Flow and Place: Transnationalism in Four Cases

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La version français de cette introduction commence à la page 13.

Flows and places[1]—these are the minimal objects of transnationalism. Flows unite the twin phenomena of transnationalism and globalization, but place separates them. Flows are the informational and interactional links among sets of individuals and institutions. What marks the new era of globalization and transnationalism is not these flows as such and the processes they produce, but their speed and volume at increased pace and scale that resists both definition and regulation in terms of location. These processes, decentred from the nation and any particular nation, working independent of any boundaries and any national territory, are global. Global processes transcend space and only have a location in an de-territorialized, abstract global space (cf. Featherstone, 1990; Kearney, 1995). These same flows which constitute global processes, e.g., financial and cultural, also work on a much smaller scale and in more contained forms, link specific individuals and institutions in few states, creating more particular and specific connections and relationships. The different treatment of place can usefully distinguish globalization from transnationalism. Transnational processes are not worldwide, but are anchored in places, i.e., states, both homelands and nations of settlement. Both migrants and corporations whose journeys and activities cross borders of two or more states are best referred to as transnational. Transnationalism is a "more humble and ... more adequate label" for relationships and phenomena which are variable in scale and distribution and cross state boundaries. (Hannerz, 1996: 6) Some caution in describing transnationalism is a healthy antidote to the sometimes almost giddy catastrophism or boosterism that marks writing about globalization.

Globalization

It is not, however, possible to examine transnational phenomena separate from global flows and processes which

underlie, make possible, support and facilitate them. These transnational phenomena can, however, be understood and analyzed as distinct from the flows which constitute them. The movement of capital is the global flow most often referred to as evidence of a new era. Its characteristics are increased volume and speed in capital movements and autonomy from managers of national economies, and its consequences are volatility which disrupts national economies and the creation of new centres of wealth accumulation, i.e., decentralizing capitalism and defining global cities. (cf. Friedman, J., 2001a, Leach, 1997, Ong and Nonini, 1997, Sassen, 1991) The same technologies that facilitate capital flows offer individuals openings for forms of communication which create a new shape for transnational relationships. The challenges to sovereignty of states by corporations and elites acting to separate capital from any particular nation or state have correspondingly weakened prescriptive definitions of citizenship. As absolutist definitions of citizenship softened the exclusiveness of nations and made nations more open to diasporic communities, the alternate and excluded spaces of transnationalism escaped from the shadows of nationalism. (cf. Kappus, 1997). The legitimacy of nation-building projects has been undercut by the complex commitments of citizens and corporations.[2] It may be that the age of nationalism (Gellner, 1983) has been succeeded by the formation of a global culture, an era of creole culture(s). (cf. Featherstone, 1990).

The answer to this question is unclear and opinion on globalization is divided about whether the boundedness of the local, the boundaries of cultures, are being erased, about the politics and morality of the phenomenon, and about the future of the globalization process itself. There is agreement that the experience of physical phenomena has been altered; "compression of space and time" is sensed; the world is a smaller place, if not exactly in the image of McLuhan's global village. Opposing theories of homogenization and fragmentation anticipate different outcomes of the trends of world integration, its consequences are both immiserating and enriching; globalization is continuity and it is change; it is novel and a harbinger of the future and it is similar to and an extension of the past; it is new and it is old. It is bringing dramatic and liberating changes and its corporate actors are oppressing, displacing and dispossessing individuals and communities, effacing the local. Nationalisms and fundamentalisms are proliferating as diasporas and transnational connections are weakening the state. Outcomes are both positive and negative and praised and condemned. On the basis of the intensity of emotion alone it is difficult to separate the enthusiastic boosters of globalization from those who bemoan its consequences.[3]

Among the many issues in these debates this introduction considers briefly the relationship of flows and technology and the problem of the nation and the state.

Flows and Technology

The technological make-over of communications and transportation has so caught the imagination of users and observers that everything has been proclaimed new. The technology boom on the stock markets has made the future seem an extension of the prosperous and rapidly communicating present. It is claimed that a physical change in the world has been made compressing space and time. Communications and transportation have become efficient, so inexpensive, so accessible and rapid that borders and separations have been erased. The web is an image of the world becoming one. At the same time HIV/AIDS, identified only twenty years ago at this month (June 2001), has given a tragic, emotional and intimate dimension to globalization. This epidemic has underscored the multiple dimensions of global integration. Moreover, the futile exclusionary practices by some nations to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS from crossing their borders and their policies of denial have so utterly failed that a subtext of the tragedy is a lesson of inevitability of globalization. But globalization is not allegory alone. Examination of the claims of enthusiasts and critical appraisal of the benefits of new technologies deserves discussion.

Enthusiasts focus on telecommunications. In many respects they are right that this is the key to what is new in globalization: increasing speed and flexibility and rapidly declining cost have expanded the markets for telecommunications and computer use to remote and otherwise technologically underdeveloped settings. Markets have also expanded within industrial economies. In India, for example, independent telephone retail kiosks marked by their bright yellow signs found 10 years ago only in large cities and even then concentrated around railway stations are now found in multiples even in the smallest towns. Capital flows, media, personal conversations, off-shore call centres, deterritorialized software labs, MP3 (downloaded, digitized) music, etc., are the content of this transformation. Technology has advanced this dimension of social life in a recognizable and measurable way. Multiple transmissions on the same wire, new materials like fibreoptic cable and wireless interconnectivity have reduced the cost and expanded the transmission of information in ways which give an immediacy to communications that is new. The revolution in telecommunications has given creative impulse to the symbolic,

narrative and rhetorical side of social life. On the other hand, when a journalist extols without irony the cutting edge jobs in a U.S. insurance company's call centre in Ghana dealing with health insurance claims of Americans, questions must be asked about a trickle down effect: whether there is any reduction in the drudgery in the lives of farmers of yams and cocoa, not to mention the availability of the insured health services to Ghanaians. We are left to wonder if Ghanaians are processing data on insurance payments for health care procedures that are unavailable to them.[4] Even a sceptical view of the benefits must acknowledge the extraordinary increase in efficiency in communications. The gains, however, are too often attributed to the market and reduced state involvement in the economy, an attribution that obscures the unevenness of technological advance; as current power shortages in California teach us messages and information are not the same as electricity, nor do they replace menial work. The efficiencies have been achieved unevenly and favour certain aspects of daily life, even transnational daily life. These limits are relevant in thinking about transportation.

Physical movement is an inescapable dimension of transnationalism. The diasporan model involves dispersal and idealized return. (Gibb, this issue, and Safran, 1991) The classic view of dispersal as involuntary and exile has faded in the recent phase of transnationalism and as scholarly work has progressed there has been a shift to understanding new voluntary diasporas. (Amit-Talai, 2002; Tölölyan, 1996) The sense of freedom and convenience regarding such movement is in part technological but it is also political as borders between states have become more open.

Air travel has been the basis of this movement and its declining cost has also enhanced the convenience of being physically present at home and abroad. Dual residence, which once marked a life of privilege, are now a reasonable expectation— and often a conscious goal— of immigrants. Although the physical limitations of travel technology are real the combination of rapid communications and travel allows frequent and well-timed returns, for example, on ritual occasions marking life-cycle events and to socialize children in the homeland, which express relationships more concretely than does verbal or written contact alone. Without being an uncritical booster there are many aspects of these changes that can be admired and we can connect them to both flows and movement, public culture and migrants' networks.

Are transnationalism and globalization simply technological phenomena? Can transnationalism be reduced to new technologies and changes in experiences of space and time? Communication can be reduced to language merging the forms of media and treating even face-to-face conversation as abstract, but this analytical synthesis loses the complexity of form and intent in various media and neglects the choices made by actors in communications (Hannerz, 1996:19-22). Physical presence can be seen as a unique form of participation, although its forms vary as discussed below, and the different forms communication must be recognized as having different consequences in relationships. Is the telephone simply an instrument, or is the sound of a particular person's voice—not to be too maudlin about it in a world of commercialized sentiments, greeting cards and sentimental telephone advertisements—not a substantive, nuanced and affective connection, more than the vibrations of the speaker and microphone and the digital impulses transmitting the sound? As costs declined the telephone completely replaced the telegraph, but today telephone and e-mail communications complement each other and users move between media for different communications purposes. The alternation between real time communications and delayed communications is interesting in itself, although the difference between e-mail and postal services has made letters old-fashioned and almost ceremonial. The exploitation of the voice, however, to simulate greater degrees of intimacy is commonly experienced and also commercially exploited. The popular and scholarly discussions of the impact of media—creating, changing, corrupting—on forms of expression, etiquette, grammar and spelling, have attracted great interest, but are only an index of awareness of different implications in different modes of communications.

My argument here, although not definitive, is that the technical underpinnings of globalization and transnationalism are real and consequential, and the efficiency of these technologies has made them ubiquitous. The range of possibilities and aspirations of those aware of these technologies expands because of their knowledge. Among these new possibilities is leaving a home community without being permanently alienated from it. This is not to say that access does not come without sacrifice or cost, but gone are the ominous telephone call and the telegram bearing sad news. Transnationalism depends on new technologies of telecommunications and transportation for some, but not all of its new attributes. Reduced costs have made intimate and frequent contact accessible in many ways for many everyday matters, which time and cost may have prohibited in the recent past. At the same time, unequal access to technology which may reflect generational and class and First World-Third World differences may create circumscribed

sub-communities of discussion as in the Harari case (Gibb, this issue).

Transnationalism

Louie, summarizing the literature, separated transnationalism into two main areas: "transnational cultural studies, which examines the effects of global cultural flows in creating a transnational public culture, and transmigrant practices, which emphasizes the creation of social networks across borders through the daily practices of travelling migrants" (2000: 647). Using a classic fieldwork technique of focussing on performative events to elicit conceptions of identity and difference,[5] Louie uses a "nationalist pilgrimage" to an annual youth festival sponsored by the People's Republic of China complete with grand events and "roots" trips to villages to show how the constructions of nationalism by the P.R.C. and by the participants, overseas Chinese youth, to re-evaluate the use of place and tradition in transnational studies to re-territorialize transnationalism.[6] In examining the different regimes of capital and labour in one of the off-shore banking havens, the Cayman Islands, Amit-Talai (1997) has shown that capital and labour markets function differently and that there is persistence of the territorial dimension, the partial deterritorialization (327) of the international job market, embracing not only the regulatory framework, but also access to job opportunities. Place remains, as Amit-Talai and Louie convincingly show in these two cases drawn from opposite ends of the continuum of national scale, a significant factor imposing limits: in Cayman on transnational openness and for China on national power.[7]

It is place, the local practice of custom, and the connections made between places, that distinguishes transnationalism from globalization. Both Kearney and Hannerz define transnationalism in terms of more than one state. Glick Schiller and her colleagues identified a new kind of migrant population "whose networks, activities and patterns of life encompass both their host and home societies." They coined the term "transmigrant" to describe these new populations who have "multiple relations ... that span borders." They define "transnationalism as the processes by which immigrants build social fields that link together their country of origin and their country of settlement" (Glick Schiller, Basch and Blanc-Szanton, 1992: 1). Louie would separate these "travelling migrants" (647) from the creation of public culture, but she does so analytically by isolating the youth festival, the series of performative events, from the social ties of the participants, their communities of origin, when it is clearly the diverse Chinese life experiences of the many classes of participants which is the source of the diverse Chinese nationalisms. Both observers and participants make judgements about the quality and content of ties between those from abroad and those at home. Different travellers *returning* to China in Louie's case claim authenticity for *their* roots visits, but belittle *others'* trips as mere tourism. Even tourism is a flow connecting these spaces. Public culture at a different level motivates these ties, giving even maligned tourism meaning.

In the papers presented here flows are of a number of sorts. Hararis are migrants from a city that had a tradition of commitment to residence in that urban space (Gibb, this issue). This identification with a particular place is perhaps of the strongest order we will encounter. The dilemmas Hararis face in their diasporic communities have the greatest assimilative potential. This identification with place is not, however, an essentialization of either identity or place, but with a dynamic bounded social and political community opposed and yet in creative relationship with its neighbours. The precarious trading and class niche of Harar was marked culturally by language and religion and techniques of ethnic self-perpetuation (boundary maintenance, in another episteme [Barth]) which were established in Harar's years of independence. Cape Verdeans (Meintel, this issue) have a similar history in its general sociological outlines. Their island community developed within the Atlantic trading system with loose state controls at the local level. The theory and interpretation of transnationalism should not depend on the limits of description. Potentials and actualities co-exist; resistance and eclecticism mark practice.

Nations, States and the Nation-State—the Nation or the State

> " ... it is the state that makes a nation, not a nation the state." — General Pilsudski

Hannerz notes "a certain irony in the tendency of the term "transnational" to draw attention to what it negates—that is, to the continued significance of the national" (Hannerz, 1996: 6). Some have argued that transnationalism and globalization require a rethinking of "the nation" (Appadurai, 1990; Glick Schiller et al., 1992). Kearney (1995: 548) draws our attention to the "the work of the state" as the object of studies of transnationalism and suggests that the conflicts of transnational and global phenomena might be more exactly called "trans-statal." He mildly regrets that this neologism is not popular and his reading of the literature reveals the euphemistic romanticizing of the implica-

tions of many of the studies of transnationalism in anthropology. The emphasis on nation as homogeneous has distorted our understanding of global phenomena and this distortion has its source in particular views of the idea of the nation and of social change (Friedman, J., 2001a; Tsing, 2000). One of these casualties is the nation-building project itself. The attempts of China to manage its nationalism is instructive: despite the official goal of a unified conception of the nation, being Chinese and the People's Republic (i.e., the state) become distinguished in the transnational process. Rather than producing unity, these efforts generate varieties of nationalism which compete and coexist (Louie, 2000; Ong, 1999). The implication of Kearney's suggestion that trans-statal is a better descriptive term for the phenomena which concern us here, is that it is necessary to separate the nation and the state in our analysis.

More modest definitions, noted at the beginning of this introduction, limit transnationalism to activities that are "anchored in ... one or more nation-states" (Kearney), and have the "characteristic of not being contained within a state" (Hannerz, 1996). It is this cross-border aspect of everyday life that is the challenge to ideas and laws of sovereignty. Renan's ironic phrase "the nation is a daily plebiscite" anticipated one of the key processes of transnationalism. These cross border activities are an everyday challenge to ideas about the absoluteness of the state. But many of these practices are not new (see below) and there is a historical dimension to these changes, which are not uniformly found in all states. Three of the countries discussed here, Cape Verde, Lebanon and Italy are states with histories of emigration and diasporic communities. Although Cape Verde is a relatively new state, its history in the Atlantic sea trade and its peripheral position in the Portuguese Empire predisposed it to openness. Harar, once an autonomous city-state dominating its agricultural hinterland, today is the urban centre of a region with some political autonomy within the Ethiopian state (Waldron, 1996).

Rather than efface both the state and the nation, the dynamics of these transnational communities cross boundaries and redefine the national; the home state and the host state are incorporated in or distanced from the lives of these migrants. Perhaps transnational does not negate the nation and the national, as Hannerz suggests (above), but makes it more flexible and expands it. What we see in the work in these papers is that the nation is one dimension or factor for people living transnational lives. The states they deal with mediate their relationships with the nation. The state is sometimes a guardian of the nation, at others an agent of the nation; its success varies in its attempts to represent all of the people of the nation. The nation is a cloak which is sometimes worn and sometimes covers many and at others fewer; the state changes in shape and porosity, emphasizing sovereignty at times and relaxing it at other times as many states are now doing.

Boundaries and borders do not separate, isolate, confine and encapsulate in an era of transnationalism as they did in an era of nationalism (Gellner, 1983). This absoluteness, the sovereignty, these edges represented over individuals has diminished (reverting partway to the early 1900s as noted in Meintel's paper), as the right to cross borders has expanded reducing permissable criteria of admission and exclusion in some states, to a very few, mainly medical and economic.

The impact of global phenomena on the nation and on our view as anthropologists of culture as a concept and theoretical tool is a growing area of dicussion which can only be noted in this introduction. It has been argued that culture has been separated from space (Hastrup and Olwig, 1997) and that this separation has telling consequences for thinking about the nation (Glick et al.). Critics of these views counter that the conception of culture said to be unbounded or de-territroialized does not accurately reflects its usage in the literature (Sahlins, 1999) and the argument that the nation is dissolving depends on a particular uniquely narrow form of this latter concept (Friedman, J., 2001a, 2001b). Beyond disciplinary history is a concern about the limits and consequences of the form the argument has taken (Sahlins, 2000)

These papers reveal a purposive, active orientation to shared, if imprecisely anticipated futures by the actors in these transnational settings. Their perceptions are not narrowly local or exclusively inward looking. Harari youth are struggling with two universalizing doctrines, Islam and Western secularism and debating these issue on the web. Lebanese Shi'ite women are cultivating consanguineal and affinal ties and elaborating the family to sustain their identity within Islam and across national borders. The elaborated family supports their diasporic identity and their ties to the homeland. Italians, long-time migrants, are re-conceptualizing their multiple ties to their multiple homelands, national and regional, Italy and diasporic. Cape Verdeans, stimulated by the independence of their state, are cultivating their transnationalism. As has been noted elsewhere for small nations (Amit-Talai, 1997, 2002) this culture-building process (Mintz, 1999) generates the dilemmas of inclusion and access. In none of these cases can transnationalism be seen as dissolution of a homogeneous, discrete and tightly bounded culture.

The authors of these papers have not addressed this question explicitly, perhaps because in each case it is

moot; the issue of boundaries has been political in these cases—including the islands of Cape Verde, but the "flow" across these boundaries has been an historical reality. Identities may be territorial in some senses, but they are cosmopolitan in others. Shi'ites can think of themselves as also Arab (often described as a "nationalism," as in "the Arab nation") and in this case Lebanese but with religious ties to others sharing their form of Islam (a transnationalism, adopted by states, but never confined to a state [Goody]).

Italians unified their country late in the eighteenth century but regionalism has thrived at home and in the Italian diaspora. The recent state reorganization (Gabaccia, 2000; Harney, this issue, p. 43), has perhaps ironically, stimulated transnational ties to the homeland and the home region giving a specificity to transnational relations.

The Hararis, experts at identity management over centuries, sustained a place economically, politically and once autonomously (until 1877), but their boundary—literally concretized by the city wall—marked a discrete culture, it never enclosed an isolated population. The Sunni Muslim faith, trade and war placed them in a complex social environment where self-awareness led to the moral commitment to stay in the city (Gibb, this issue, p. 55). Being also Muslim, African, Ethiopian connects Hararis to other locales in various ways which reduce particularism but also reflect the complexity of boundary maintenance (cf. Barth, 1969; Wallman, 1986) How action and meaning are shaped through movement and location is the dynamic of these processes.

These Papers

These papers raise questions about the form of transnational as a culture building process (Mintz, 1999). In each case, the agency of actors in transnational settings has stimulated new institutions. These accounts focus on the orientations of the migrants to host country and homeland and develop symbolic and material analyses of their transnational ties. The history of nations and of transnational connections is explicit in these papers and the issues of continuity are implicitly addressed. In these cases transnationalism continues old relationships even as their form changes (Foner, Mintz). Fieldwork cannot answer ultimate questions about cultural survival, diasporic assimilation, but more middle-range questions about the range of forms of diasporic communities, the range of relationships and processes at work in them, and the interventionist or facilitating role of the state are addressed.

Cape Verde is a product of an early era of globalization and expansion of the world system and its history is instructive on the differences between, and the historical transformations of, the nation and the state. Deirdre Meintel historically situates the changing Cape Verdean society and changing Cape Verdean diasporic communities in the Portuguese Empire and in the Atlantic trade linking Europe, Africa and the Americas. Cape Verde, a product of the Portuguese Empire, built markers of distinctiveness within this empire and its transnationalism from the 17th century which have been incorporated in its contemporary form as an independent country after 1975. As a homeland, Cape Verde, has now redefined its related diasporas.

Its location in the eastern Atlantic off the coast of Senegal, made Cape Verde valuable to both European and American sailors. It was a community created by the discoveries—Portuguese administrators and sailors expanding the empire and the Atlantic trade which provisioned and crewed sailing ships from New England trading for slaves and hunting for whales on the coast of West Africa. Its history is one of contact and global connections marked by one period of isolation—"submerged transnationalism" Meintel calls it—during the fascist years under Salazar from 1926 to 1974.

Cape Verde is an example of the centrality of the state to the transnational relationships of its people. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Cape Verdeans were oriented to and integrated into the Atlantic trade with New England. Their crewing on the slavers and whalers led to settlement in New England. They were, however, also part of an empire which had a sharp hierarchy of place from centre to periphery, with the African colonies especially the labour-short island of São Tomé off the coast of Gabon at the outer edge and low end. The Portuguese state coerced Cape Verdeans into unfavourable labour contracts on São Tomé's equatorial plantations. Cape Verdeans were an intermediate population, neither African nor fully Portuguese who faced a set of starkly different overseas possibilities: labour on plantations in Africa or settlement in New England. Although New England was a preferable destination for settlement for economic reasons racial restrictions were oppressive. In this environment, Cape Verdeans sustained an identity separate from Afro-Americans, working in coastal trades and identifying as Portuguese, but still separated by colour from other "more European" Portuguese, with similar trans-Atlantic links, from Madeira and the Canary Islands. (Harney, Greenfield) This defensive response to racial discrimination ironically sustained a transnationalism that stimulated the flow of diasporan resources to assist in development on independence in 1975.

The opposition of the regions and the nation has been a continuing theme of Italian politics. The late—

compared to other European nations—consolidation of the Italian nation-state and the patterns of emigration from certain regions to the same country, and often city, of settlement, sustained regional identities which remained active as in the ideologies of organization of overseas settlements. Nicholas Harney situates the negotiation of Italianness in the politics and re-structuring of the Italian state and the historically continuing relationship of Italy and its diasporas.

This case study illustrates the flexible sovereignty of the national governments, i.e., the states of Italy and Canada cooperating in Canada-based projects. These projects are not defined in terms of either state, but of the regions of Italy. These state activities can be seen as a continuing attempt to control and sustain some level of sovereignty over diasporan communities which forces a participation in the transnationalist projects of their citizens. Canada, a former colony of Britain and a former dominion in the British Empire has always, we might say, qualified its sovereignty in regard to Britain and immigrants from Britain,[8] and nationalist initiatives have had to contend with a history of Loyalist attachments (Mackey, 1999; Winland, 1998). Most recently the tensions of this special ambiguity were revealed by disputes over the power of Queen, Head of State of both Canada and Britain, to confer knighthood titles on Canadian citizens.

Co-operation with and endorsement of the presence of Italian officials is a new form of participation, although in the Italian case, not a new interest on the part of the Italian state. (cf. Gabaccia, 2000) In the rhetoric of multiculturalism, being Italian and Canadian are not mutually exclusive. In Harney's view, both states gain from cooperation as "these projects help to discipline and regulate the behaviour and identity of Italian immigrants engaged in transnationalism" (Harney, this issue).

Italian transnationalism is 130 years old; in this era of globalization, however, there seems to be a recognition of the permanence of the Italian diasporas and transnationalism. Paralleling Louie's study there is a re-territorialization and materialization of identity to create meaningful worlds within larger structures of power and a creativity in regard to culture, to the daily practice of Italianità, that gently ignores the question of continuity of community and the authenticity of place.

Camilla Gibb's study of Harar is another case that reminds us of the history of transnationalism and its variety of forms. Harar was perceived by its inhabitants as a closed city. The boundaries of Harar were boundaries of difference marked by a moral ideology of commitment to the city, clear markers of belonging, and a wall. The almost medieval management of ethnic relations, developed since the 16th century until the defeat by Ethiopia in 1877, could continue to work in the empire of Haile Selassie, but not in the communist republic of the Dergue (1974-1991). As it did for many Ethiopians this period led to exile for many Hararis. The period of exile was the beginning of Harari transnationalism. In post-Dergue Ethiopia Harar has been granted some jurisdictional autonomy, but the terms of negotiation of membership have become broader and the differentials of power of those in and those out have become less as the Ethiopian state acknowledges political issues of cultural difference and state hegemony. For Harari the homeland and its state is not the only transnational connection: their Sunni Muslim faith involves them with "similar" others, neither Ethiopian nor African, and their Africanness makes a set of yet different connections. They, like the other migrants described in these papers, have also experienced the invidious discrimination of North American settlement societies and anti-Islamic discourse in the North American press, and these experiences have motivated some of their thinking about their Harari diaspora.

The question of Harari identity has been displaced from territory, from a precise economic niche to de-territorialized thinking about and imagining of a diasporic community. This transformation is a product of the technologies of cyber space. The timing of these discussions in the run-up to Y2K—a crisis anticipated by excited, apocalyptic expectations that never happened and is now almost forgotten—is a reminder of the narrow experiential and historical perspectives of those deeply involved and dependent on globalizing technology. The Harari case, however, is one of several in which practice—worship of saints for example—attached to place and continuity of practice across generations is broken by migration. Is this one of the many diasporic communities of minorities fated to assimilate, not as Americans, or British, but as Muslims, Ethiopians, or Africans, (cf. studies of the Parsis [Luhrmann, 1996], Burghers [Roberts, 1989]), and Anglo-Indians, or will Hararis create a transnational niche like Cape Verdeans?

Josiane LeGall's study of Shi'ite Lebanese women demonstrates the liberating aspect of transnational diasporic life. Below the horizon of the state, both Lebanese and Canadian, the family is elaborated as both normative goal and pragmatic transnational link. The circumstances of minority identity could not be more different in these two states. Lebanon where faction is highly political and marked by religion, contrasts with Canada where the particularism of this self-description is lost on most Canadians and is immaterial to the state. LeGall's work shows how transnational ties can be cultivated in a particular

form, a form that enhances boundary both at home and abroad. The intimacy of frequent communications allows a continuous, daily involvement in the lives of family members wherever they are. Facing similar pressures and temptations to those encountered by the Hararis, the Shi'ite Lebanese can link themselves religiously with other Shi'ites, culturally with other Lebanese and Arabs, but simultaneously sustain a transnational community oriented toward their minority homeland community in Lebanon.

In the case of Shi'ite Lebanese, studied by LeGall, the role of the states, homeland and Canadian settlement, is minimal. Lebanon was historically part of the Ottoman empire, then of the French overseas empire and its citizens are noted for transnational trading diasporas, especially in West Africa. The homeland orientation of these diasporic communities is characteristic, but not engaged officially with the state. The adult women in Montreal are not oriented to global technology as reality, as the excited Harari youth were in advising flight from the Y2K crisis, but as instruments to facilitate and sustain long term family relationships that anticipate connections over generations.

Conclusion

This small set of papers raises questions about the uniformity of transnationalism as a global phenomenon. Everywhere the nation is qualified by ethnic claims and the state (perhaps universal in definition and form, but far from uniform in reality and substance) is challenged by diasporic allegiances. The examples here, humble forms of transnationalism perhaps, reveal the agency of individuals, the adaptability of culture (some of culture), and the complexity and contingency of global phenomena. Although utilizing new global technologies, only Harari youth have made a part of cyber space their world. These studies do not separate flows and migrant practices, but show how they are interdependent and mutually stimulative of popular as well as official nationalisms and of institutions other than the nation. The states of origin of these communities and Canada and the United States, the states of settlement, are relatively open "plural" nations, allowing dual citizenship, free movement and by implication transnational connections of their citizens.[9] (Gabaccia, 2000: 176) Pluralism has also softened the nationalism of the homeland states. Lebanon is a state of historical compromises and pluralist politics. The history of Cape Verde is plural from its origins, which, in its late liberation, is not denied in an imaginary homogeneous community. Ethiopia, since the Dergue has acknowledged the pluralism of its population and accomodated it. And Italy, which is imagined as a classical European nation and is lived in many respects in reference to its regions has, if somewhat reluctantly and ironically, officially accepted a plural present. From these cases, especially the latter three, it is clear that these states have adopted visions of the nation, nation-building projects which are inclusive of transnationalism and diasporic communities. For the migrants, it would appear, transnationalism offers distance from their states of origin and of settlement and alternatives to constrictive visions of the nation and is, in this way, liberating.

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Notes

1 "Non-places" (Augé, 1995 and Gould and White, 1974) are a product of globalization, but the question, perhaps metaphysical, whether the local has been (can be) stripped of all meaning by global processes is more difficult to answer.

2 "Dual loyalty" was once almost a definition of treason. Such an accusation implied and often led to the conclusion that the accused was unworthy of citizenship.

3 A remarkable aspect of the discourse on these topics is the coeval or simultaneous range of participants in it: academics from literature to economics, unrestrained by conventional boundaries of their fields, journalists, civil servants and politicians, and the range of forms of reporting, comment and analysis, from gossip, rumours about internet gaffes, to the most technical of scholarly analysis. This breadth of participation is in contrast to the consensus, not on the dangers or merits of the processes, but on the issues and questions at stake.

4 Friedman, Thomas L., "It takes a satellite," *New York Times*, May 8, 2001, A31. The author of *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*, Friedman, a regular columnist for his paper, is well known as an information age booster. What seems to me to be obvious questions in regard to this Ghanaian data processing case: "Does the displacement of jobs do anything for the workers, except in the short term, and how does the corporation benefit?" are not asked by him. Nor are they questions for this introduction.

5 Gluckman's famous study of a social situation, the dedication ceremony of bridge in South Africa is the model for use of a performance or celebratory event as a social situation which defines identity and difference (1940-42).

6 Louie's title "Re-territorializing transnationalism" only partly reflects her argument or evidence. The ideology and cultivation of village-emigrant ties were suppressed during the Cultural Revolution (1966-76), but revived, though not with universal interest, in the current era of state promotion of Chineseness at home and abroad (655). The complexity and interplay of state and popular nationalisms and the possibility of a variety of Chinese identities challenges the idea of "a unified, essentialized transmigrant popula-

tion" (662). It is not always clear if the object of this criticism, this idea of a transnational community based on "a shared Chinese identity" is that of the state and the youth festival organizers, or projected from the literature (Appadurai, 1991) and is a kind of transnational vision. Her attempt to separate flows from transmigrant practices, however, neglects the importance of movement of various intentions, durations, and permanences. Nationalist tourism of the kind she studied is a reminder of the possibility of migration *and* return.

7 Cf. Pico Iyer for an evocative interpretation of this lifestyle and identity. He may not intend it but his *Global Souls* is self-congratulatory. See "Alien Home" (267-298) where he distinguishes between simple communication and emotional communication in intimate relationships.

8 Until very recently British immigrants could apply for citizenship after three years, whereas those from other places had to wait five years.

9 The United States has become more liberal in allowing dual citizenship only recently.

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