

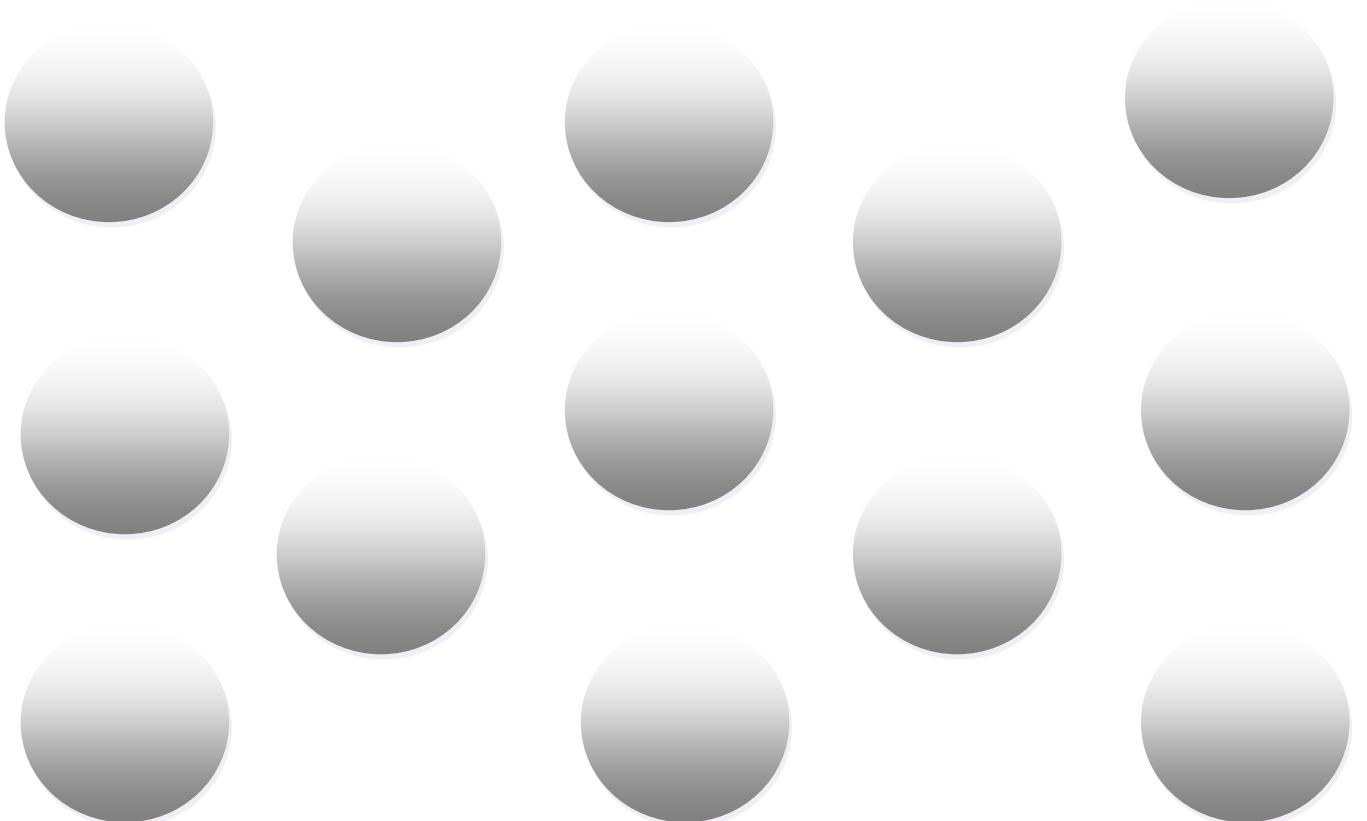


Information Centre about Asylum and Refugees

Globalisation, Transnationalism and Diaspora

Gareth Morrell

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About the Refugee Rights and Responsibilities Project

ICAR's Refugee Rights and Responsibilities research and consultation project explores some fundamental questions about the place of refugees in contemporary British society and, in particular, how the experiences and legal status of refugees shapes their understanding and perceptions of important social changes that are at the heart of current political debates. The project focuses generally on issues related to citizenship, identity, multiculturalism, migration and integration, and specifically on rights and responsibilities as the cornerstones of new citizenship and current refugee integration policy.

ICAR is grateful to the *Sigrid Rausing Trust* for the funding of this project. For more information on the project or to take part in or view the results of the online consultations, visit www.icar.org.uk/rightsandresponsibilities

About the policy and literature reviews

There are three reviews in this series: *Multiculturalism, Citizenship and Identity; Globalisation, Transnationalism and Diaspora; and Refugee Integration: Rights and Responsibilities*. The aim of these papers is to provide a discursive and conceptual basis for the qualitative research stage of the project. The papers provide an examination of the literature on multiculturalism, citizenship and identity in the UK, the impact of globalisation, transnational's and Diaspora on these ideas and whether literature on refugee rights and responsibilities can be integrated into this work. The papers will address these theoretical developments in the context of the real social and political trends that they both influence and are influenced by.

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1. Introduction

In the contemporary world, people live more complex and interdependent lives than ever before. Not only do we rely on our immediate family, community or state to provide a framework for us to make meaningful social, political and cultural decisions, but we draw on sources beyond these conventional boundaries of space and belonging. The terms globalisation, transnationalism and Diaspora are part of a conceptual vocabulary that aims to understand this world of wider interconnectedness, cross-border flows and layered cultural identities and political jurisdictions.

Refugees and forced migrants occupy a distinct space in this debate and increasingly affect and are affected by these phenomena. Aspects of globalisation have had a profound impact on conditions that generate refugees, the routes they subsequently travel and the policies of receiving countries towards their protection and settlement needs. Similarly, transnational engagement amongst refugees has affected their relationships with the home and host state and types and processes of community formation.

Scope and Methods

This review addresses these terms in turn, describes their origin and contested meaning and explores the impact of the phenomena they describe on nationally-bound understandings of multiculturalism, citizenship and identity discussed in the first paper of this series (Morrell 2008), as well as where the experiences of refugees fit into the existing literature. It will be shown that the terms often overlap and are occasionally synonymous.

This cannot be considered a full and systematic literature review, though the main academic debates that have relevance for the actions of states and individuals in relation to refugees and their rights and responsibilities are dealt with as comprehensively as possible. Literature included is not confined to the UK given the 'transnational' nature of the subject matter. Academic literature, including books, journal articles and conference papers, has been sourced through extensive searches of academic directories and online libraries incorporating political philosophy, sociology, political science, ethnic and racial studies and other disciplines. Additional literature was sourced through ICAR's own research directories, political periodicals, government libraries and contacting research and policy organisations conducting work on these issues.

2. Globalisation

The term globalisation is often presented as all-encompassing yet it is highly relational and lacks any real specificity. Its academic usefulness is contested across a number of disciplines, while politicians have cited globalisation as both threat and opportunity at the same time that it is both champion and villain for different civil society groups. Other than being distinctly context-specific, what all these understandings of globalisation have in common is that they are addressing a perceived shifting relationship between the autonomy and influence of the nation-state and emerging forms of social, cultural and political agency and organisation at a sub- supra- and trans-national level. Consequently, grappling with the term and that which it claims to describe has significant implications for multiculturalism, citizenship and identity in Britain as well as the rights and responsibilities of refugees and those states and agencies responsible for the protection of forced migrants.

Globalisation is frequently seen as an omnipotent and omnipresent phenomenon, a process that cannot be stopped and over which we can have no control. This lack of specificity has allowed the term to be viewed as ‘a process without a subject’ (Hay 2001). Consequently, rather than search for the actions of individuals, organisations or states that have triggered globalising tendencies, there has been an inclination to absolve all of responsibility and put the blame on the inexorable march of globalisation. More critical understandings suggest that the trends globalisation describes have their origin of different forms of agency and social relations.

Initially, this section will offer an account of the origins of the term globalisation, detailing three distinct phases in the literature over its extent and meaning, from early hyper-globalisation literature, through revisionist literature to more critical approaches. The impact of globalisation literature on understandings of the nation-state will also be addressed as this has implications for refugee protection and integration policy. Finally, this section will take forward a critical understanding of globalisation as a term offering a more specific appreciation of its many manifestations and impacts particularly for refugee rights and responsibilities.

2.1 The emergence and rethinking of globalisation literature

While it now encompasses a much wider set of circumstances, the term globalisation was originally seen almost exclusively through a financial or economic lens. A succession of interrelated events affected developed economies across the globe in the 1970s encouraging capital to free itself from nationally-bound rules and regulations. The rise in oil prices, increasing manufacturing competition from economies in Asia and the establishment of Dollar-based capital markets in Europe were key events (Underhill 2000). This ‘transnationalisation’ of capital also affected international trade and manufacturing: production structures began to transcend national boundaries, with different parts of a manufacturing firm or industry located in different countries or regions, leading to a new international division of labour.

Mittelman (1994) identified this shift as 'a more flexible, fragmented and decentralised system of production making use of a geographically dispersed labour force'. The term globalisation was first assigned to this transnationalisation of economic relations and markets. Consequently, it has been consistently seen as an economic phenomenon; yet there is much debate over its extent and impact. Kneerjerk reactions viewed 'globalisation' as a seismic shift in the way states and markets interact, with the influence of the state considered to have been irreparably damaged. Some proclaimed this the end of borders and the nation-state (Ohmae 1990 and 1995), with the more restrained declaring a retreat or 'marketisation' of the state (Strange 1996; Cerny 1997 and 2000). There has been serious academic revision of these accounts, yet the popular perception of globalisation is often an economistic interpretation of something that is out of the control of individuals and the state.

Objections to the characterisation of a world of unprecedented interconnection and the inevitable demise of the state offer a more sobering account of the extent of this global restructuring. The literature first refutes three key empirical claims of the early 'hyper-globalisation' accounts. It had been suggested that the extent of cross-border flows of goods, capital and people was unprecedented by the 1990s; yet critics argued that in terms of financial integration and labour flows, the 'Gold Standard' era of the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Century was similarly interconnected (Hirst and Thompson 2002). Secondly and more persuasively, the revisionist literature points to the fact that an overwhelming majority of economic activity continues to take place within nation states (*Ibid.*; Rosamond 2003). Furthermore, activity that is technically transnational tends, with some exceptions, to be organised within geographical regions rather than being truly global in reach (Castles 2003). Similarly, while large firms' operations span across borders they are not completely free from territorial grounding as they continue to retain headquarters and research and development activities within the country of origin and often operate within distinct structures of business culture (Amoore 2005). Finally, many institutions of the nation-state remain resistant to the imposition of constraints from financial and economic globalisation, notably some national welfare states. This suggests a conceptual weakness with early understandings of what are primarily economic forms of globalisation. In assuming that globalisation is unstoppable in its dominance over the state, the actual role of states and state apparatus in triggering many of these aspects of economic globalisation is ignored. This argument turns on an understanding of the state as an amalgam of the social relations contained within; it makes decisions based on this collective identity relative to the collective identity of other states (see Jessop 2002; Wendt 1992). It has been suggested that the interests dominating the social relations within Western states have become 'transnationalised' in turn leading to the transnationalisation of the state (Panitch 2000).

While the revisionist literature was critical of claims about the extent of globalisation, it did not sufficiently question the construction of the term or provide alternative conceptualisations of generative mechanisms of these supposedly global processes. There remained an understanding that there is something that exists as globalisation, but it is not as all-encompassing or as rapid as initial accounts

suggested. Furthermore, the revisionist accounts only attempted to rein in the extent of this economic form of globalisation rather than widen the understanding of the concept to incorporate accounts of the increasing interconnectedness in terms of social relations, political agency and cultural exchange and hybridity. Consequently, the term *globalisation* was hardly adequate for that which it described: economic restructuring and the transnational integration of financial markets.

2.2 Critical globalisation studies

The criticisms of the early accounts of globalisation have ushered in a more critical approach to understanding cross border flows and exchange. Despite argument over the extent of globalisation, what it attempted to describe and how it proposed to conceptualise this had received less discussion. Consequently, globalisation was considered a particular form of development, an increasing Westernization of the globe along a particular, largely neo-liberal, trajectory. This view presupposes a Weberian¹ notion of the state where capitalist enterprise is the chief form of production. While there is an acceptance that globalisation involves forms of what academics term 'time-space compression and distancing' and the disembedding and re-embedding of institutional norms into different local contexts, the manifestation of these tendencies has often been seen as largely economic and through institutional structures (Giddens 1990; Jessop 2002). Alternatives to this conceptualisation of globalisation tend also to be economic or centred on structural determinism. More recent, critical sociological approaches suggest that the theories attempting to critique an exclusively neo-liberal understanding of globalisation (such as transnational historical materialism (Sklair 1997; Overbeek 2000), world-systems development theory (Wallerstein 1979), and other standpoint positions (Ling 2000)) either continue to reify the state as a unitary actor, apportion too much weight to a particular categorisation such as class, deny the agency of less influential individuals and institutions or emerge without any appreciation of the work of other disciplines (Mittelman 2004; Rupert 2005; Rosamond 2006).

More recent approaches to understanding globalisation suggest that it should also be seen as more inclusive in three ways: the types of tendency it refers to should not just be economic or technological; standpoints other than those of Western capital should be incorporated; the trajectory of globalising tendencies are not necessarily an extension of 'Western modernity'. It has been suggested that limitations in the way globalisation is understood and studied, in terms of methodological nationalism (Glick Schiller et al 1995), the lack of inter-disciplinary engagement and an implicit 'Eurocentrism' (Robertson 1992; Beck 1999) have contributed to a political climate conducive to promoting a particular form of globalisation. These criticisms do not argue that there has not been a significant increase in economic interdependence or financial integration, nor do they underestimate the impact of these transformations. Yet what they hope to clarify is that this process is not inevitable, but is also complimented by other transformations. Castles (2003) writes of the social transformations generated by of globalisation: increasing social

¹ Weber's definition of the state is a monopoly on the legitimate use of violence

interconnection and networks across existing borders, transnational social capital and agency. The same can also be said of cultural networks and capital, supra-national political institutions and resistance, all of which comprise a clustering of relations that may be local, regional or transnational (Castells 2000).

In addition to widening the meaning of globalisation to incorporate social, political and cultural relations, it is incumbent on a fully global account of globalisation to be inclusive of a range of perspectives. Amartya Sen (2002) has commented that to 'see globalization as merely Western imperialism of ideas and beliefs (as the rhetoric often suggests) would be a serious and costly error'; certain forms of globalisation have had a relatively larger impact upon the lives of sections of the populations of developing countries (Stiglitz 2003) notably in terms of the emerging 'regionalism' in Asia, Africa and Latin America (see Taylor 2003; Hamilton-Hart 2003). Furthermore, as Mittelman (2004) demonstrates, taking a number of standpoints when studying specific manifestations of globalisation restores the concept of power to this kind of work. Following the work of Braudel (1980) in understanding interactions between different periods of history, this is taken further to include multiple timeframes in which to understand globalisation.

Theoretically, these challenges for understanding globalisation echo theories of deliberative democracy and communication discussed in relation to citizenship: that is the importance of incorporating multi-perspectives to understand the evolving meaning and identity of society (Morrell 2008). A similar approach, it is argued, is required to fully understand the global implications of the diverse tendencies and social transformations that constitute what globalisation attempts to describe. In this way, it is possible to determine a number of competing trajectories along which different aspects of globalisation can travel. Cultural, social and economic interconnectivity is not just about further financial integration and 'neo-liberal' development, but also about reactions to this form of globalisation, sub-national revivals, remittances through informal social networks and localised political interaction and agency.

It is argued, therefore, that the concept of globalisation needs to be less and more: less teleological and more inclusive. Being more inclusive and cross-disciplinary in fact deters any narrow understanding of globalisation as travelling in a single inevitable direction. Mittelman (2004), who attempts to draw together these criticisms into a framework for critically studying globalisation, suggests that globalisation:

'encompasses an historical transformation in the interactions among market forces, political authority and the lifeways embodied in societies, as they encounter and join with local conditions'

In this respect globalisation does not exist as a phenomenon but as a conceptual umbrella term for the transforming dynamics of social, cultural, economic and political relations between different combinations of national, sub- multi- and trans-national actors and institutions that constitute multiple intra- inter- and trans-border flows and movements. Globalisation exists as an abstract sum of many parts. The

fact that we are able to conceive of such an idea is itself the product of a more interconnected world. What *is* global is the *capacity* for these flows and movements to take place almost anywhere and between almost anyone; yet few single tendencies, flows or movements are in themselves global. The effects of globalisation are therefore mediated through the specific conditions of each locality at various levels (Castles 2003; Jessop 2002).

What is significant about globalisation is that its manifestations have the capacity to routinely transcend borders. It is not necessarily the relations or the mechanisms that generate these processes that are new, but the way in which the transformation of structures has relaxed constraints upon agency in particular situations. Globalisation itself has no explanatory power; we cannot say that 'globalisation means that this happens' or 'globalisation caused that to happen'. Such assertions lack specificity by not identifying actual causal tendencies that may fit conceptually within the term globalisation and removes the subject and disallows the impact of agency (Hay 2001). When looking at the impact of 'globalisation' there needs to be attempts to identify the actors directly and indirectly responsible for triggering the specific tendencies in question.

2.3 Manifestations of globalisation

To add specificity to what has so far been a discussion of abstract theories and concepts, this section highlights the effects of certain globalising tendencies on the role and capacity of the nation-state generally and briefly in terms of forced migration, immigration policy and multiculturalism and citizenship.

There is abundant literature on the more visible manifestations of economic globalisation (Klein 2001; Stiglitz 2006; Gilpin 2001). For better or worse, global capitalism is highly conspicuous and often provides the battlegrounds for conflict and clashes with reactions to this aspect of globalisation (Wilkinson 2006). Yet there are more subtle manifestations of globalisation that affect the way in which societies are organised and governed. Most significantly, these tendencies manifest themselves in retractions and reassertions of state power and influence. It is suggested that social networks that cross boundaries of political organisation have fractured traditional social capital, reducing the contributions people are willing to make to protect the social and economic rights of other members of the citizenry (Putnam 2000 and 2002). Additionally, the increasing influence of globalising capital has contributed to a greater proportion of welfare provision being carried out by private agencies. Irrespective of whether this improves or diversifies sources of welfare provision, state control of these mechanisms is limited. Some academics (Cerny 1997 and 2000) have suggested that this represents the era of the 'competition state', where the state is merely another actor in the market place attempting to attract capital. High welfare spending, paid for by higher tax on capital and individuals, it is argued, is likely to repel capital away from investment in a particular state. There are several other interpretations that purport a restriction of state power (Strange 1996; Mann 1997; Schneider and Hage 2008), but critics of

these arguments would counter that the actions of non- and trans-state actors also need to be understood in this framework to avoid reifying the unitary state and state system (Hay 2001). As discussed above, understanding these manifestations as a transnationalisation of certain (dominant) segments that comprise the state offers a more nuanced way to interpret this shift as a reconfiguration of the interests of sub-state forces rather than a retreat of the unitary state (Panitch 2000).

It is argued that the wide variety of state formation, historically and synchronically, precludes any sweeping generalisation about its decline. Different forms of liberal, authoritarian and socialist states have risen and fallen in the past, while today tendencies of globalisation have differential impacts on states dependent upon, *inter alia*, geographical location, legal constitution and political systems (Mann 1997; Jessop 1990). Research suggests that contemporary forced migration forms a dialectical relationship with a number of globalising tendencies and is indicative of the differential impact of such tendencies on nation states. Most notably, the refugee has always represented the limitations of the unitary state system, as a contradiction between citizenship and nation, where citizenship is understood as the exclusive source of individual rights and nation the exclusive or dominant source of collective identity (Turton 2003; Adelman 1999). On one level, therefore, forced migration is itself an exposition of the weakness of understanding the world purely through the state system; additionally, however, forced migration is also a manifestation of the inequity and instability generated by other globalising tendencies. As Castles argues: ‘...forced migration is not the result of a string of unconnected emergencies but rather an integral part of North-South relationships’ (Castles 2003; see also Mittelman 2000). The inequities of these relationships, along with significant local factors, contribute to the political and societal breakdown that generates refugees (Scheirup et al 2006). Identifying and isolating these causal factors can be part of the exercise of restoring the subject and agency to an account of globalisation.

Forced migration as a manifestation of globalisation is also illustrative of the latter’s differential impact upon states: it holds different consequences for countries of origin and their neighbours, transit countries and countries of asylum. The response of Western states to forced migration and immigration more generally is considered as one form that the reassertion of state power has taken, with a number of academics arguing that increasingly restrictive immigration policies represent an attempt to retain aspects of sovereignty at a regional level and reassert political legitimacy amongst the domestic population (Pellerin 1999 and 1999a; Morris 1997; Sales 2007). While differences exist between the specifics of industrialised nations’ immigration and asylum systems, the trend across the West has been towards externalising the social, political and economic costs associated with immigration, most notably with respect to asylum (Garlick 2006). At the European level, however, attempts to harmonise such policy are complicated not only by these systemic differences but also by the particular social and cultural histories and political systems that prevent the EU from asserting political legitimacy over matters conceived of as related to sovereignty (Kneebone et al 2006). All this takes place in the context of actually increasing levels of certain types of immigration into

European and North American countries, often largely facilitated and encouraged by state apparatus for economic reasons.

In its entirety, migration is indicative of the multitude of directions in which aspects of globalisation pull states and force them to react. This can also be seen in states that produce forced migrants. Large-scale displacement generates significant social transformation, dismantling communities, markets and families. Responses to these crises are themselves interrelated with aspects of globalisation. Global politics and economics are likely to dictate levels and forms of humanitarian and reconstruction support in areas of conflict and state repression (Van Hear and McDowell 2005). Furthermore, the uncertainty that reigns in the aftermath of such displacement situations can affect perceptions of belonging for refugees. A desire to return to a peaceful situation can compete with the aspiration to forge a sense of belonging in the country of asylum. This can have implications for designing forms of membership that reflect the reality of layers of identity and belonging that immigrants, and particularly refugees, can experience (Morrell 2008).

There is clearly a complex relationship between the state, forced migration and domestic issues of citizenship and multiculturalism. Yet the effects of an increasingly interconnected world cannot just be understood by uttering 'globalisation' to describe an invisible and relentless force of economic interdependence. More critical literature suggests that aspects of globalisation are wider and more nuanced and are triggered in particular structural settings by specific individual and collective actors, not just states. It is this set of presuppositions that can make globalisation a useful tool for providing context to understandings of the situation and experiences of forced migration at various stages.

3. Transnationalism and diaspora

The language and concepts of transnationalism emerged from observation of the same tendencies and processes to which globalisation owes its existence; yet the two terms have a confused and contested relationship. This section reviews literature that illustrates transnationalism as one manifestation of the tendencies that globalisation attempts to describe. Transnationalism takes on many forms, but it is the engagement of the transmigrant in transnational activities that is of concern in this section. Examining 'agency-led' transnationalism, which amounts to a form of 'globalisation from below', contributes to restoring the subject to globalisation as advocated at the end of the previous section.

This section is structured in such a way as to drill down to the level of personal and collective agency: having discussed transnationalism as a form of globalisation, a number of types of transnationalism will be highlighted, largely through the actions of transmigrants. Further specificity will then be introduced in what evidence exists of refugees' engagement in transnational and diasporic activities.

3.1 *Globalisation or transnationalism?*

In the previous section, it was asserted that globalisation exists only as a conceptual umbrella term for increasingly observable interconnectedness that is either across borders or de-territorialised. It was also argued that no individual manifestation of globalisation is itself truly 'global'; what is global is the tendency, the potential for this interconnectedness to emerge from anywhere and link with anywhere else. Transnationalism is a manifestation of this interconnectedness and follows these rules: no single connection or set of transnational engagements is global, but largely between two or three locations. The *potential* for transnational engagement, however, exists in any location and increasingly between any two locations and is, therefore, global.

A conceptual conflation of globalisation and transnationalism can be shown to be problematic. Globalisation offers a broad analytical framework for the contemporary world, but it requires specificity to be of use. Transnationalism is a concept that can provide that specificity. Definitions of transnationalism have been continually refined since the concept was first (formally) introduced in the 1970s to describe the increasing freedom of capital from national regulation and also the potential for 'supra-state' institutions and co-operation within international relations (Keohane and Nye 1971). Contemporary transnationalism is understood as a far wider concept in terms of its scope, but a more focused one in terms of what to be transnational actually requires. It encompasses transnational social spaces, fields, formations and networks and refers, according to Faist (1999), 'to sustained ties of persons, networks and organizations across the borders of multiple nation-states, ranging from weakly to strongly institutionalised form'. This paper is concerned with

connections made by, between and through migrants and processes of international migration. The relevant agents in this process of transnationalism are 'transmigrants'.² Transmigrants are described as migrants 'whose daily lives depend on multiple and constant interconnections across international borders and whose public identities are configured in relationship to more than one state' (Glick Schiller et al 1995).

In studying how transmigrants 'construct and reconstitute their lives as simultaneously embedded in more than one society' (Caglar 2001) a number of features have been identified. Firstly, the extent and intensity of their 'transnationality' varies. Following Faist (1999), this ranges from transnational kinship groups, through transnational circuits to full transnational communities, each of which involves different resources, forms of interaction and characteristics. This typology illustrates the extraordinary heterogeneity that exists across transmigrant activities between and within forms of transnational groups, circuits and communities, amalgamated by Grillo (2001) under the term 'transnational trajectories'. Further evidence of this diversity will be discussed below with the aid of examples of different forms of transnational engagement. The transmigrant may originate from and subsequently be hosted in any locality, hence transnationalism being a globalised tendency. Routes are entangled and criss-cross in a manner that is no longer adequately conceptualised by a simple core-periphery or North-South dichotomy (Robins 2006; Hannerz 2002). This demonstrates the importance of understanding that the extent, intensity and form of transnational engagement is contingent upon local contexts in both countries of origin and host countries as well as any potential third countries. It is these differential but often overlapping contexts that account for the heterogeneity of transnationalism (Vertovec 2004).

Studying transnationalism, therefore, requires a disaggregation of transnational activities, forms and processes (*Ibid.*; Faist 1999). This approach adheres to the approach to studying tendencies of globalisation advocated in the previous section. That is the attempt to locate the local contexts, structures and actors that trigger these tendencies and manifest themselves in transnational connections. Transnationalism also offers significant validation for another argument explored earlier in this section, namely that rather than the death of the nation-state, tendencies of globalisation actually represent a reconfiguration of the state. Transnational activity and transmigrants do offer a distinct challenge to understandings of culture, society, politics and identity that are derived from a unitary and container-model of the nation state (Robins 2006; Grillo 2001). Paradoxically, however, transnationalism also simultaneously illustrates the resilience and continued resonance of local contexts, of which the nation state is one, in developing understandings of society and culture. Transnational communities and connections, despite their transcendence of rigid boundaries, continue to be anchored in the nations which they span: '...it (transnationalism) only makes sense when firmly tied to specific spaces in different nation-states' submits Faist (1999). Transnationalism, therefore, vindicates the proposition that though tendencies of

² Transnational processes and actors are also found in other spheres, for example the media, corporations, crime and terrorism, sport etc.

globalisation do have causal efficacy in constraining and transforming the role of the state, they have not rendered it superfluous. Not only do those studying transnationalism intimate that container views of culture and society have limitations, but they also suggest that concepts of global, horizontally homogenous and de-territorialised 'utopias' of culture and society are equally unrealistic (*Ibid.*).

It is clear that transnationalism can aid the study of globalisation and also address some of the limitations of rigid understandings of national culture and society, yet transnationalism is not a catch-all term and is certainly not without criticism. It is necessary, therefore, to briefly explain what transnationalism *is not* and the limitations it has. Not all international migration exhibits transnational characteristics and not all migrants engage in transnational activities. Some migrants may choose immediately to cut all ties with their homeland (Faist 2006), though it is more likely that connections are initially maintained but not subsequently sustained either by the first or following generations (Layton-Henry 2002). Similarly, not all transnational activity requires or produces a transnational community as discussed above (Faist 1999; Vertovec 2004).

Vertovec (2004) has responded to the criticisms of the programme of transnational research in turn, which he argues are more useful for configuring the parameters and limitations of transnationalism than they are demonstrable of its inaccuracy or lack of explanatory power. It is worth mentioning some of these criticisms as they help define what transnationalism should *not* be about. The most relevant is perhaps the charge of conflation, confusion and overuse, which suggests that transnationalism is often used interchangeably with other terms, including globalisation, or used to describe *any* cross-border movement or connection. This may have been the case as the terminology and conceptual tools used to study transnationalism evolved and developed. Now, however, the literature does make a clear distinction between transnationalism and globalisation as previously demonstrated, such that there should be no reticence in using the former (c.f. Grillo 2001). It is also clear, as the numerous papers and research reports of the Transnational Communities Programme³ epitomise, that the charge of overuse can also be overcome: transnationalism refers to *sustained* connections across borders and between multiple locations. In this instance the question of degree is of relevance, such that there is explanatory power in discerning 'how transnational (or not) and why' when studying different forms, routes and populations of international migration (Vertovec 2004).

A second criticism asks: what is new about transnationalism? Such a riposte echoes the early responses to the hyper-globalisation theses. Critics suggest that numerous historical examples of similar cross-border connections can be identified. Yet it is argued that this contributes positively to the study of transnationalism: it is a conceptual tool that provides 'a way of seeing what was there and could not be seen before' (Smith 2003). In fact, the conceptual tools of transnationalism are what have facilitated the identification of these historical anticipations of it (Vertovec 2004; see also Portes 2001). A final criticism is the charge of technological determinism. The

³ See <http://www.transcomm.ox.ac.uk/>

only aspect new and remarkable about contemporary transnationalism, it is argued, is the immediacy facilitated by advances in communications and international travel. The effects of these technological developments cannot be denied but the links and networks that have emerged out of them are now increasingly embedded in other national and global structures such that they are not dependent upon technology. This suggests something of a 'transnationalism multiplier', where different processes of transnationalism reproduce and embed others: there is political, social and cultural exchange in today's world that benefits from and is facilitated by technology but not determined or directed by it.

These criticisms illuminate transnationalism as a signifier of certain forms of sustained cross-border engagement; it is not and does not claim to be an all-encompassing term. It is a framework in which to understand the extent, form and intensity of such engagement. The following section provides a brief distillation of the extensive research that has uncovered the various forms of transnationalism.

3.2 Forms and manifestations of transnationalism

In order to illustrate the heterogeneity of transmigrants' engagements and experiences, this section will segregate different forms of transnationalism and discuss differentials within these forms in terms of extent and intensity. Following Vertovec (2004), we can disaggregate the practices of transmigrants along different 'modes of transformation': perceptual transformation in the socio-cultural domain or the 'habitus'; conceptual transformation of 'identities-borders-orders' in the political domain; and institutional transformation in the economic domain. Within these domains, we can also identify the relative intensity of transnational links and connections along Faist's (1999) typology of kinship, circular and community. Vertovec acknowledges that the former is purely an analytical separation: in actuality, the modes of transformation and forms of transnationalism are interrelated, overlapping and dialectical. Similarly, transmigrants may be engaged in one or more of the transnational spaces that overlap. The 'social morphology' which Vertovec asserts that transnationalism describes takes place across these artificial divisions. Where transnationalism is most deep and intense, Archer's (1995) concept of morphogenesis may prove useful in conceptualising how the transnational community itself becomes the source for identification or orientation in its own right (Grillo 2001), but this is as yet an unexplored theoretical combination. Within each of these forms of transnationalism, there are clear examples of structures both constraining and enabling agency from above and below; there are also instances of agency in one form of transnationalism reproducing or transforming structures in other forms, as discussed further below.

It is argued that engagement in transnational practices re-orientates migrants' 'habitus'. The emergence of a new set of *transnational social practices* and frameworks produces a set of identifications and sources of social and cultural reference that both immigrants and people in the country of origin can relate to. This 'habitus' is transformed through several types of socio-cultural engagement. As

mentioned previously, technological advances in communications and travel have augmented the extent and intensity of transnationalism (Glick Schiller et al 1995). Vertovec (2004a) is keen to stress the importance of telephone calls as the social glue of migrant transnationalism. Such an assertion is backed up by evidence of the dramatic fall in the cost of international calls triggered by increased competition to large communication companies by smaller outfits offering cards and packages tailored to the transmigrant (see Caglar 2002). Other communications are increasingly important, notably email communication. The proliferation of migrant-run internet cafes in Western Europe is indicative of an increased extent and intensity of transnational engagement. Bermudez Torres (2006) identified a number of internet forums for Colombian transmigrants based all over the world. These 'virtual communities' represent a form of cultural exchange, allowing 'Colombian culture' to transcend space and be practiced and identified with in multiple locations. In research on the Burundi diaspora, Turner (2008) has demonstrated that these networks are also used to reproduce or mediate transnational political debate and conflict over the situation in the country of origin. Further to this virtual contact, actual social contact is facilitated by the falling cost of frequent travel between the home and host countries. Again, the enterprise of the market has responded in this area with the emergence of travel agents specialising in flights to countries of origin in areas of the host country densely populated with specific communities. These are clear examples of transnationalism from below, with the community itself responding to the demand for these services.

These types of socio-cultural engagement tend to take place primarily within the framework of immediate and extended families and less frequently through wider communities linked by some form of socio-cultural commonality. The forms of communication outlined above have allowed small and large family units to transcend space. These 'dispersed family structures' (Vertovec 2004) allow a single family to widen their social, economic and political opportunities, often balancing each other out with internal financial transfer payments (Glick Schiller et al 1995) and a division of labour on childcare and tending to assets at home, such as land or local business. This is particularly common under patterns of circular migration (Vertovec 2004) and can often create negative relationship tensions as well as providing positive economic gains (Glick Schiller et al 1995). Research has also highlighted formalised institutions based in the host country that facilitate further migration from the homeland and provide welfare and employment services on arrival (*Ibid.*). These formalised institutions tend to be situated in wider networks out of which emerge reproduced and transformed norms of tradition and behaviour (Vertovec 2004). These norms exist at various levels, the family, kinship group or community, meaning that transnational flows and exchange are dependent upon practices and experiences that change on more than one level. This suggests that the form and extent of transnationalism is affected by different agents acting within different layered structures. Factions can emerge out of these differentials in terms of what is considered 'traditional' or culturally pure and correct, particularly through extended transnational communities.

The literature often characterises transmigrants as living between two cultures and sometimes as not accepted by or belonging to either. The most important aspect of

transnationalism, however, is not that it occupies an isolated socio-cultural space that is half of one essentialised culture and half of another, but that is indicative of the multitude of sources that constitute 'habitus'. This is a salient concept for transmigrants as it understands practices through both their origin and the conditions of their implementation (Bourdieu 1977) and is reinforced by the suggestion that all individuals draw on multiple identity sources in different social settings (Morrell 2008).

Transmigrants are also often involved in significant *transnational political engagement*, an aspect of globalisation that offers a serious challenge to the authority and sovereignty of the nation-state as conventionally understood. These engagements can be characterised as either homeland politics, immigrant politics or translocal politics (Ostergaard-Nielsen 2002). A number of research studies have explored the engagement of transmigrants in homeland politics (Ostergaard-Nielsen 2003; Bermudez Torres 2006; Ellis and Khan 2002), which can be divided into electoral and non-electoral politics (Guarnizo et al 2003).⁴ Formal electoral engagement among transmigrants is increasingly permitted as many nations' expatriate populations have swelled in recent years. Colombian transmigrants, for example, are not only permitted to vote in Colombian elections but may also stand as candidates to represent Colombians abroad (Bermudez Torres 2006); Mexican migrants have also successfully campaigned for franchise from abroad (Courtney Smith 2008). This is a distinctly transnational form of engagement as transmigrants from a particular polity continue to consider themselves legitimate members of this order despite residing elsewhere (Vertovec 2004). Other forms of political engagement are more indirect and take place in the host country: lobbying the host government, organising protests in front of consulates and generating support amongst the host population can have a significant effect on political causes related to the homeland (Ostergaard-Nielsen 2003; Saldana 2003). Such political activism is often able to influence the development of bilateral agreements between two nations on trade, migration or political and diplomatic support.

These forms of political engagement are taken up with differing intensity by transmigrants and also welcomed to differing degrees by governments and publics in the homeland. Ostergaard-Nielsen (2003) has shown how the involvement in homeland politics of Turks and Kurds in Germany is dependent upon the individual's situation in the host country (See also Koopmans and Statham 2001). It is often those transmigrants that are more integrated into the host society, that are employed and educated, that have sufficient social and financial capital to engage in homeland politics (Glick Schiller et al 1995). Another factor that affects the extent and intensity of involvement in homeland politics is the relationship of the host society with the country of origin (Ostergaard Nielsen 2003). The extent to which the home government welcomes or attempts to harness this kind of political involvement also differs. Vertovec (2004) lists a number of examples of countries of origin opening up their franchise to a form of citizenship that, according to Fitzgerald (2000), significantly emphasises rights over obligations. Mexicans and Koreans in the

⁴ The full-range of these political activities is explored through a number of contributions to a recent special issue of *Ethnic and Racial Studies* (See in particular Turner 2008; Courtney Smith 2008).

US have been courted by their respective homeland governments, while Turkish candidates have campaigned abroad in recent elections. However, it is not always the case that home country governments desire the involvement of emigrants or exiles (Layton-Henry 2002); some governments actively discourage such 'political meddling' (Ostergaard Nielsen 2003). Transmigrants from countries that are ethnically or religiously divided can often export this intra-community conflict abroad with them (Faist 2006). In such instances, political involvement in the homeland is both welcomed as useful and despised as interference, depending upon which side of the conflict it originates from.

In addition to political engagement with the homeland, transnational communities also engage in the politics of the host country in their 'role' as immigrants, focusing on securing social and cultural rights, political recognition and organising welfare and service provision within the community. Organisational activities are often born out of nostalgic imaginings of the homeland but their political efficacy is more tangible. Glick Schiller et al (1995) highlight the effectiveness of such activities in providing a political base for Caribbean transmigrants in the US to 'confront the racial barriers that have prevented their full incorporation' into the political sphere of the host country. A significant proportion of immigrant politics is stimulated by the fact that immigrant communities often do not feel represented by mainstream political structures. In this respect, Layton-Henry (2002) has identified a distinction of what it means to be politically active for African-Caribbeans in the UK. While some respondents to this research study thought it important to be politically active in mainstream structures, others felt this was a redundant exercise and political activity should remain focused on local initiatives for the community of co-nationals or co-ethnics. Alternatively, research among Arab communities in the UK and the US by Nagel (2006) suggests that for some migrant populations, engaging in political activism toward countries of origin along co-ethnic or co-national lines can actually serve to facilitate greater integration and equal participation in the host country by demonstrating the individuals' commitment to certain civic 'values'. A number of factors have been found to affect the prevalence and form of this type of immigrant politics in different host nations and among different transmigrant communities. Following Bird's (2004) conceptual framework for understanding the political engagement of ethnic minorities in France, Canada and Denmark, a number of macro factors can be identified, such as the political and electoral system, coverage of social and economic rights afforded to immigrants and the citizenship regime operated by the host country. It also suggested that micro factors of organisation and demographics, such as age, spatial concentration, depth and intensity of social networks, also contribute to the extent of political engagement, forming what has been called a political opportunity structure for ethnic minority communities (Koopmans and Statham 2000).

A further form of transnational engagement takes place in the *economic domain*. Migrant remittances are the most prominent manifestation of this, yet there are further subtle economic engagements that transcend borders, such as developing micro-finance, family divisions of migrant labour as well as the emerging industries facilitating transnational living. The impact of this economic activity is experienced in the homeland and the diaspora as well as through transnational practices that

actually facilitate transnational living. These engagements can be seen as a tendency of globalisation not considered by early theories focusing on conventional capital movements and, it has been argued that, represent a form of 'globalisation from below', a countervailing tendency to the capital expansion of neo-liberal globalisation (Portes 1998).

Remittances are the most visible, frequent and quantifiable of economic transnational engagements. Numerous studies have uncovered forms of remittances that represent an evolving structure of long-distant solidarity and 'generalised' reciprocity (Van Hear 2002; Guarnizo 2003; Horst 2005; Lindley 2007). Remittances can be transferred by any form of migrant either formally through credit organisations or banks or informally through traditional money systems such as *hawala* or by hand (Vertovec 2004). The most rudimentary form of remittance takes place between members of the immediate family unit as a simple contribution to subsistence living costs or improving the living standards of family members in the homeland. This can manifest itself in improving educational opportunities for younger relatives or healthcare for older relatives in the extended family; it can also stimulate family businesses or fund further emigration. Remittances, however, can also have negative effects. There is evidence to suggest that small subsistence levels of remittances channelled to immediate family members can create a dependency in countries of origin that embeds a cycle of poverty or subsistence living (Lindley 2007). This suggests that remittances are not always utilised in an efficient manner or a manner promoting economic development. Furthermore private wealth often exists next to public squalor in regions where extensive remittances have been sent back to families that use it to improve their own standard of living. In countries that do not have systems to redistribute wealth or generate public finances, public spaces and buildings cannot keep up with private holdings, which can increase local inequalities and may have an adverse effect on local communities (Vertovec 2004).

While there is no consensus on the relative costs and benefits that remittances generate, there is no doubting the sheer volume and absolute impact that they can have on the domestic economy of a small state. It can be relatively easy to identify the direct effects upon recipients of remittances, such as improved standards of living and injections of investment into businesses, yet Taylor (1999) insists that any study of the impact of remittances is required to adopt a wider viewpoint incorporating the whole local economy. Such an approach incorporates what demand-side economic theory suggests would be the multiplier effect of consumer spending. Studies in both Mexico and Bangladesh have utilised this more comprehensive methodology to identify an even more significant impact made by remittances on the homeland in terms of increased demand and job creation (Durand et al 1996; Arnold 1992). Conversely, a more recent study on the socio-economic impact of remittances in Colombia suggests that remittances may have a detrimental impact on the economy in the long-term, despite the short-term gains of the recipients (Khoudour-Castéras 2007). Remittances alone are not a viable development solution and, it is argued, to have any positive long-term effect they need to be complimented by robust domestic economic and social policies.

Other forms of transnational investment can also have a local social and political impact. There are numerous instances of money being raised abroad and sent back to fund specific community projects, infrastructure or symbolic constructions, often through community organisations. Alternative investment methods have been used by the Somali diaspora, with families in the diaspora buying land on a collective basis for ambitious plans to transform the local area (Kleist 2007). Research suggests that a number of factors drive 'diaspora investment' from altruism and homeland orientation to business acumen and ethnic comparative advantage (Gillespie et al 1999). Similarly, the efficacy of homeland investment is subject to a number of constraints and impediments, mainly clustered around investment risk. Consequently, investment expectations also play a role in determining the extent and form of diaspora investment (Nielsen and Riddle 2007). This is particularly the case in conflict areas or regions of political instability, in which financial institutions and infrastructure networks are likely to be weak (Gillespie et al 2001). Furthermore, there are also concerns about the use of this money, particularly if funds do not ultimately contribute to the projects for which they were originally raised.

3.3 Refugees, diaspora and transnationalism

Research on the transnational activity and engagement of migrants has often neglected the experiences of refugees (Al Ali et al 2001; Koser 2007; Crisp 1999). Refugees have historically been more closely associated with the term diaspora, as an exiled community bound by an idealised vision of the homeland (e.g. Jews or Armenians, see Pattie 1999). Transnationalism, on the other hand, emerged initially out of studies of labour migrants in North America. This separation of migrants into economic and political or voluntary and involuntary is problematic. Contemporary refugee flows are more complex and the line between migrant and refugee increasingly blurred (McDowell 1996; Crisp 1999). Consequently, refugees should not be absent from debates on transnational communities, which can and do incorporate diasporas and refugees. In fact, a number of studies that have begun to address this anomaly suggest that the transnational activity of refugees is often mediated by a more complex and ambiguous legal status and relationship with 'the state'. This may, therefore, suggest that the transnational activities of refugees, in comparison with other migrants, could have a distinctive impact on their homeland (Koser 2007). This is a phenomenon, however, about which it is impossible to generalise as any single diaspora can be 'good and bad' (Vertovec 2006a) or 'peace-wreckers' and 'peace-makers' (Koser 2007a). An understudied area, however, remains the impact of refugees' transnational engagements on their situation and experience in the host country. Having outlined some possible explanations for the relative dearth of research on the transnational activity of refugees, this section discusses the terms diaspora and transnationalism. Following this, research conducted on this subject is briefly reviewed, highlighting both the specificity of some aspects of the transnational activity of refugees and the areas that remain understudied.

The previous section on transnational communities highlighted numerous modes, trajectories and networks through which migrants engage and interact, many of which apply to refugee and exile communities. Despite the proliferation of work on transnationalism, academics working on refugee and asylum diasporas have consistently suggested that the transnational activities of refugees remain relatively understudied (Crisp 1999; Al-Ali et al 2001; Koser 2007). Almost a decade ago Crisp (1999) suggested that the absence of refugees and asylum seekers from the discourse of transnationalism represents an 'assumption of a rigid separation between the exile's country of origin and country of asylum...and a long-standing division between the field of refugee studies and the study of international migration'. This distinction, in which refugees account for the 'political' and labour migrants the 'economic' outcome of global systems (Al-Ali et al 2001), has been demonstrated to be increasingly problematic in a world where migration flows are more accurately captured by the asylum-migration nexus, a concept that acknowledges the reality that all migrants have mixed motivations, use similar routes and can be seen as a migrant or refugee in different places at different times (Richmond 1994; Van Hear 1998; Castles 2003). Despite this, the division is one of the reasons for the initial overlooking of transnational engagement amongst refugee and exile communities. The study of transnationalism emerged in North America, focusing largely on labour migrants from Latin America and the Caribbean. While exile communities have historically settled in the US, contemporary refugee flows to North America are largely regimented through resettlement programmes, unlike in Europe, where spontaneously seeking asylum is dominant. The transnational networks that generate these asylum flows and emerge from them are not so prevalent in North America (Koser 2007).

Studies that did break the mould to focus on exile communities in the US tended to reproduce the migrant-refugee division in confining their research to the political, notably the pursuit of specific political goals in the homeland (see for example Basch et al 1994). The economic activities of refugee communities have been relatively neglected on the assumption that the motivations for their migration had been political and enforced upon them. This not only fails to acknowledge that all migrants are motivated by a complex set of factors but also that even if the motivation of refugees was primarily political, they cannot help but become economic actors during their migration and in the host country (Van Hear 2004). This problematic separation of refugee and migrant perhaps also reflects a distinction made between transnational communities and diaspora. Vertovec (2006a) suggests that diaspora 'is commonly defined as a self-identified ethnic group, with a specific place of origin, which has been globally dispersed through voluntary or forced migration'. Historically, however, diaspora has been associated with exiled co-ethnics that have that have self-perpetuated further migration of other individuals to other locations linked by a desire to return to an idealised version of the homeland (McDowell 1996; Cohen 1997). Transnationalism, on the other hand, manifests itself through a diverse set of practices, made increasingly immediate by advances in communications and transport. Communities of 'transmigrants' do not require a political goal to unite their dispersed community; rather, as the previous section illustrated, practical livelihood strategies, economic opportunities, the maintenance of cultural practices and the export of domestic political divisions can link transnational communities.

Consequently, Vertovec's definition of diaspora above reflects a set of social relations that are likely to experience some forms of transnational engagement. Where diaspora represents geographical dispersal, transnational reflects the geometries of the links between members of a diaspora that are rooted in different nations and local contexts. Diaspora and transnationalism are not, therefore, mutually exclusive terms.

This suggests that refugee and asylum diasporas should not be absent from the discourse of transnationalism; nor, however, should they be incorporated as homogenous groups with linear political aims. Recent research is clearly illustrative of the diversity within and between different refugee and asylum diasporas (Al-Ali and Koser 2002). It is also clear, as represented by the asylum-migration nexus, that transnational communities and diasporas rarely consist solely of refugees but are formed by different types of migrants with different legal statuses (Crisp 1999). Diasporas comprising a significant proportion of refugees, however, emerge out of more diverse and complex conflict and humanitarian situations and develop along various trajectories and with different levels of intensity (Cohen 1997). Furthermore, each diaspora contains a whole range of opinion, political affiliation and economic resources often exporting divisions and inequalities that are rooted in domestic conflict and social relations (McDowell 1996; Van Hear 1998; Armbruster 2002; Vertovec 2006a). Conversely, the social relations and networks of the diaspora and the transnational community also have the potential to transform, contributing to healing division and addressing inequality. They also provide economic resources and wield political influence to contribute to development in the homeland (Ostergaard-Nielsen 2002 and 2003; Ellis and Khan 2002; Van Hear et al 2004).

Research that has been conducted on the transnational practices of refugees has unearthed a range of political, social, cultural and economic interaction, challenging previous conventional thought that refugees were engaged in transnational interaction only for political change. The expansion of this type of research, alluded to in the previous section, also reflects a change in the demography of refugees, from predominantly political exiles suffering from individual persecution to large social groups vulnerable to collective repression and violence (Crisp 1999). Consequently, patterns of interaction overlap in more complex ways. Bermudez Torres' (2006) research on political engagement in time of conflict is significant as it highlights active use of the diaspora to generate political transformation in the homeland. This is apparent 'from above', with the governments extending the vote in national elections to Colombians abroad, and 'from below' through private-led initiatives maintaining transnational links to give 'something back' to Colombia by creating 'a more positive image of their country abroad'. It has also been suggested that political diasporas use varied routes to influence politics both home and abroad (Ostergaard-Nielsen 2002). This is corroborated by a volume of work published in 2002 (Al-Ali and Koser 2002) in which contributors explore the impacts of transnational practices on the transformation of home (notably Ellis and Kahn 2002; Ostergaard-Nielsen 2002). Further to the research on political interactions, the importance of the remittances of refugees as a livelihood strategy in times of conflict has also been highlighted (Horst 2004; Van Hear 2002; Lindley 2007). Evidence on remittances suggests that as personal payments, they tend to 'sustain' rather than

transform receiving societies (Van Hear 2002). Recent research conducted by the Overseas Development Institute (Savage and Harvey 2007) also found that people in crises (which included natural disasters alongside conflict and humanitarian crises) depend heavily on remittances from relatives abroad. While crises can erect additional barriers to accessing remittance flows, remittances are vital in replacing basic subsistence strategies that have been disrupted by conflict, political repression or natural disaster. In addition to political and economic forms of transnationalism, there is evidence that social and cultural links are also prevalent in refugee communities. Research on the Tamil diaspora in Norway has illustrated how social and cultural concerns within the diaspora impact upon forms of economic and political interaction that Tamils have with the homeland (Birvand Erdal and Stokke 2007), while there is also evidence of cultural reproduction in diaspora through, for example, retaining educational practices amongst the Eritrean community in the UK (Al-Ali et al 2001).

Each piece of research conducted on the transnational engagement of refugees underscores the importance of not essentialising any particular diaspora and demonstrates the interrelationship between different forms of transnational engagement, as discussed in the previous section. Furthermore, the research highlights the added complexity of the transnational engagement of refugees: the uncertain relationship between the refugee and 'the state', whether the home state, the host state or any third states encountered in between. While this relationship has been explored with respect to the impact of transnationalism on the homeland, little research has attempted to address the impact of transnational links and obligations upon refugees' experiences in the host country. Two exceptions, recent studies by Akuei (2005) and Lindley (2007), explore the impact of remittances as an economic and social obligation on the sender's experiences of integration. Both authors found refugees often working two (low-paid) jobs to satisfy the demands of family and friends at home or elsewhere in the diaspora. Consequently, engaging in the local community is not prioritised as some individuals simply do not have the time to do so.

This research raises some important new questions about transnational engagement, yet the focus on remittances largely excludes the refugee's relationship with the state from the analysis. The impact of other social and political obligations often mediated by the state, legal status and citizenship are yet to be explored. This fact is perhaps illustrative of the assumption that refugees' transnational activity is primarily directed at the homeland with the ultimate aim of returning home; this may only be true to a certain extent and it is not clear what impact directing resources to this type of activity has on refugee experiences of integration in the host country, particularly as the hope or desire to return fades. This remains a gap in the literature and represents a distinct opportunity to conduct original research that addresses this question. One study that alludes to this issue suggests that rather than generating a conflict of obligations, developing active political networks can aid the development of community 'bridging capital', even when the focus of that activism is the homeland. Nagel (2006), in her study of Arab political activism in the UK and the US, argues that complex sets of responsibilities that emerge out of transnational engagement can be mediated through a layered sense of identity. How

these political activities interact with economic and social transnationalism remains an unexplored area.

4. Conclusion

This review has charted the development of three interrelated concepts, all of which can be useful in understanding the dynamics of forced migration and the experiences of refugees. In the first section, three strands of globalisation literature were discussed and it was suggested that to be useful as a conceptual tool, globalisation needs to be understood as less teleological but more than merely the transnationalisation of capital. Tendencies of globalisation, it was argued, are also social, cultural and political, have different impacts depending upon local contexts and can both restrict and enable the agency of states and institutions. It was shown how these properties are illustrated by viewing forced migration through this conceptual framework. The paper then reviewed literature around transnationalism and diaspora in respect to the relationship of the two terms with globalisation and also their relevance for understanding the experiences of refugees. Transnationalism was presented as a manifestation of the interconnectedness facilitated by globalisation. Similarly, therefore, local contexts determine the form and nature of transnationalism, and transnational engagement also occurs across socio-cultural, political and economic spheres. The concept provides a way of understanding the lives of people or groups of people that are organised and connected across national boundaries. Diaspora provides further specificity to transnationalism, describing a transnational community linked by the reality or perception of a common heritage. Refugee communities have traditionally been considered as diaspora communities, though the two are not synonymous. The term diaspora, it was argued, has limitations in only describing refugees' socio-cultural heritage and political activity; refugees are also economic actors and involved in transnational economic engagement. Finally, it was considered that while there is growing literature on the form of refugee diasporas and the nature their transnational engagement, a gap in the literature remains with respect to the impact of transnational responsibilities and obligations on the integration of refugees into their host society. Further research and conceptual work is required to better understand the relationship of these three concepts with others that are traditionally understood within national or state boundaries such as citizenship. The transnational engagement and integration of refugees may offer a specific insight into this relationship.

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