Diaspora and Transnationalism

Conducts, Theories and Methods

RAINER BAUBÖCK & THOMAS FAIST (EDS.)

Amsterdam University Press
Cover image: Paul Klee, ARA, Kühlung in einem Garten der heissen Zone, 1924, Inv.1960.60186, Photo Kunstmuseum Basel, Kupferstichkabinett, Martin P. Bühler
Cover design: Studio Jan de Boer BNO, Amsterdam
Layout: The DocWorkers, Almere

ISBN 978 90 8964 238 7
e-ISBN 978 90 4851 266 9
NUR 741/763

© Rainer Bauböck, Thomas Faist / Amsterdam University Press 2010

All rights reserved. Without limiting the rights under copyright reserved above, no part of this book may be reproduced, stored in or introduced into a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means (electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise) without the written permission of both the copyright owners and the authors of the book.
Chapter 2
Diasporas, transnational spaces and communities

Michel Bruneau

The term ‘diaspora’, long used only to describe the dispersion of Jewish people throughout the world, has in the last 30 years elicited unprecedented interest, attracting the attention not only of the academic world but also of the media. In everyday language, the term is now applied to all forms of migration and dispersion of a people, even where no migration is involved; this corresponds not only to the development and generalisation of international migrations throughout the world, but also to a weakening, or at least a limitation, of the role played by nation-states at a time when globalisation has become a dominant process. I have chosen here to address the concept of diaspora from a geographical standpoint, taking into account its materiality in terms of space, place and territory.

In this chapter I shall try first to differentiate the concept of diaspora from that of others such as migration, minority, transnational community and territory of movement, and then complement the resulting definition with a typology of diasporas. My hypothesis is that the related concepts of diaspora and transnational community could be applied to different types of trans-border or transnational societies and thus help improve our understanding of the different spatial and temporal processes involved.

2.1 The concept of diaspora

A community diaspora first comes into being and then lives on owing to whatsoever in a given place forges a bond between those who want to group together and maintain, from afar, relations with other groups which, although settled elsewhere, invoke a common identity. This bond can come in different forms, such as family, community, religious, socio-political and economic ties or the shared memory of a catastrophe or trauma suffered by the members of the diaspora or their forebears. A diaspora has a symbolic and ‘iconographic’ capital that enables it to reproduce and overcome the – often considerable – obstacle
of distance separating its communities (Bruneau 2004: 7-43). Members of a diaspora coalesce in their present place of settlement the whole set of micro-places (e.g. city neighbourhoods or villages) occupied or crossed by those whom they recognise as their own. Each of these places acts as a centre in a territory where social proximities suppress spatial and temporal distances (Prévelakis 1996). All diasporas are socio-spatial networks necessarily undergoing territorial expansion because they aggregate both places of memory and places of presence (Offner & Pumain 1996: 163).

Diaspora areas and territories must be assessed in steps: first in the host country, where the community bond plays the essential role; then in the country or territory of origin – a pole of attraction – via memory; and, finally, through the system of relations within the networked space that connects these different poles. It should, however, be borne in mind that the term ‘diaspora’ often plays more of a metaphorical than an instrumental role. The different criteria suggested by most authors (Cohen 1997; Sheffer 2003) can be narrowed down to six essential ones focused around dispersion under pressure, choice of destination, identity awareness, networked space, duration of transnational ties and relative autonomy from host and origin societies as indicated below.

1) The population considered has been dispersed under pressure (e.g. disaster, catastrophe, famine, abject poverty) to several places and territories beyond the immediate neighbourhood of the territory of origin.

2) ‘The choice of countries and cities of destination is carried out in accordance with the structure of migratory chains which, beyond the oceans, link migrants with those already installed in the host countries, the latter thought of as conveyors towards the host society and the labour market, and guardians of the ethnic or national culture’ (Dufoix 2000: 325). Such a choice may, however, also be determined by the conditions of traumatic dispersal, in which case, even though there may be far less choice, previous migratory routes can be used.

3) The population, integrated without being assimilated into the host countries, retains a rather strong identity awareness – which is linked to the memory of its territory and the society of origin – with its history. This implies the existence of a strong sense of community and community life. As in the case of a nation, it is an ‘imagined community’, relying on a collective narrative that links it to a territory and to a memory
(Anderson 1983). Intergenerational transmission of identities is also at work.

4) These dispersed groups of migrants (or groups stemming from migration) preserve and develop among themselves and with the society of origin, if one still exists, multiple exchange relations (people, goods of various natures, information, etc.) organised through networks. In this networked space, which connects essentially non-hierarchical poles – even if some are more important than others – relations among groups dispersed over several destinations tend to be horizontal rather than vertical.

5) These diasporic migrants have an experience of dispersion including several generations after the first migration. They have transmitted their identity from one generation to the other in the longue durée.

6) A diaspora tends to be an autonomous social formation from the host and the origin societies thanks to its numerous cultural, political, religious, professional associations. Lobbying in favour of their origin society is not uncommon among diasporas, but neither is resistance against instrumentalisation by the homeland.

Against this concept of a ‘community’ diaspora (Jewish, Greek, Armenian or Chinese diasporas, for example), Chivallon (2004) posits a ‘hybrid’ diaspora, distinguished very clearly from any ‘centred model’. This ‘hybrid’ model has been defined by Anglo-American authors on the basis of the black diaspora of the Americas, using the approaches of post-modernist cultural studies. These authors, Hall and Gilroy especially, refer to the philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari and to the image of the rhizome as opposed to that of the root – i.e. to a world of dissemination and hybridisation, as opposed to a world of filiation and heritage. There is no hard core of identity – nor continuity nor tradition – as in the community model, but a variety of formations. This hybrid diaspora rejects all reference to the nation and to nationalist ideologies. However, albeit for a relatively limited period of time (1919-1945), a minority of intellectuals gravitating around Garvey and Du Bois did promote a pan-African nationalist ideology.

For a diaspora to be able to live on by transmitting its identity from one generation to the next, it must as much as possible have places for periodic gatherings of a religious, cultural or political nature, in which it can concentrate on the main elements of its ‘iconography’. The
concept of iconography, introduced in the 1950s by Gottmann (1952: 219-221), shows the importance of visible and palpable symbols, such as the monasteries that the Greeks of Pontos (the Black Sea region in Turkey) reconstructed in Northern Greece. Such symbols contribute to consolidating social networks and to preserving them during the hard times of exile. The symbols that make up an iconography are akin to three main fields, religion, political past (memory) and social organisation: ‘Religion, great historical recollections, the flag, social taboos, invested and well grounded/ anchored interests are all part of what is called iconography’ (Gottmann 1952: 136). Those symbols are the object of a virtual faith that singularises a people as different from its neighbours, who are attached to other symbols. The rooting of national iconography in the minds of citizens is all the deeper as it is transmitted to children very early by the family and the school. It unquestionably constitutes the main factor of socio-political partitioning in space. It is also what allows a diaspora not to become diluted into the host society and to keep its distinct identity. This concept particularly applies to ‘nations’ or, more exactly, to nationalities within great multi-ethnic empires, such as the Ottoman or the Russian. Their territorial inscription is neither continuous nor homogeneous, unlike what is implied by the ideal territory of a contemporary European nation-state. The case appears very close to that of the diasporas, to which it can apply with equal relevance.

These ‘places’, where we can find the main components of the iconography, include sanctuaries (churches, synagogues, mosques), community premises (conference rooms, theatres, libraries, sports clubs) and monuments that perpetuate memory. They also include restaurants and grocery shops, newsagents and the media (newspapers, community magazines, local radio and television stations, websites). These various places may be concentrated in the same ‘ethnic’ neighbourhood, the same locality, or be dispersed throughout a city or some bigger territory.

Since ‘iconography’ – in the Gottmannian sense – is the material and symbolic condensation of the intricate web of linkages between the members of a community and their territory, a perfect reproduction of its elements (e.g. reconstructing the Pontic monasteries in mainland Greece) is simply not possible: territory cannot be moved from one location to another. The material aspects of social networks depending on locations, territories, landscapes or monuments that are usually associated with rootedness, immobility and autochthoneity have, in the course of time, become mobile. The fact that members of a diaspora create ‘places of memory’ in the host country gathering the icons make it possible.

By introducing the spatial and temporal dimensions of territoriality into the concept of diaspora, it can be shown how the reproduction of
memory goes hand in hand with the construction of monuments and other symbolic and sometimes also functional places that constitute the instruments for a re-rooting in the host country.

2.2 Four major types of diasporas

Different diasporas are distributed unequally throughout the world at the beginning of the twenty-first century, with a generally confirmed tendency for them to be found on one or several continents. In every diaspora, culture in the widest sense – folklore, cuisine, language, literature, cinema, music, the press as well as community life and family bonds – plays a fundamental role. Family bonds, in fact, constitute the very fabric of the diaspora, particularly in the case of diasporas stemming from Asia and the eastern Mediterranean, with their well-known extended family nature; similarly, the community link is always present in, and constitutive of, all types of diasporas. What distinguishes diasporas, however, is the unequal density of their organisational structure, and the greater or lesser influence exerted by, if it still exists, their nation of origin. Religion, enterprise, politics and a combination of race and culture are the four major domains in which these two discriminating features manifest themselves. The combination of these criteria allows a typology of diasporas to be sketched out here, as four types, and illustrated with a few examples.

1) A first set of diasporas is structured around an entrepreneurial pole; everything else is subordinated to it or plays only a secondary role: the Chinese, Indian and Lebanese diasporas are the best examples of this. Religion here does not play a structuring role, essentially because of its very diversity: Christians, Muslims, Hindus or Buddhists. Nor does the nation-state of origin exercise any decisive influence, for a variety of reasons: there may be several such states instead of one homeland clearly defined (Hong Kong, Taiwan, mainland China, South-East Asia for the Chinese); it may be deliberately disengaged and intervene only in case of extreme difficulties (India); it may be too weak and divided (Lebanon). Entrepreneurship constitutes the central element of the reproduction strategy of these diasporas, most of them emerging from a colonial context in which the ruler assigned their various commercial and enterprise activities (Indians and the Lebanese in Africa, the Chinese in South-East Asia).
2) Another set of diasporas is that in which religion, often associated with a particular language, is the main structuring element: this is the case of the Jewish, Greek, Armenian and Assyro-Chaldean diasporas. In these cases the religion is monotheistic, and the language of a holy script or a liturgy may itself be regarded as essential. Greek and Armenian are taught alongside religion in diaspora schools. Synagogue and church, each with their pronounced ethnic hue, are constitutive places for these diaspora communities. Where nation-states have been formed, they have exercised an increasingly stronger influence on these diasporas. Nevertheless, even where this influence is greatest, as is the case for the Greek diaspora whose cohesion is secured by the Orthodox Church, the diaspora has managed to preserve relative independence. When the Holy Synod of the Athens Church (1908-1922) tried to take over control of the Greek Orthodox Church in the United States, strong resistance led to restoring the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

3) A third set of more recent diasporas is organised chiefly around a political pole. This is particularly so when the territory of origin is dominated by a foreign power, and the main aspiration of the diaspora population is the creation of a nation-state. An example of this is the Palestinian diaspora: having succeeded in setting up a real state-in-exile, the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO), whose objective of establishing a nation-state next to the state of Israel has already been partially achieved by the creation of the Palestinian Authority, which has been endowed with territories that it has administered since 1994. The Palestinian diaspora’s collective memory is rooted in the historical events that mark the trauma of dispersal and occupation, especially the catastrophe (nakba) of 1948. This is ‘the core event of their imagined community, the criterion of its alterity and the main founder of the diaspora’ (Kodmani-Darwish 1997: 194).

4) A fourth set is organised round a racial and cultural pole. This is the case, for example, of the black diaspora, which has been shaped by several attempts at defining a shared identity. Centred on the ‘negro race’, what separates it from the other types is, first, the fact that this diaspora has no direct reference to definite societies or territories of origin. The black diaspora is defined first and foremost by socially constructed ‘race’, and only subsequently by culture. Whereas the
The concept of diaspora cannot be used to describe all types of scattered populations issued from a migration process: other types of social formations were to emerge in the post-colonial period and societies within migration fields. Concepts other than that of diaspora – like those of transnational communities and territories of movement – can be invoked; although they do share some characteristics with diasporas, they also have their own, specific features.

2.3 From migration field to transnational space: The Turkish example

An international migration field results from the ‘structured coupling of the places produced by the flows between the different points of the migration system’ (Faret 2003: 283). Such a field comprises places of departure, route, settlement, re-settlement and even places of return. This concept applies particularly well to Turkish migration in Central and Western Europe.

In the second half of the twentieth century (1957-2000), more than three million Turks migrated to Western Europe, with two thirds going to Germany (De Tapia 1995: 187). This was essentially an international labour migration, often the subject of agreements between states.
Nevertheless, further analysis reveals this field to be relatively complex, because the subsequent migration of shopkeepers, carriers and various investors – not to mention social migrations such as family reunifications, second- and third-generation marriages as well as collective solidarities – all superimpose themselves on labour migrations. In a subsequent phase, political migrations by asylum seekers – for example, Kurds, Assyro-Chaldeans, Armenians and Alevi as well as refugees of leftist parties – have acquired ever increasing importance. There is, consequently, great diversity in the reasons for, and causes of, Turkish migration. The migration movement inside this field is intense, owing to the road, sea-going and air network forms of transport that Turks themselves use and run, largely based within their own travel agencies, transport companies and communication satellites.

In the case of Turks, the diaspora does not precede the emergence of the nation-state, but comes after it. Is it therefore a diaspora or, rather, a transnational migration field that favours the emergence of a transnational community? The Turkish nation-state is recent (1923); it has not completely succeeded in unifying the national identity of the different segments of society round a Sunni and Kemalist hard core. The high segmentation and internal disparities of Turkish society appear more in dispersion and migration than they do in the national territory where the minorities are not fully recognised and are hidden by an apparent national homogeneity. This society is a community composed of different socio-cultural milieux that, though they do interact, have also acquired their own organisational and social networks. The divisions are not only ethno-cultural, but also religious or ideological. The Kurds, whose migrations – owing to the repression directed against them since the 1980s – are increasingly political in the current period, find themselves increasingly distinguished from other Turks and it is they, more than other Turkish-speaking Muslims, who come under the heading of diaspora (Wahlbeck 2002).

It is therefore difficult to differentiate a diaspora from the economic and political migration of a people stemming from a socially segmented society and comprising notable differences of identity. The recent character of migration (since 1957) and the segmented type of society constitute obstacles to the recognition of a real diaspora. To take better account of these phenomena, researchers such as Vertovec (1999) and Kastoryano (2000) have suggested the concept of transnational community.
2.4 Transnational communities

In the 1990s, a new concept emerged in academic discourse: ‘transnational community’. Countries at the edge of the industrialised and tertiarised world of the North’s major powers (the US, Canada, Western Europe, Japan), often former colonies or old countries of the Third World, send more and more migrants in search of employment and remittances to their families in the ‘place of origin’. These rural, mostly unskilled economic migrants set off from a village, a basic rural community to which the migrants remain strongly attached and to which they return periodically. The family structure, more than the village community of origin, is essential in explaining the cohesion of these networks. Those from a rural community in a Latin American country or the Philippines, for instance, increasingly migrate to urban centres of various sizes in the US, with a migration movement being established between the place of origin and the places of settlement and work. The migration territory also comprises relay places, most often a large city, which serve as hubs for a migratory route network: for example, Dallas and Chicago for Mexicans from Ocampo (Faret 2003) and Buenos Aires for Bolivians from the Cochabamba region (Cortes 1998).

The strong association with these different places, based upon the movement of the population of one village, where the dominant activity is migration in a variety of forms, constitutes a transnational migration territory.

A transnational community is based on specific mobility know-how, ‘migration expertise’; the inhabitants of these places, so strongly marked by migration, have made it their essential activity. Some mobility may be based on the experience of mountain husbandry, which has always had to adapt to the seasons – whether for transhumance in certain cases or, in the case of Andean peasants, because several distinct ecological mountain levels are concerned. Peoples with a long nomadic tradition, like the Turks or Mongols, can also be moulded more easily in these transnational spaces (De Tapia 1995). A transnational community links the global to the whole range of greatly different local, networking places, without hierarchy between these different hubs. The role of the border is very much curtailed by a migrant population whose essential element of identity is knowing how to first cross the border itself, pass through the border area and then live outside it, whilst avoiding expulsion.

These migrants come from a nation-state, where they have lived for a relatively long time, returning periodically, and then investing part of their income in their village of origin, which they, or at least part of their family, do not plan to quit for good. The members of a transnational community seek to acquire the citizenship of their host country,
while retaining that of their country of origin. This double affiliation is not only a question of facility, but also a chosen way of life. However, there is no uprooting from the territory and society of origin, nor trauma, as in the case of diasporas. There is no strong desire to return, because transmigrants never actually leave their place of origin, with which they retain family and community ties that are greatly simplified thanks to the growth, regularity and safety of communications.

As Foner (1997) has shown for immigrants in New York, both today and at the turn of the twentieth century, modern-day transnationalism is not altogether new but instead has a long history. Russian Jews and Italians maintained family, economic, political and cultural links to their home societies at the same time as they developed ties within their host land. Expecting to return home one day, they sent their savings and remittances homeward and kept up their ethnic allegiances. A transnational social space already existed but it may have been harder than it is now to maintain contacts across the ocean. Today technological changes have made it possible for immigrants to maintain closer and more frequent contact with their home societies. International business operations in the new global economy are much more common. Telephones, emails and internet-based telecom allow immigrants to keep in close touch with the family members, friends and business partners they left behind in the home country. With greater US tolerance for ethnic pluralism and multiculturalism, maintaining multiple identities and loyalties is now seen as a normal feature of immigrant life. Nowadays, too, a much higher proportion of these immigrants (e.g. Indians and Chinese) arrive with advanced education, professional skills and sometimes substantial amounts of financial capital that facilitate these transnational connections (Foner 1997: 362-369).

The concept of transnational community is also used by researchers who have studied transnational nationalism. According to Kastoryano (2006), for example, Turkish transnational communities live in a four-dimensional space: that of the immigration country, the country of origin, the immigrant communities themselves and the transnational space of the European Union. The concept of ‘long-distance nationalism’ (Anderson 1998) refers to the nation-state of departure, Turkey, which acts on its exiled population by way of language, religion and dual nationality. This nation-state tries to reinforce as much as possible the loyalty of its nationals residing outside its frontiers. But the transnational networks of migrant associations can bypass the states by acting directly on transnational European institutions. We can observe the emergence of a transnational space, characterised by the dense interaction of actors belonging to different traditions (e.g. Islamist and secular Turks, Alevi, Kurds, Lazes). It is a new space of political socialisation, one of identification beyond that of national societies. The EU has
created a transnational civilian society in which national, provincial, religious and professional networks compete and interact among themselves, thereby promoting the logic of supranationality.

For Kastoryano (2006: 90), the concept of diaspora is more aptly applied to populations scattered prior to the making of their nation-state, such as Jews and Armenians, for whom nationalism refers to a mythical place, a territory to be recovered, a future state-building project. This more restricted meaning takes into account the extended history of diasporas who may have built their own nation-state after a lengthy period without a state, which is exactly the case of the Jews, Greeks and Armenians. Nation-states emerged only in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Europe, and these diasporas were already in existence a long time before that. Migrations occurred often after this state-building within the former reticular space of their diaspora. But diasporas may also have emerged from the forced exile of religious or national minorities of a nation-state after its creation (e.g. the Tutsis of Rwanda, Assyro-Chaldeans or Kurds of Turkey, Tamil of Sri-Lanka, Tibetans of China). Such diasporas are organised around an unsettled nation-state problem; this is not the case of transnational communities that do not contest the home or host nation-state. A transnational community is economically oriented, and its political interest is restricted to the migration policies of both its home and host country. There is, equally, another form of transnational community in which cross-border migrants, using a network of acquaintances, are continually circulating between their home place and a variety of host places to sell goods; this kind of quasi-nomadism requires the use of another concept, as discussed below.

2.5 Territories of movement

In the name of an anthropology of movement, Tarrius works in the tradition of analysing the emergence and development of new migratory forms in Europe, which have been studied by researchers since the 1980s. Marseille is the observation site for the construction of these underground international economies dealing with licit or illicit products. A world of ‘small migrants’ – i.e. ‘merchandise/goods conveyers’ – is devoted to the transportation and trade of goods imported outside official EU quotas of forgeries and smuggled goods, between the North African countries and France via Spain. They take advantage of the spatial, economic and social closeness that exists between the south and the north of these Mediterranean countries due to the colonial and migratory past of those spaces. Localist analysis must be overcome to study those migrant societies that generate ‘new cosmopolitisms’,
which are now invisible or hidden or displayed in mixity. They result in encounters between mobile, more or less steady and enduring groups. New forms of identities then occur, founded on the capacity of multiple belonging.

‘Territories of movement’ (Tarrius 2001) link the place where goods for consumption are shipped out (for instance, in the Maghreb) to the places they are delivered in Western Europe, within which there are further underground economy networks. They may seem to resemble transnational communities, in so far as they link the formerly colonised country where the migrants’ community of origin is situated with the migrants’ current residence. They are, however, actually very different. The transnational community essentially moves people who are going to ‘sell’ their labour and send part of their wages back to their community of origin in the form of remittances. Conversely, in the territory of movement, the cross-border entrepreneurs and nomads move with goods they loaded up on in their place of origin to sell in different cities of the host country that they are familiar with. Having in some cases lived in the latter for a lengthy period, they have been able to establish a helping network of acquaintances and support – the ‘informal notaries’ of Tarrius (2001: 52-56).

These intermediaries take commercial advantage of the wealth differential between their place of origin and their host place, circulating goods between poor and rich countries. Their expertise in moving – in moving goods especially – by crossing borders and circumventing taxation mechanisms of the states is as important for them as the expertise of a Mexican or Bolivian is within the migration field of a transnational community. Their host places are only points of passage or way stations, not places of settlement and integration. The only essential place for them is the one of their origin, whence they leave with their goods; they return regularly, and invest their earnings there. They never actually leave: it is their only base. Their identity is not a diasporic one: it is a ‘nomadic identity’ based on ‘partial and short-lived hybridisation [métissage]’ acquired in the course of the selling activity through which they socialise. In their place of origin, the link is based on family and community ties, whereas in the host and transit places, well-established local intermediaries – informal notaries (Tarrius 2001) with diaspora experience – are needed:

Those informal notaries are interlocutors who are very much valoreised by regional and local, political and police authorities who actively take part in the life in emerging mosques in large Southern cities. They contribute to institutionalising uncontrolled areas, of land’s ends within Schengen space, such as
those identified by Italian researchers around Trieste, or Bari, Sicily, in Naples and in Milan’s suburbs. (Tarrius 2001: 55)

Without their intermediation nothing is possible and the smuggler cannot maintain his activity and presence on the selling places. These brokers maintain relationships with local, political and police powers, with official representatives of the migrants’ home states as well as with their religious representatives, open trading and various underground networks. They sit astride numerous borders of norms and interests.

The territories of movement and transnational communities are produced by globalisation and result from socioeconomic inequalities, which tend to increase, such as differences in the price of goods and wages between countries of the North and of the South. They lock nation-states into an asymmetrical situation, one of dominating and being dominated. The base in the host country, although weak for territories of movement (in the transit place), can, on the contrary, be strong for transnational communities (in the host place); in both cases, however, the rooting in the community of origin remains very significant and may prevail over that in the country of settlement or transit.

2.6 Originality and value of the concepts of diaspora and transnational community

The value of the diaspora concept is that it shows sedimentation over time, often a long period of time, of communities dispersed throughout the world, which vary considerably from one diaspora to another. These diasporas are characterised by the search for a certain cultural or religious – at times even political – unity. They have been formed, over the course of time, by several waves of migration, each of which could have different or several causes at once. It is this long-term sedimentation that makes a diaspora. This is not the case either for transnational communities, which have been formed recently in response to a call for labour, or for smugglers depending on an underground economy. Each diaspora member, wherever he or she may be, adjusts his or her own cultural and social unity to the local and national features, with integration characterising intergenerational trajectories: he or she produces métissages. For instance, Greek-Americans are different from those living in Canada or Australia because their various migration trajectories combine with the integration policies of these different states. The first, second or third generations, in turn, produce their own different types of ‘mixities’ within each of these host countries. There are several ways to keep one’s identity in exile and dispersion, as diasporas firmly rooted in their various places of settlement have taught us. They have an
exceptional symbolic and ‘iconographic’ capital that enables them to re-produce and then overcome the obstacle of the – often considerable – distance that separates their communities. This symbolic capital lives on, particularly in shared memory.

So the relationships between diasporas and space or territories have their own specificities. Belonging to a diaspora implies being able to live simultaneously on the transnational world scale, the local scale of the community and the scale of the host or home country, thereby combining the three scales whilst privileging one or two of these. This combination differs from one individual to another, according to their position in the genealogy of generations. For instance, the first generation, those who were born and have lived in the society of origin, tend to privilege the local scale of the host country and the national scale of the home country where they lived before their migration. The second generation takes into account more often the local and national scales of the host country, where they were born and have lived and, sometimes, the transnational scale; the third generation, in search of its origins, moves on two or three of these scales.

A diaspora is a patchwork of families, communities and religious networks integrated in a territory by a nation-state, within its borders. These patchworks of families, clans, villages, cities, etc., are contained inside the borders of this nation-state where circulation, and exchanges are easier inside than with the outside. The nation-state creates an arbitrary limit between the networks inside it and those that are outside. Diasporas, however, cannot benefit from this extraordinary tool of integration. They function, as previously mentioned, as a hinge between different spaces and different geographical scales. Their networks belong to each of the host countries as well as to a trans-state diasporic network. Their global network, with its economic, cultural, social and political functions, can play the stabilising role that nation-states cover less and less.

Through migration, diaspora members have lost their material relationship to the territory of origin, but they can still preserve their cultural or spiritual relationship through memory. Territory or, more precisely, territoriality – in the sense of adapting oneself to a place in the host country – continues to play an essential role. Memory preserves part of territoriality, whilst the trauma of uprooting creates conditions of mobilisation that can play a substantial role in integrating and unifying various family, religious or community sub-networks into a real diaspora. The construction of commemorative monuments, sanctuaries, monasteries and other symbolic (and sometimes functional) places is an essential means, for the members of a diaspora, of a re-rooting in the host country.
Unlike people of the diaspora, transmigrants and cross-border entrepreneurs or smugglers do not seek to establish a social network destined to last or a transnational social group based on the richness of a symbolic capital and a memory transmitted from one generation to the next. They seek first and foremost to build a house in their home village and climb the social ladder there, and then to do so in their place of settlement if such a place exists. Transmigrants are far too dependent on their community of origin and on their host country to become as independent as people of the diaspora are. The social group to which they belong often does not exceed the community of origin and the network of its migrants, whereas the people of the diaspora have the feeling of belonging to a nation-in-exile, dispersed throughout the world, bearing an ideal. But transnational communities, like the Turkish one, are sometimes the bearers of a transnational nationalism, which appears with the interactions of their different actors and tries to influence the nation-state of their origin and that of their settlement. Dual nationality and migratory circulation within the framework of a transnational region like the EU favour the emergence of new trans-border communities differing from the long-term diasporas.

It is, in my view, this relationship to places and territories that enables us to distinguish between diasporism and transnationalism. Diaspora implies a very strong anchoring in the host country and sometimes, when the home country is lost or is not accessible (as with the Greeks of Asia Minor, Armenians or Tibetans), a clear-cut break with it. This is compensated, in the host country, by the creation of territorial markers, places of memory, favoured by an ‘iconography’ fixing the link with the home country. That gives some kind of autonomy from host and origin societies to the diasporic social formation compared to the transnational community. In transnational spaces and territories of mobility, this break does not take place, nor is there the need to be re-rooted elsewhere on the host territory. Any particular family has two parallel lives in two or more nation-states: the home country is dominated and the host countries, where the family has migrated, are dominant. In the autochthonous model, the fact of having ‘always been there’, on which the nation-state is based, means that identity is constructed in close connection with place over a greater or lesser period of time. On the contrary, in a diaspora, identity pre-exists place and tries to re-create it, to remodel it, in order to reproduce itself. Individuals or communities in diasporas live in places that they have not themselves laid out and that are suffused with other identities. As such, they will try to set up their very own place, one that is redolent of their home place within the bosom of which their identity, that of their kinfolk, of their ancestors, has been formed. De-territorialisation goes with, or is followed by, re-territorialisation.
can be found neither exclusively at the national level nor solely at the transnational or global level. Instead, all scales on which civil society can be found to operate – local, national and beyond – have to be taken into account. Finally, this chapter closes with reflections of what a transnational perspective on cross-border migration and its consequences has to offer for a transnational turn in the social sciences more generally. This book provides a piece of the puzzle to unpack social practices towards more adequate understandings of society unbound.

Migrants engage in transnational social practices by travelling back and forth, through long-distance communication and by transferring financial and social remittances, among other means. From a transnational perspective it is crucial not only to focus on migrants in the country of immigration but to consider both sides of the migration process and the connections between ‘here’ and ‘there’. This alerts us to the fact that migrants and relatively immobile residents in both countries engage in transnational practices and live in transnational social spaces (Faist 2000a). For instance, within transnational families, migrants organize long-distance parenting when their children are left behind, while children send emails to their parents. Migrants who send remittances back home to their families and international students who receive money for tuition fees from their parents constitute other examples (Khadda 2009: 109), indicating that cross-border flows do not go in one direction only but operate in both ways. Thus, transnational processes affect both migrants and non-migrants. ‘Non-migrants who engage in core transnational practices are those whose social and economic lives depend upon and are shaped on a regular basis by resources, people, and ideas in the receiving-country context’ (Levitt 2001b: 199). Thus, while classical approaches in migration research focus predominantly on migrants in the country of immigration, a transnational approach also takes into account non-migrants left behind in the country of emigration and the flows between the two. In taking into consideration cross-border
activities of migrants and relatively immobile residents in both
countries, a transnational framework for the study of migration
has consequences for the ways in which empirical research is
conducted (see chapter 7).

Migrants and non-migrants may engage in transnational prac-
tices in all spheres of social life (Levitt 2001b: 197; Itzigsohn
and Saucedo 2002: 768). Nevertheless, for analytical purposes,
transnational practices are often categorized with regard to dif-
f erent spheres. Along these lines a vast body of work in migration
research addresses transnational practices in one or various spheres
of society (see, among others, Levitt and Jaworsky 2007; Vertovec
2009). The rest of this chapter gives an overview of transnational
practices in four basic spheres of transnational life: the familial,
socio-cultural, economic and political. All of these are illustrated by
typical examples from interviews conducted in the German survey
Transnationalization, Migration and Transformation: Multi-Level
Analysis of Migrant Transnationalism (TRANS-NET). Based
on the case studies, some characteristics of the corresponding sphere
of social life are emphasized. The chapter closes with a discussion
on the significance of transnational practices by giving insights
into their extent and intensity. Here transnationality is understood
as ranging along a continuum from low to high.

Familial transnational practices

Case study 2.1 Emre

Emre was born in 1971 in Turkey. When he was a small child
his parents moved to Germany as guest workers, as did many
Turkish migrants in the 1960s and 1970s who wanted to
improve their economic situation. Emre was left in the care of
his grandparents in Turkey.

I believe it was after I was one year old that my parents came to
Germany as guest workers, first my mother and after six months

also my father. That meant for me that there was no mother after
my first year of life. And I grew up with my maternal grandpar-
tents. It was only later, sometime between the ages of four or five,
that I realized that my natural parents were not who I thought
they were and that they were in Germany, and at the same time
I realized that I had a brother who was four year younger than
I am. Probably because of their fear of losing me completely,
and also due to their love and desire for me, my parents made
an attempt to integrate me in Germany when I was five years
old. This didn't go very well, since my parents were in employ-
ment and worked shifts. And I also had difficulties getting used
to Germany... and to my parents and to my brother. This is
why at the age of six I went back to my grandparents again, and
there I also went to primary school. Yes, that went well for two
years. Then my parents decided in 1979 to bring me to Germany
permanently. Yes, since 1979 I have been in Germany.

Now, as an adult, Emre travels once a year to Turkey for
holidays and, unlike his three brothers, who were born in
Germany, he still has contact with his relatives there. The
relationship with his grandmother, under whose care he grew
up, is especially important.

Usually, I fly to Turkey once a year when nothing intervenes...
And of course I still maintain very good contacts with my rela-
tives in Turkey... I've contact with my maternal grandmother,
whom I've seen as father and mother. This relationship is still
very intimate, and my grandmother is still alive and was here
[in Germany] this winter. And I still got to know her and she is
already very old – well, unfortunately it soon could come to an
end.

As in the case of Emre's parents, who moved to Germany as guest
workers to earn money, migration can be seen as one of several
strategies of upward social mobility, pursued in order to reduce
family risks and ensure the core or even extended family a better
life. Migration processes are not based exclusively on individual
decisions but rather must be understood in the context of family
Transnationality and Social Practices

strategies (Stark 1991: 39). Sending family members abroad may be an investment for the livelihood of the whole family. Thus, spatial dispersal as migration strategy is 'often a rational family decision to preserve the family, a resourceful and resilient way of strengthening it: families split in order to be together translocally' (Chan 1997: 195). Accordingly, families do not necessarily migrate together. In the case of labour migrants who search for employment in other countries, the movement of families is often restricted or even excluded by stringent immigration policy. In the course of war, migrants may also be displaced from their families, as illustrated in the case of refugees from Bosnia-Herzegovina (Al-Ali 2002). In these circumstances migrants and refugees work and reside in the country of immigration while leaving their families behind. Different forms of separation may thus occur, such as of (married) partners, parents from their children, children from their siblings, and grandparents from their grandchildren. The result is that migrants and their family members are located in places in at least two distinct nation-states.

In some cases many years may pass before the family is reunited, as migrants continue to live and work in the country of immigration and conditions for family members to join them are limited. However, this does not necessarily lead to broken families. Rather, families separated by migration have to organize their lives spanning national borders. Thus, transnationality becomes a characteristic of individuals and families as a whole. "Transnational families" are defined here as families that live some or most of the time separated from each other, yet hold together and create something that can be seen as a feeling of collective welfare and unity, namely "familyhood", even across national borders (Bryceson and Vuorela 2002: 3). Studies of cross-border family practices point out that the family does not necessarily require unilocal residence. Nevertheless, changes and transformations within nuclear and extended families are observable after they are maintained across borders. 'In the migration process, the family undergoes changes because it must continue to meet the same set of needs within a dramatically changed context' (Landolt and Da 2005: 627). Transnationality in the private sphere can be attributed to

the fact that responsibilities and obligations do not cease when migrants move to another country, leaving their family members back home. Rather, migrants have to organize simultaneously their daily work lives in one country and their private family lives in another. Even when it is not possible to share in the daily life of their families, migrants continue to perform caring roles and to meet the material and emotional needs of family members. Long-distance family practices performed by migrants include care of both children and the elderly.

As mentioned previously, migration may lead to a separation of parents and children. Many of the parents who migrate to take advantage of better labour market opportunities leave their children behind. In these cases it is mostly close relatives – usually the other parent, the grandmother, or other female kin – but also paid caregivers who provide for the children's daily needs. But even though parents who have migrated to another country may not be able to provide care on a daily and face-to-face basis, they are not released from their responsibilities. Women in particular are faced with the challenge of providing childcare over long distances, as illustrated by studies on 'transnational motherhood' (Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila 1997: 554) and 'female-headed transnational families' (Parreñas 2001a: 361). Female migrants must often fulfill familial obligations in the country of immigration by earning money and simultaneously act as caregivers in a transnational setting. As a Latina migrant in the United States put it, 'I'm here, but I'm there' (Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila 1997: 558). These conditions not only create logistic complications for female migrants but also result in emotional costs for parents and children (Parreñas 2001a: 386; Mazzucato and Schans 2011). For example, Emre perceived his grandparents to be his parents, since they took care of him, and when he was reunited with his natural parents and his younger brother in Germany he initially felt the situation to be unfamiliar.

Moreover, the case of Emre's grandmother indicates that not only children but also elderly parents and grandparents are left behind by migrants. If they too are in need of care, this kind of support across generations is also affected by geographical
Transnationality and Social Practices

distance. It becomes apparent that face-to-face interactions or physical contacts are often an indispensable requirement for caregiving, which demands continuous or frequent efforts, time and presence (Zechner 2008: 37). Thus, migrants often find it impossible to fulfill the role expected of them as carers for elderly parents and grandparents left behind.

Socio-cultural transnational practices

Case study 2.2  Kamber

After undertaking voluntary work for various organizations in the areas of migration and integration in Germany, Kamber became the manager of a German–Turkish association. Most of the association's interests are related to the cultural sphere. It has manifold relationships with Turkey and, thus, Kamber's activities often involve dealing with people and organizations there.

As manager of the house, I actually have to deal with Turkey almost every day, particularly with ministries and cultural organizations in Turkey. We work closely with foundations in the areas of the arts and culture in Istanbul. We deal with artists in Turkey all the time, whom we invite to events. Also, managers, record companies, whatever - you name it. In all kinds of areas.

Moreover, the child of binational parents who had met when his mother was on holiday in Turkey, Kamber has dual citizenship and speaks both German and Turkish fluently. He is of the opinion that all migrants and their descendants should be allowed to hold dual citizenship. For him this best corresponds to his own identity.

Personally I've the situation that I'm German and Turk and thus it is actually logical for me that I've both citizenships ... For me actually there was never a question of choosing between am I

As in the case of Kamber, socio-cultural transnational practices may be characterized by a certain degree of institutionalization. Here, the artistic and cultural exchanges take place in the framework of a German–Turkish association based in Germany. Other more institutionalized transnational practices going beyond private life include the participation in hometown associations or in charity organizations linked to the country of emigration (Itzigsohn and Saucedo 2002: 777). Even if these are rather different sets of transnational practices, they are all undertaken within the broad spectrum of migration-related organizations and associations that are socio-cultural in nature. Moreover, they have in common that they build community relations across national borders. 'Sociocultural transnationalism refers to those transnational linkages that involve the recreation of a sense of community that encompasses migrants and people in the place of origin' (ibid.: 768).

However, transnational socio-cultural practices are not necessarily based on any stable, ongoing migrant-based organizations or collective initiatives, as in the case of Kamber, but can also be performed by ad hoc groups aimed at specific projects. They include, as shown for Colombia, 'cases in which immigrants had informally gathered voluntary monetary and non-monetary contributions to meet some specific local need in their locality of origin, such as providing scholarships for the poor, building a classroom, contributing equipment to hospitals and other public facilities, or donating fire trucks, ambulances, and so forth' (Guarnizo and Díaz 1999: 412–13). Both kinds of practices, carried out by stable organizations or more informally, and undertaken by quite different migration flows, such as old resident returnees, new working-class emigrants and migrants connected to the drug trade, may converge in a dense web of transnational relations linking migrants and their places of origin, as illustrated by the field research in Colombia by Guarnizo and Díaz.
Regardless of whether stable organizations and associations or more informal practices are taken into account, these various examples open up a view beyond monetary remittances, which are at the centre in migration research, and illustrate that social and cultural ideas and practices are also transmitted and received in transnational settings. These migration-driven forms of cultural diffusion can be summarized under the term ‘social remittances’: ‘Social remittances are the ideas, behaviors, identities, and social capital that flow from receiving- to sending-country communities’ (Levitt 1998: 927). They are transferred by migrants when they interact with the country of immigration. At least three types of social remittances can be distinguished (ibid.: 933–6; see also Levitt 2001a: 59–63). The first type is ‘normative structures’ and involves the exchange of ideas, values and beliefs. Taking the example of gender, it is shown that, on their return, female Bangladeshi labour migrants to Malaysia brought back new norms of gender equality – in particular, that Muslim women could engage in work outside the household. This was made possible, among other things, by the fact that Malaysia, a successful Islamic country, is regarded as trendsetter in terms of female employment outside the home (Dannecker 2005). The second type is ‘systems of practices’, which are made up of actions shaped by normative structures. In the case of Bangladeshi migrant women, this means that the observation of new versions of gender ideologies in Malaysia led to transformations of existing gender relations in Bangladesh. Female migrants have introduced new gender practices following their return, and non-migrant women adopted some of these practices. The third type of social remittance is ‘social capital’, since the social capital acquired by migrants in the country of immigration may be transferable to the country of origin. With regard to gender, for instance, migrant women may make use of the gendered social capital accrued within their social networks in the country of immigration to help family members back home – for example, by enabling them to access resources such as health care. And even if, in the case of female Bangladeshi migrants, in contrast to their male counterparts, their social position and status had decreased with their migration, after their return they were able to give loans to other women who planned to migrate and thereby established a new credit system in Bangladesh. Social remittances may involve not only gender ideologies and gendered social capital but also political ideas such as concepts of human rights and democracy, among other things (Fait 2008: 34). It is important to mention, however, that the transfer of social remittances by migrants and non-migrants does not reveal anything about how they are used. Moreover, social remittances can have positive as well as negative effects (see also chapter 4).

Another important aspect with regard to the socio-cultural dimension of transnationalization is the issue of personal identity. Identities may also be affected by transnational processes, as the case of Kamber illustrates. Kamber’s identity is not characterized by a sense of belonging to only one nation-state; rather, he created a dual mode of belonging. This example shows that contemporary migrants and their descendants do not necessarily lose their past identity when living in the country of immigration but may form fluid and multiple identities. Transnational studies emphasize the need to take into consideration not only concrete activities but also more symbolic and subjective dimensions of transnationality. Accordingly, transnational approaches started to take into account both social and symbolic ties (Fait 1998: 218), objective and subjective dimensions of transnational practices (Levitt et al. 2003: 571), or ways of being and ways of belonging (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004: 1010–11).

**Economic transnational practices**

**Case study 2.3 Özlem**

In 1971, Özlem, a Turkish citizen who is now aged fifty-five, immigrated to Germany, where she married her German husband. During the initial period in Germany Özlem received financial remittances from her family in Turkey.
Transnationality and Social Practices

They have given me support... Yes, for example, first of all when I was married, my husband was a student. Yes, he was a student and then I was a young mother, one could say. Yes, we needed everything. For example, they paid for our holidays and put money in our pocket and dressed us in new clothes there [in Turkey]... It was like that until we earned money ourselves.

Throughout her life Özlem has been self-employed in various lines of business. She currently sells evening and wedding dresses to customers of Turkish immigrant origin in Germany. The clothes are made at factories run by family members in Turkey and at other Turkish companies. Özlem and her new partner have numerous business contacts in Turkey, such as her stepfather.

Therefore I've my stepfather there [in Turkey] and he brings the cheques there... One enlists all people. Or he has two people or also my partner has his people, and we say, 'Can you quickly go to the airport, someone brings samples. Can you quickly go to the airport, you have to send that', that's how it works. One has to - and we've enough people.

Özlem communicates mainly via telephone and email, but she also occasionally travels to Turkey, thereby always trying to combine her professional and private life.

I go there [to Turkey] for business for ten days and then try to stay for the weekend, so I can see my daughter. I have just opened my own fashion studio in another [Turkish] city, and when I go there I can only see my daughter for two hours during the stopover at the airport.

The globalization of capital and labour creates not only needs but also new opportunities for economic practices among migrants. Migration itself is often driven by economic considerations, especially when migrants move to another country in search of employment. Moreover, migrants and non-migrants undertake a vast variety of transnational economic practices. The spectrum ranges from small-scale and informal practices, such as sending remittances, to larger-scale and more formal practices, such as transnational entrepreneurship, both visible in the case of Özlem.

Financial remittances (see also chapters 1 and 4) constitute one form of transnational economic practice directly involving migrants and include two-way flows between the countries of emigration and immigration (Mazzucato 2006; Faist 2010b: 78). At least three different types of economic remittances can be distinguished (Guarnizo 2003: 671–80; Goldring 2004: 812–32). First, the largest share of financial remittances is used as income. Money is sent abroad to support children or spouses but also to help other relatives or friends. Remittances are often sent in particular on the basis of kin solidarity and reciprocal obligation. Being a member of a family or a community often goes along with responsibilities to help that family or social network to survive. Monetary remittances intended to maintain and improve the standard of living of the family or household are used for recurrent expenses, such as food, housing and clothing, but also for education and health services. Such remittances end in cases of family reunification in the country of immigration or return migration or if relatives living abroad have also emigrated or died. A second type of remittance is entrepreneurial, where monetary remittances are used for building houses or for the acquisition of land, but also for establishing small businesses. In contrast to familial remittances, this type is primarily investment oriented and may be used either to establish a new business or to investment in existing businesses. A third type of monetary remittance comprises funds used by individual immigrants or hometown associations to finance community projects in the country of emigration. These projects are related to basic infrastructure, such as building roads, or public services for education, health and social security, but also for recreation, such as sports fields. Such remittances are thus meant to support local community development (see also chapter 4). The community projects may involve government actors and institutions, as for example in the case of Mexico (Guarnizo 2003: 674; Goldring 2004: 830).
Transnationality and Social Practices

With regard to the situation between Turkey and Germany (Faist 1998; 2000a: 214–18), financial remittances, and especially familial remittances, were relevant primarily in the early 1960s until the 1970s and 1980s. Most of these remittances were transferred by labour migrants and return migrants or invested in housing and consumer products in Turkey. Such remittances decreased slightly in the 1980s and 1990s, probably as a result of family reunification. More recently they have been replaced by entrepreneurship as the now dominant economic practice undertaken by Turkish migrants. Thus, the period from 1983 to 1992 was characterized by the growing importance of ethnic enterprises established by Turkish immigrants, and the number of self-employed Turks tripled, from about 10,000 to 35,000. The enterprises were located in a variety of economic sectors and included among others grocery shops, craft works, travel agencies and restaurants. Many of the enterprises established by Turkish migrants relied on the work of family members. However, during this period entrepreneurial practices among migrants were limited to the local markets in Germany. Only later did they move from ethnic niche businesses to become transnational. While not the case for the majority, a proportion of Turkish migrants entered fields in which they found themselves competing with German businesses. Moreover, existing and newly established contacts with Turkey enabled migrants to operate transnationally. In textile production especially, transnational entrepreneurs such as Ozlem could take advantage of the much lower costs in Turkey and thus moved production there. At the same time, they retained their sales and distribution centres in Germany.

In sum, transnational entrepreneurs can be conceptualized as company owners and the self-employed who travel abroad for business and whose success of their enterprise depends on regular contacts with foreign countries, especially with their country of origin (Portes et al. 2002: 284). For example, transnational entrepreneurship is based on a whole range of exchange of goods, capital, services and labour forces across at least two countries. Five types of transnational entrepreneurial practice can be distinguished (Zhou 2004: 1055):

- financial services, such as informal remittances handling agencies
- import and export – for example, of evening and wedding dresses (as in the case of Özlem)
- cultural enterprises which, among others, trade music and movies or organize musical, dancing or sports teams
- manufacturing firms, such as garment factories
- return migrant micro-enterprises, including restaurants and car sales and service.

All in all, contemporary migrants are not only involved in small business ownership, such as fast-food restaurants, newsstands or nail salons, but also now engage in entrepreneurial practices that ‘have become increasingly heterogeneous in scale, range, intensity, and levels of formality or institutionalisation’ (ibid.: 1065–6).

Political transnational practices

Case study 2.4 Adnan

When he was less than a year old, the Turkish-born Adnan migrated to Germany, where his father had an attractive job offer. Throughout his childhood he maintained contact with his extended family in Turkey. After studies and work experiences abroad, among others in Turkey, he has been back in Germany for three years and now works for a government agency. His professional activities give him ‘the opportunity to help shape the integration policy’. Adnan’s ‘migration background’ was not an obstacle to finding employment; it actually helped him get his current job, enabling him to facilitate understanding and dialogue between Turkish migrant organizations and the Turkish community in Germany, on the one hand, and German political and administrative institutions, on the other: ‘In particular, persons with a Turkish background who play a bridging role do both; they help the
Transnationality and Social Practices

[German] government to understand the Turkish position, but they also affect the Turkish community.

In addition to participating in the German political system, Adnan is also concerned with Turkish politics. As an employee of a German government agency, he often works with Turkish political organizations and institutions.

Professional contacts [in Turkey] have increased since I returned [to Germany] and started to work for the government. I'm engaged in integration politics, and there are a lot of issues that can only be resolved with the help of Turkey. Since many Turks living in Germany continue to be Turkish citizens, my professional contact to Turkey has been very intensive over the last three years.

In Adnan’s case, political transnational practices are based solely on his employment in a German government agency. Thus, he participates indirectly in the country of his parents via an institution located in Germany. Indirect political participation by migrants and their descendants in the country of emigration can be distinguished from various forms of direct cross-border participation (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003a: 762; 2003b: 22). These direct forms include, among other things, voting in elections in the country of origin, support to political parties and campaigns abroad, participation in hometown associations, membership in political associations active in the country of emigration, and political media consumption. All in all, migrants and their descendants can be involved in different forms of political transnationalization, participating either directly or indirectly.

Such forms of political transnationality illustrate that transnational research needs to go beyond two shortcomings of the predominant research on political activities undertaken by migrants. On the one hand, the focus of research into the political practices of immigrants in Europe is generally on participation in the country of settlement (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003a: 764; 2003b: 6). These studies look at the inclusion of migrants in the political system and their integration in the society of the country of immigration. From this perspective, transnational practices, if considered at all, are seen mainly as an obstacle to successful political and social integration. On the other hand, in studies on political transnationality the focus is generally on the emigrants’ political participation in the country of emigration (Bauböck 2003: 700). These studies investigate how migrants are embedded in the political landscape of their country of origin. Different from both approaches, contemporary transnational research turns away from analysing simply one or the other towards a more comprehensive picture of transnational political practices.

Immigrant politics and homeland politics can thus be differentiated as two basic dimensions of migrants’ transnational practices (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003a: 762–3; 2003b: 21). Immigrant politics are aimed at improving the situation of migrants in the new country, including, for example, practices geared to obtaining more rights. Adnan’s professional activities, for example, are directed precisely towards such objectives. But his case also demonstrates that, for the achievement of these integration-related objectives, cross-border collaboration with political organizations and institutions located in Turkey are helpful. Here, the emigration country becomes involved in supporting its nationals in the immigration country. This shows that practices related to immigrant politics can also have a transnational dimension. Homeland politics, on the other hand, pertains to the domestic or foreign policy of the homeland. Migrants’ political orientation towards their country of origin can involve both opposition and support. Homeland politics can be further differentiated into emigrant politics, diaspora politics and translocal politics. The subset of emigrant politics is related to all issues of migrants’ legal, economic and political status in the emigration country – for example, the demands for external voting rights and tax exemptions. Diaspora politics relates to migrant collectives who engage in homeland nation-building projects (for more detail, see chapter 6). Finally, translocal politics consists of initiatives undertaken by migrants to improve the situation in the local community of their country of origin, including the support of development projects.
Transnationality and Social Practices

All in all, the dimensions of migrants' transnational political practices are not mutually exclusive. There is no zero-sum relationship between political practices in the country of immigration and that of emigration. Rather, as the example of Adnan illustrates, they can take place simultaneously and even complement each other.

Not only do migrants have an impact on politics in the countries of immigration and emigration, but their transnational practices depend on the situation in both countries. The context in the countries of immigration and the mobilizing role of the countries of emigration affect the process of political transnationalization among migrants (Østergaard-Nielsen 2001, 2003a, 2003b). Processes of transnationalization among migrants are related to political issues of equal rights, discrimination and citizenship in their new countries. Transnational political practices with regard to both domestic and foreign policies are not only driven by integration policies but are also a reaction to events and developments in the country of emigration. For example, the laws and policies of home countries are important in determining whether or not their nationals acquire the citizenship of their new country (Freeman and Ögelman 1998). Moreover, transnational political practices can also be based on homeland conflicts, as is the case in the Turkish–German context, where Kurdish organizations in Germany are engaged in supporting Kurds in Turkey (Faist 1998). The solidarity and material support flowing from activists in Germany to PKK warriors and those sympathetic to that organization intensified the armed conflict in Turkey. Kurds living in Germany demand more cultural and political autonomy for Kurds in the Republic of Turkey.

However, political transnationalization by migrants may comprise more than political activities across state borders. Migration becomes 'transnational ... when it creates overlapping membership, rights and practices that reflect a simultaneous belonging of migrants to two different political communities' (Bauböck 2003: 705). For example, Kamber's dual citizenship, as shown in the case study, is accompanied by a sense of belonging to both countries. Thus, there is a need to focus not only on transnational political practices but also on multiple political memberships in terms of collective identities and citizenship. While transnational political activism in most cases is limited to the first generation of immigrants, a largely passive affiliation to the country of emigration is much more widespread and can persist also among their children (ibid.: 711).

The significance of transnational practices

Even though each of the selected case studies represents one specific sphere of social life, migrants and their children may participate simultaneously in various transnational practices. To capture the variable degree of transnational involvement in different spheres, a distinction between comprehensive and selective transnational practices can be drawn. 'Some individuals whose transnational practices involve many areas of social life engage in comprehensive transnational practices while others engage in transnational practices that are more selective in scope' (Levitt 2001b: 198–9; see also Levitt and Waters 2002: 11). An example of the former is Emre, who participates in familial, socio-cultural, economic and political processes. Besides maintaining relationships with his relatives in Turkey, he is the leader of a folk dance group which draws inspirations from traditional and modern dances in Turkey and buys its costumes there. Moreover, the group was founded mainly by left-wing intellectuals from the first generation of Turkish migrants in Germany, and the group is still interested in Turkish policies. An example of the latter would be Özlem, whose transnational practices are limited to the economic and familial spheres, both of which generally go hand in hand.

Alongside the scope of transnational practices across different spheres of social life, the question of how widespread transnational practices are among migrants has raised considerable scholarly debate. From this perspective, by generalizing it to the entire migrant population, the phenomenon of transnationalization was overestimated by the initial conceptualization of transnational theorizing. While most research on transnationality draws on case studies and participant observation to show
evidence of transnational practices in the various contexts, such studies have not allowed for any conclusions as to their extent and intensity (Faist 2004a: 5; see also chapter 7). In the following it will be shown that, first, not all migrants are involved in transnational practices and, second, even those who are do so to different degrees.

Most of the efforts to investigate more precisely the extent of transnationality in different spheres of social life are based on the Comparative Immigrant Entrepreneurship Project (CIEP), which was the first survey explicitly designed for this purpose. The overall result of the project shows that not all contemporary migrants ought to be seen as transnational migrants in a strong sense – that is, characterized by a high degree of transnationality (Portes 2001: 183; 2003: 876). The transnational practices of Colombian, Dominican and Salvadorian migrants in the United States are not very widespread across the economic, political and socio-cultural spheres of social life (Portes 2003). By focusing on the economic sphere, it was found that the proportion of respondents who participated in transnational entrepreneurial practices did not exceed 6 per cent of the sample. In the political sphere, both kinds of practices, electoral and non-electoral, were measured. While regular transnational participation did not exceed 10 per cent, occasional participation was more common, even if it did not exceed one-fifth of the sample. The results in the socio-cultural sphere, where the focus was on various forms of civic activities (see chapter 8), show that only one-third of the sample participated at least occasionally in transnational socio-cultural practices. However, even if the majority of the Latino immigrants considered in the CIEP survey does not maintain transnational practices on a regular basis, a sizeable minority becomes engaged in transnationalization at least occasionally. In sum, while mass migration generates an infrastructure facilitating cross-border practices, regular engagement is not characteristic of all migrants and their descendants.

As these findings already indicate, based on the CIEP, statements can be made on the intensity of transnational practices among migrants. In this respect, different degrees of transnational involvement became obvious. Accordingly, José Itzigsohn and his colleagues distinguish between 'narrow' and 'broad' forms of transnationality (Itzigsohn et al. 1999: 323; see also Itzigsohn and Saucedo 2002: 770). Narrow transnationality refers to continuous participation in transnational practices, while broad transnationality means only sporadic involvement. A similar distinction is that by Luis Guarnizo and his colleagues (cf. Levitt 2001b: 198; see also Guarnizo et al. 2003) between 'core' and 'expanded' transnationalism. Whereas the first term is related to regular transnational practices, the second refers to transnational practices on an occasional basis. Both approaches aim to point out different degrees of intensity, and so describe the variation by a binary distinction between deep involvement in transnationalization, on the one hand, and only sporadic or occasional participation, on the other. Going beyond such binary distinctions, we suggest that transnationality should be understood as a marker of heterogeneity and, thus, as ranging along a continuum from low to high (see chapter 1; see also Faist et al. 2011; Fauser and Reisenauer 2012). In cases of high degrees of transnationality, multiple and dense transnational practices may become condensed within transnational social spaces, as will be shown in chapter 3. All in all, the focus on the extent and intensity of transnational practices in this section clarifies that the analytical concept of transnationality has to be further refined to describe adequately the empirical phenomenon of cross-border practices undertaken by migrants.