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THE IMPACT OF PAST AND PRESENT
IMMIGRANTS' TRANSNATIONAL ENGAGEMENTS
ON THEIR HOME-COUNTRY LOCALITIES:
EXPLORING AN UNDERINVESTIGATED ASPECT
OF THE TRANSNATIONALISM-MIGRATION RELATIONSHIP

One of the agenda-setting issues in current social science studies of immigration on both sides of the Atlantic, the concept of transnationalism has been defined as the *cross-border spaces of back- and-forth flow of goods, ideas, and practices* which join individuals, groups, and institutions in different nation-states that engage in these interactions. The sociologists and anthropologists of immigration, including this author, use the concept of transnationalism to denote the involvements of immigrant actors that stretch across state-national borders and, thus, pluralize civic-political commitments and socio-cultural practices on each side of these boundaries; for political scientists this term usually signifies the proliferation of supra-national organizations and legal provisions that take over, and, thus, undermine the authority and influence of modern nation-states. Although the *interaction* and the resulting *interdependence* of the involved parties on different sides state-national border are the constitutive components of the accepted understanding of the concept, an almost exclusive focus of a vast volume of studies on immigrants' transnationalism has been on different forms and sociodemographic correlates of these expatriates' engagements in their home countries on the one hand, and, on the other, on the effects of such extraterritorial commitments of immigrants on the authority commanded by the nation-states in which they reside. The impact of immigrants' transnational engagements on the home-country side of "interdependence" created by this phenomenon has however remained largely unexplored, except for assessments, led by population studies specialists and development economists, of demographic and labour market restructuring in sender countries resulting from emigration and the role of immigrant remittances for sender-country economies. A rare deviation from

this neglect-in-*richesse* are two studies of immigrant transnationalism of American sociologists--Robert Smith's Mexican *New York. Transnational Lives of New Immigrants* (2006) and Peggy Levitt's *The Transnational Villagers* (2001) about transnational engagements of Dominicans in Boston--and a couple of recent articles by Stefan Rother, a German political scientist examining transnational involvements of Filipinos residing in Hong Kong (Rother 2009a; 2009b) which pay explicit attention to the transformative impact of what Levitt calls "social remittances" or cultural (including religious) and civic-political beliefs and ideas, and sociocultural habits brought into sender localities by the transnationally active immigrants (see also Boccagni 2012 for an attempt to incorporate the impact of immigrants' transnational engagements on their home societies into a general theoretical model of transnationalism).

To make empirical research reflect more closely the definition of the concept which informs it, this essay focuses, precisely, on diverse effects of immigrants' transnational engagements on their home-country localities. Its other, related purpose is to locate immigrant transnationalism in an encompassing theoretical framework that accounts for the interdependency of sender and receiver sides of the expanding cross-border circuits proclaimed by the students of this phenomenon. A fitting theoretical framework for this task is the structuration model as reformulated by William Sewell (1992), Mustafa Emirbayer and Ann Mische (1998), and Rob Stones (2005). Its basic claim can be summarized as follows. Whereas the pressures of forces at the upper structural layers (economic and political systems, cultural formations, technological civilizations) set the "dynamic limits" of the possible and the impossible within which people act, it is at the level of the immediate social surroundings that individuals and groups evaluate their situations, define purposes, and undertake actions. The intended and, often, unintended consequences of these individual and collective activities affect--sustain or transform--in turn these local-level and, over time, larger-scope structures. I have analyzed the macro- and micro-level structural circumstances generating and sustaining (or hindering) immigrants' transnational activities in my book, *A Sociology of Immigration. Remaking Multifaceted America* (Morawska 2009). Of concern here is the next phase, so to speak, of transnationalism conceived of as the structuration process, that is, the impact of immigrant actors' engagements in their home-country localities on the latter's economic, civic-political, and socio-cultural structures analytical attention to which should constitute, I argue, the integral part of empirical research on the issue of transnationalism.¹

¹ Not addressed in this essay, a parallel implication regarding the integration into the study of the process of immigrants' assimilation of its (re)constitutive effects on the host-society structures should also be noted.

The third and most ambitious aim of this discussion is to demonstrate to colleagues in the field of immigration studies the advantages deriving from integrating the subject matter of their enquiry into the mainstream agenda of the social sciences. International migration-related processes articulate the major transformations of the contemporary world and, as such, they should constitute the integral part of the core theoretical and empirical agenda of social science disciplines. Curiously, however, this has not been the case. In considerable part this neglect reflects, I believe, a “nichification” of (im)migration studies within its own field-specific agendas, meetings, journals, and research networks—an evidence of the very success of this specialization but at a cost of a parochialism of interests and pursuits.² It is a bit like gender studies which everybody recognizes as central to the social sciences, yet few nonspecialist scholars read the specialty journals or attend thematic meetings. In an attempt to remedy this situation just a little, I will treat here some of the transformative effects of immigrant transnational engagements on their home country localities in terms of *glocalization*—a concept informing current mainstream social-science debates about the operation of globalism, yet not referred to in studies of immigrant transnationalism³—understood as the process of simultaneous homogenization and heterogeneization of economic, sociocultural, and political forms (Robertson 1992; Robertson and White 2005).

The information about turn-of-the-twentieth-century and present-day immigrants in America and their influence on their home country localities comes from my longitudinal historical-sociological study of past and present immigration in the United States based on my own historical and contemporary ethnographic investigations⁴ as well as the projects of my historian and sociologist colleagues in the field.

My discussion of the impact of immigrants’ transnational engagements on their home country localities is informed by the historical-sociological mode

² In the meantime, mainstream social scientists take up the issues central to (im)migration research and, based on skewed and truncated readings of the literature in this field, construct theories of immigrants’ assimilation, transnationalism, and generally, multicultural society. A good example of this development is a recent book by Jeffrey Alexander, *The Civil Sphere* (2006; for a critical review pointing to the author’s lack of familiarity with (im)migration/ethnic studies, see Kivisto 2007).

³ In her earlier-quoted study on *Transnational Villagers* Levitt (2001) discusses the creation of “global culture locally,” but does place this development in the theoretical framework of *glocalization*; it has been done by Giulanotti and Robertson (2007; 2004) neither of whom are affiliated with (im)migration studies.

⁴ See Morawska 2009, 2005, 2003, 2001(a) on contemporary immigrants; idem 1996, 1993, 1991, 1989 on turn-of-the-last century arrivals; and idem 2009, 2005, 2001 on these two waves compared.

of interpretation whereby in order to explain *why* social phenomena come into being, change, or persist, a researcher should demonstrate *how* they do it, that is, by showing how they have been shaped over time through changing circumstances (Abrams 1982). A comparative analysis of transnational involvements of turn-of-the-twentieth-century and contemporary immigrants in the United States—Slavs and Italians in the first case and Latin Americans, Caribbeans, and Asians in the second—provides a good illustration of the diverse effects of these context-specific circumstances. An intense exchange among immigration scholars in the late 1990s-early 2000s about the supposed novelty of the phenomenon of transnationalism has led to a consensus that while “old,” 1880s-1914, immigrants did sustain multiple involvements in their home countries, transnationalism of their contemporary successors differs from its past equivalent in that due to the rapid advances in transportation and communication technologies, the development and restructuring of sender country economies resulting in the socioeconomic differentiation of international population flows, and the globalization of capitalism, present-day immigrants’ engagements in their home societies have become significantly more intense and diverse in forms and “contents.” (On the old-new transnationalism debate, see Foner 1997; Morawska 2001.)

The remainder of this essay consists of three sections: the first one comparatively assesses the effects of transnational engagements of past and present immigrants’ in the United States on the economies of their home-country localities; the second compares this impact in the civic-political realm; and the third part examines the transformative influence of old and new immigrants’ transnationalism in the socio-cultural sphere. In each of the three sections, I present the main similarities and differences of the impact on home-country localities of turn-of-the-twentieth-century and contemporary immigrant-actors’ transnational involvements, and identify their contributing circumstances.

I. THE IMPACT OF PAST AND PRESENT IMMIGRANTS’ TRANSNATIONALISM IN THE ECONOMIC REALM

A comparison of the impact of turn-of-the-twentieth-century and contemporary immigrants’ transnational engagements in their home country localities on the latter’s economies shows an underlying similarity with important differences which make for distinct overall pictures in each period. Both now and then the decisions of hundreds of thousands of people to emigrate to the United States in search of a livelihood from un(der)developed regions of the world:—South and East Europe at the turn of the twentieth century and impoverished parts of South America, the Caribbean, and Asia today—have relieved overpopulation

and hunger in the sender societies. Both now and then the expanding volume of income-seeking emigrants, departees' letters (today, also phone calls and email messages), photographs, remittances, and, especially, the stories told about the returnees, have served as a "demonstration effect" to incite others to follow. The recollection of a resident of a turn-of-the-twentieth-century village in south-eastern Poland is typical of this mobilization effect on the impoverished folks at home both then and today: "When, after a few years spent in America, Walenty Podlasek returned to Wierzchoslawice...[and with] the dollars he brought with him he purchased a dozen or so hectares and started to build [a new home], the people went wild with envy and desire" (Witos 1964: 188; on further migration-inciting impact of earlier departed émigrés among contemporary international travellers, see Massey et al. 1998).

Both turn-of-the-twentieth-century and contemporary immigrants, a large proportion of whom have viewed their income-seeking sojourn in America as temporary, and practically all of whom have shared a sense of obligation and commitment to their families left in the home countries, have supported them financially from abroad. These multimillion dollar remittances regularly sent back by the immigrants—then mainly men who constituted the overwhelming majority and now, resulting from gender equalization of migratory flows and the massive entry of women into the labour market, especially in receiver countries, both men and women—to their home towns and villages have helped their households survive and also better themselves materially. As historical records indicate, turn-of-the-century immigrants managed to save and transfer home up to 75 percent of their labourers' pay (Greene 1975; Bodnar 1985; Morawska 1989). Between 1900 and 1906, the immigrant colonies in America sent a staggering \$90 million in money orders to Italy, Russia, and Austria-Hungary. Local figures are perhaps even more impressive. In 1903, Hungarian emigrants from Veszprem County sent \$290,000 to their villages. In 1910, the Slovak villages of Butka and Zdiara in the Zemplin region each received about \$15,000, an average of about \$200 for each emigrant household—more money than its members had ever seen in their lifetime. Existing estimates from East European and Italian transatlantic emigration regions indicate that in the decade preceding the outbreak of World War I those immigrant remittances made up between a quarter and more than a third of these regions' annual balances of payment (Balch 1910; Wyman 1993; Puskas 1982; Tajtak 1961).

The amounts of money sent home by contemporary immigrants are as impressive as the remittances of their turn-of-the-twentieth-century predecessors, especially considering that these transfer originate mainly from low-skilled émigrés whose wages in secondary or informal markets of the receiver-country post-industrial economy are notoriously low and unstable. In 2000 alone, remittances sent from the United States totalled \$12-odd billion. Of this sum, Mexicans,

the largest and proportionately to its numerical size lowest skilled immigrant group, remitted no less than \$ 5 billion; much smaller in numbers, El Salvadoran, Dominican, and Cuban immigrants transferred home more than \$1 billion each in that same year; while Jamaicans and (South) Koreans sent, respectively, nearly \$700,000 and \$600,000. Like they did a century ago, these large annual transfers from immigrant group not only allow minimal survival or increased affluence of recipient households, but in many underdeveloped sender countries they are a key element in balancing national economies. In the Dominican Republic, for example, immigrant remittances have been the second most important source of foreign exchange. (Information compiled from Ueda 2007; Eckstein 2009; International Organization for Migration--World Migration Report Series 2003; Foner 2005; Levitt 2001; Min 2006).

The effects of immigrants' remittances on the local economies of their home countries have been subject to a debate among students of this issue (for an overview see Pozo 2007). The majority opinion has been that because macro-level conditions of economic under-development and political instability which promote emigration generally discourage investment, and because "on the ground" migrants' families in these sender countries spend the received monies primarily on survival or on consumer goods, this effect has been negligible. The use of remittances by their recipients—past as well as present immigrants' families at home—simply for survival can be treated as a reconstitutive effect of immigrants' transnational activities in that they contribute to the perpetuation of the existing economic situation in their home-country localities. If these remittances have allowed the recipients to purchase goods beyond their survival needs, and if such "innovations" have become a regular feature of the consumer habits in the families dependent on monies sent/brought from abroad by their kin, it could be considered a low-level transformative effect of immigrants' transnational involvements. It can be called a glocalization effect to the extent that these innovations involve the importation into émigrés' home country localities of sender-country style of building construction, food, dress, and entertainment. Slovak and Hungarian families of turn-of-the-twentieth-century immigrants working in America were reported to build their homes in the villages following the models they saw in the photographs sent by their kin and to wear—usually to church on Sunday and on other festive occasions—articles clothing sent by their kin from the United States (Puskas 1982; Stolarik 1980). Contemporary families in Latin America likewise adapt elements of American diet and entertainment learned from their émigré kin in the United States; even in communist Cuba immigrant remittances have been reported to "Miamiize" local lifestyles (Smith 2006; Levitt 2001; Eckstein 2009).

The evidence regarding the use of remittances sent by working-class immigrants appears to support Massey et al.'s (1998) conclusion from an overview of

extensive data that these effects “vary from country to country and time to time depending on market conditions, resource endowments, and the ease and cost of foreign exchange” (p. 222). For example, in the first years after the collapse of the communist regime (1989), Philadelphia lower-class Polish immigrants’ remittances had been used by their families to buy the basic necessities in order to survive. A decade later, with economic progress, émigrés’ families began to use some of the remittances towards improvements in their standard of living, such as apartment furnishings, colour TVs with satellite dishes, stereo systems, and better-quality clothing, often following the advice of their relatives in America regarding the recommended brand (Morawska 2003 and a follow-up informal investigation of the pursuits of Philadelphia Polish immigrants, 2009).

The transformative effect of past and present immigrant transnational activities in the form of increased economic inequality in the localities which receive large émigré remittances and where immigrants make business (and other) investments the profits of which are appropriated by their family members has been ambivalent. The negative effects are summarized in an observation by a student of present-day Mexican immigrants’ economic assistance to their families at home which has been echoed in reports on other contemporary groups: “A remittance economy exacerbates inequalities by ‘dollarizing’ the local economy, inflating prices as migrant families pay for goods in dollars and widening class differences” (Smith 2006: 50; interestingly, a similar effect on the receiver-country economy through refugees’ remittances has been reported in communist Cuba—see Eckstein 2009.) This situation has transformed the class structure of the affected sender locations by sharpening the discrepancy between the well-off (migrants’ families) and those in dire poverty or, as the same researcher calls them, a “remittance bourgeoisie” and a “transnational underclass” who have no connections in the United States or any other highly developed immigration country. If one would argue that the rapidly growing army of landless proletariat in the economically backward South and East Europe a century ago could be treated as an equivalent of sorts to an underclass of today’s global capitalism in that its members’ opportunities for getting out of their situation through their own effort were severely limited by structural circumstances, the effects of turn-of-the-twentieth-century immigrant remittances on the socioeconomic composition of sender villages were likewise disequalizing. Families that received such monies were able, if they used this “foreign capital” wisely, to elevate their standard of living by purchasing land, farm buildings, and livestock; those who did not get any financial support from abroad saw their members slip one after another into the ranks of the landless rural proletariat.

The positive results of increased economic inequality in home-country locations resulting from immigrant remittances reveal themselves over a longer

period of time. They become visible when the children in better-off contemporary remittance-receiving families are sent to better schools, stay there longer, and obtain better jobs which enable them, if they remain in their home localities, to invest more and more systematically in the latter's economic development. Their turn-of-the-twentieth-century counterparts did the same except that instead of remaining in the villages they tended to relocate to the cities where the advancement opportunities, albeit limited, were nevertheless tangibly greater.

Before we move to the important differences between the economic effects of past and present immigrants' transnational involvements in their home countries, one more enduring phenomenon should be noted. Both turn-of-the-twentieth-century and contemporary immigrants, motivated by a sense of obligation toward their native community and having at their disposition some extra capital saved from their American earnings, have been reported to engage in the financing of philanthropic projects in their home towns and villages, such as the construction and renovations of local churches, schools, and roads—investments in communal welfare which would not have been realized without émigrés' contributions. The main difference between these past and present immigrant transnational activities is that the former usually involved better-off individual male sponsors, while the latter tend to be organized group initiatives drawing on a large pool of contributors, and, as we shall see in the next section, they include women-led initiatives. (On "old" immigrants' philanthropic contributions to their home country communities, see Duda-Dziewierz 1938; Kantor 1990; Golda 1974; Cerase 1971; on similar activities their contemporary successors, see Burgess 2005; Levitt 1997; Smith and Guarnizo 1998; Hu-DeHart 1999.)

Because of the increased economic globalization of the contemporary world combined with revolutionary advances in transportation and communication technologies on the one hand, and, on the other, the emergence of a large group of highly skilled travellers with high capital, present-day immigrants' leaving their countries and their transnational involvements there have, however, much more diversified effects on the economies of home societies than did similar activities of their turn-of-the-twentieth-century predecessors. Three major new developments should be noted. Whereas the overwhelming majority of turn-of-the-century South and East European immigrants were unskilled manual labourers,⁵ today's arrivals match the native-born American population in the overall proportion of college and higher educated persons (24 percent), while the share of persons employed in professional and managerial positions (25 percent) is only slightly lower than that among native-born employed

⁵ East European Jews, the majority of whom were skilled workers (including craftsmen), were the exception.

residents (30 percent). (Information about educational achievement and occupational position of the foreign-born population comes from the 2000 U.S. Population Census; these proportions differ significantly, however, among particular immigrant groups, ranging from 70 percent of college educated and 66 percent in professional and managerial occupations for Asian Indians to 5 and 8 percent, respectively, for Mexicans.) Unknown in the past, the phenomenon of the brain-drain or massive emigration of highly educated and highly skilled men and women lured to America (and other core countries) by the prospects of professional advancement and a much better remuneration presents today a serious problem to the labour markets of un(der)developed economies of sender societies. In Poland, for example, the departure since the country's admission to the European Union in 2004 of thousands of computer specialists, engineers, doctors, and nurses to the highly developed western parts of the Continent and, about 15 percent of the total, across the Atlantic to the United States, has considerably undermined the operation of the national economic infrastructure and effectively incapacitated the labour market in the localities most affected by emigration.

The second new development relevant for immigrants' impact on their home country economies has been the increased circular migrations of a considerable number of highly skilled migrants and the return of the brain drain from core countries to migrants' home societies, usually to the cities where they grew up or received education. Many of these professionals are actually semi-returnees who arrange for so-called slot appointments dividing their residence and employment between their native and adopted countries. A number of them are also employed by transnational companies with branches in their home countries. These (re)emigrants have been noted to contribute towards the dissemination there of a professional: scientific, technological and also organizational cultures, resulting in their glocalization (Lessinger 2001; Saxenian 2006; Dhingra 2007; Khandelwal 2002). I will return to this issue in the last section of the paper.

The third effect of contemporary immigrants' transnational activities with no counterpart a century ago has been a growing volume of small- to large-scale investments of émigré capital in their home-country/-region economies—the initiatives motivated by immigrants' business interests and their emotional and/or ideological commitment to their native land, and encouraged by sender-country political authorities interested in capturing immigrant capital for the development of national- and local-level economies. (Protracted and uneven modernization of South and East Europe a century ago was driven by the initiatives taken at the upper echelons of their social structures from which, as members of the (post-) feudal lowest caste, peasant immigrants and their families were excluded even if they had the capital to advance.) For example, Asian American transnational

entrepreneurs have been called the “bridge builders” between the United States and the Pacific economies, a function which has furthered these economies’ incorporation into the global capitalist system. In two-way business operations Asian American entrepreneurs serve as partners or mediators in the growing capital investments from the Far East in the United States, and they themselves engage in business activities overseas. Thus, encouraged by the Indian government, many Indian immigrants from New York invest in profit-making ventures in India such as urban real estate and construction of factories and medical centres (Lessinger 2002; DasGupta 1999). Korean-owned retail businesses in America receive supplies from major department stores in large cities in the United States and deliver U.S.-made goods to immigrants’ relatives in Korea (Min 2001; Espiritu 2003; Yu et al. 2004). Of all Asian groups in America, Chinese have been involved in transnational business most extensively. Because of language facility, familiarity with cultural customs, and local connections, Chinese American entrepreneurs, in collaboration with Taiwanese and Hong Kong traders and financiers, have had a decided competitive advantage in accessing vast markets of mainland China since it opened its doors to foreign investment in the 1980s. According to reports, in the 1990s overseas Chinese accounted for 70–90 percent of the total foreign investment in the Chinese economy, and American Chinese businessmen have played an important role in this activity (Weidenbaum 1996; Hu-Dehart 1999; Chang 2004; Saxenian and Quan 2006; Holdaway 2007).

Among Latino immigrants, Cuban entrepreneurs have been most active in business ventures in the Caribbean and South America (their own homeland has been closed to Western capital since the communist revolution in 1959). They have made Miami—the centre of the Cuban refugee diaspora in the United States—into a thriving global city with dense transnational networks of finance and trading operations and an intercontinental professional-managerial class. Other Latin American immigrants build bilateral links between U.S. cities in which they reside and their native countries, often the locations they originate from, with smaller business ventures (Grenier and Perez 2003; Stepick et al. 2003; Perez 2007; Smith and Guarnizo 1998; Eckstein 2009). Among Caribbean immigrants, Jamaicans with the largest proportion of members of middle class in this regional group and, among those, the largest—more than 10 percent—number of small-to-middle-scale entrepreneurs, have been most actively engaged in transnational import-export activities in their home-country, bringing from Jamaica food, music, and clothing for their ethnic stores in America, and taking back American products (Kasinitz and Vickerman 2001).

The transformative impact of financially powerful immigrants who undertake large-scale business investments in their home countries/regions has been globalization of those economies more than their glocalization, although, as

we shall see in the last section, their collaboration with residents of their native countries also results in the implantation there of elements of American business and organizational culture. The transnational activities of small-to-middle-scale traders, however, usually focused on their home-country localities, bring directly into these economies American consumer products and lifestyles which mix with and, thus, glocalize the local ways.

II. THE IMPACT OF PAST AND PRESENT IMMIGRANTS' TRANSNATIONALISM IN THE CIVIC-POLITICAL REALM

Whereas the comparison of the economic effects of past and present immigrants' transnational engagements yields a picture of the overall similarity with notable differences, when we consider their impact in the political realm, the overall outcome is that of difference with notable similarities. I begin with the major transformative effects in the civic-political sphere of home-country localities of turn-of-the-twentieth-century immigrants transnational activities. Against this comparative framework, I then identify the main areas of impact in this field of their contemporary successors.

The overwhelming majority of turn-of-the-twentieth-century South and East European immigrants in the United States, more than 90 percent of whom were from rural backgrounds, arrived with a group identity and a sense of belonging that extended no further than the *okolica*, local countryside.⁶ Paradoxically, it was only after they came to America and began to create organized immigrant networks for assistance and self-expression and establish group boundaries as they encountered an ethnically pluralistic and often hostile environment, that these (im)migrants developed translocal national identities with--to use a distinction of the Polish sociologist, Stanislaw Ossowski (1967; see also Anderson 1983)--their old-country ideological *Vaterlands* or the imagined communities of the encompassing *Patrias* as distinct from the *Heimats* or the local homelands as Italians, Poles, Ukrainians, Slovaks, Lithuanians, and so on. Lithuanians have referred to the United States as "the second birthplace of the[ir] nationality," and the same may be said of the others as well (quote after Park 1922: 51; see also Wyman 1993; Hoerder and Moch 1996; Jacobson 1995). Among the variety of agencies that immigrants created to help them confront the new environment, the foreign-language press played an important role in defining ethnic-group boundaries and fostering solidarity by propagating identification

⁶ East European Jews who brought their "mobile" spiritual community of klal-Yisroel, the community of Jews, which stretched back 25 centuries, were again the exception.

with a commitment to the old-country fatherland. In addition to current news from the homeland, all these newspapers regularly carried sections devoted to their group's national history and reprinted (and advertised) novels and poetry by heralds of nationalism and patriotism in their respective countries (Park 1922; Wyman 1993; Jacobson 1995; Nelli 1979; Morawska 1992).

As these newspapers with the stories about national heroes and famous events and the representations of national membership and its obligations reached immigrants' home-country villages either by mail or with visiting or returned *Amerikanci*, East and South European sojourners in the United States, their recipients began to develop an interest in and a sense of more encompassing identity with their *Vaterlands*. The reaction to this development of political authorities in the sender regions, particularly in multi-ethnic East Europe ruled by authoritarian regimes, who began sending special emissaries to "their" immigrant colonies in America "to prevent the exportation of these subversive ideas to émigrés' home localities," testifies to the effectiveness of this influence of immigrants and the threat it presented to the rulers. The Hungarian political elite, concerned with the growing national consciousness and separatist aspirations among émigrés from non-Hungarian groups under its rule, especially Slovak and Rusyn, launched a systematic propaganda action in these immigrant communities to ensure that the members remained "good Hungarian citizens" and stopped spreading their new national aspirations in their home-country villages. From the Russian consulates in American cities with large concentrations of Poles and Lithuanians—members of subordinate national minorities in the Russian empire—regular reports were sent to St. Petersburg about the immigrants who "awaken a Lithuanian [or Polish] national spirit and implant it back home when they return" (Rubchak 1992: 122; see also Stolarik 1980; Puskas 1982; Gletter 1980; Greene 1975; Wyman 1993; Conzen et al. 1992; Morawska 2001.) Definitely of a transformative nature in that it introduced new civic-political identities and commitments into émigrés' native villages, this particular effect of immigrants' transnational engagements cannot, however, be called glocalization in the earlier-defined meaning of this term because the emergence of modern national consciousness among the region's peasantry did not involve the implantation into their environment of outside, American components of civic-political orientations and practices.

The other major transformative civic-political effect of turn-of-the-twentieth-century immigrants' transnational engagements in their native communities was a dissemination of popular interest in and skills of self-organization among South and East European peasants. Within a decade or so after they settled in American cities, immigrants established in their "foreign colonies" a dense network of associations, such as local lodges of labour organizations in the industries that

accepted new immigrants,⁷ and a variety of mutual help cooperatives whose operation was often modelled on similar associations of Irish and German workers who had arrived and were already more adapted to the American life. These associations also reflected the lessons immigrants acquired in the citizenship classes offered by the progressive-minded middle-class Anglo-Protestant men and women in the foreign colonies. When they returned to their home-country villages and also when they visited there, members of these immigrant associations told local residents about the advantages of self-organization and taught them how to proceed. As historical reports indicate, by the 1920s rural regions in South and East Europe with large émigré populations in the United States had significantly more and more diversified local self-help organizations and, important, a noticeably greater degree of participation in the emerging peasant political parties than the regions with no large transatlantic (e)migration. (The information compiled from Koht 1946, Wyman 1993; Cerase 1971; Nelli 1979; Saloutos 1956; Cinel 1991; Golda 1976; Morawska 1993.)

The dissemination into present-day émigrés' home-country localities of skills in civic-political organization through visitors and returnees from the United States, and also—a technological novelty—through videos and recordings sent home by the immigrants-- most commonly recorded in the case of low-educated international travellers from traditional settings, has been the most notable enduring past-present similarity regarding the glocalizing effects of immigrant transnationalism. Because of different circumstances in which they evolve, however, both on the side of the sender and the receiver countries, other major effects of contemporary immigrants' transnational engagements in their home societies' civic-political realm have differed from the impact of their turn-of-the-twentieth-century predecessors.

We begin with the just noted enduring effect of immigrants' transnationalism, namely, dissemination of skills in civic-political organization. A century ago the transmitters of these skills were nearly exclusively men who constituted the overwhelming majority of immigrants and whose cultures, both in their native villages and in the working-class colonies in America, relegated public-sphere activities as the exclusive prerogative of men. In comparison, even in a large low-educated group of immigrants today this diffusion is carried out by—and has an influence on—women as much as men. The involvement of contemporary immigrant women in areas previously closed to females, that is, transnational

⁷ It was only in the 1930s with the pluralist spirit of New Deal politics and the founding of the immigrant-friendly national labour organization, the Congress of Industrial Organizations, that South and East European workers, immigrants and their native-born children, became fully accepted into the ranks of the American labour unions (Bodnar 1985; Brody 1980; Montgomery 1979; Kolko 1976.)

activities in their home-countries' public sphere, has been an outcome of the elevation of women's general educational status (starting with basic literacy) in home- and host-countries combined with legal provisions for their engagement in public affairs. Reflecting these developments has been a considerable expansion of present-day immigrant women's practical know-how in matters of public life deriving from their contacts with American schools, health clinics, and social welfare agencies, and accompanied, even in a lower educated group, by their increased assertiveness as individuals and expectations of self-realization outside of the home (Hondagneu-Sotelo 2003, 1997; Bhalla 2008; DaGupta 1999; Pardo 1997). As they sustain their transnational involvements in home countries, these women contribute to the implantation there of new ideas regarding women's entitlement to active participation in the public sphere—usually, especially in more traditional societies, female-area public sphere, such as education of children, care of the elderly, and servicing of communal events, but public sphere nevertheless (Mahler and Pessar 2001; Espiritu 2003; DasGupta 1999; Pardo 1997; Levitt 2001). To the extent that these transnationally engaged women transplant into their native communities new spaces for female activities and, especially, American-style, democratic ways of running them, such as tolerance of different opinions and compromise-seeking rather than confrontational style of discussions, the effect of these developments falls under the rubric of glocalization.

The other departure from the past-to-present continuity in the dissemination into the sender country of skills in civic-political organization resulting from immigrants' transnationalism is that it does involve a large segment of contemporary international travellers, a group with no equivalent a century ago, namely high-educated professionals.

Turn-of-the-twentieth-century immigrants' impact on the formation of the modern national consciousness among residents of their home-country communities does not have a contemporary equivalent, either. Most of the present-day sender countries from which the largest numbers of international migrants to North America originate have already completed or find themselves in an advanced stage of the nation-building process, and all segments of these societies, even members of the lowest strata, are included in the socialization into state-national membership by educational institutions and the public media. At the same time, both in the sender and receiver societies—although for different constellations of reasons—in the post-World War II era there has emerged a growing recognition of ethnic pluralism and tolerance of diversity of civic commitments and participation (in comparison, the laws regarding national membership, and public discourse about this issue a century ago commonly presumed the citizens' exclusive loyalty.) An important development that has contributed to this transformation has been the proliferation of international

organizations, laws, and bi- and multilateral treaties upholding human rights and civic entitlements of groups and individuals to sustain, among other things, their preferred commitments and identities, which, spread across the globe, have trickled down to the nation-states involved in this process. On the side of the sender countries, the (near-)completion of the nation-building process has relaxed the earlier-noted emphasis on citizens' exclusive national loyalty. And the official ideology of cultural pluralism in the receiver countries—of concern here, the United States—combined with its practical implementation in the legal system and public institutions that have legitimized *le droit a la difference* of the citizens, has brought present-day immigrant transnationalists “out of the closets” into the open where they can espouse their home-country commitments publicly with a sense of entitlement and without fear of opprobrium and accusations of civic disloyalty. (On the exclusive understanding of national membership in South and East Europe and the United States in the past, and on present-day legal and ideological tolerance of ethnic/national diversity, see Greene 1975; Morawska 2001; Castells 1996; Freeman 1998; Koslovski 1998; Cornelius, Martin, and Hollifield 1994; Shain 1999.)

The official recognition or at least tacit tolerance by present-day sender- and receiver-country governments of émigrés/immigrants' dual citizenship has been an important consequence of the above developments. As citizens of their home countries, immigrants in America have been reported to engage not only in local-level but also, especially higher educated groups, in national-level political affairs there. The extension of voting rights to émigré citizens abroad by a number of sender-country governments over the last two decades has significantly empowered them politically, especially in countries—such as Mexico or the Dominican Republic—with very large and well organized diasporas in the United States. Depending on the political programmes such transnationally active immigrants ally themselves with, the effects of their home-country voting may be conservative or transformative; if, as in the case of Colombia, they can also run for local political offices in their native communities and if thorough political activities infuse there elements of the outside, American democratic procedure and style of debate, receiver-country local political processes become glocalized. Public interventions by immigrant groups in the politics of their home countries have become increasingly common. Thus, Palestinian Americans have criticized the radicals in the PLO and lauded its moderate wing, and in the wake of the Tiananmen Square massacre Chinese people in the United States used the internet and fax machines to spread anti-government propaganda in China. Home-oriented politics of organized immigrant groups in the host country constitute a particularly strong connection to the native country in the case of political refugees. This connection is further reinforced and immigrant demarches become more effec-

tive in mobilizing the sender-country political establishment and public opinion if their causes coincide with its foreign policy interests. The sustained anti-Castro activism of Cuban refugees in Miami, ideologically and financially supported by the U.S. government, such as the Radio Marti programs broadcast into Cuba, has reportedly helped to keep up morale at home—a reconstitutive rather than glocalizing effect whereby immigrants’ transnational engagements contribute to the endurance of unspoken resistance “from below” to the authoritarian rule. (Information about immigrants’ involvements in their home-country politics from Hu-Dehart 1997; Sheffer 1986; Guarnizo 2000; Pedraza and Rumbaut 1996; Eckstein 2009; Fitzgerald 2004; Levitt 2001; on sender-country political authorities’ soliciting such engagements, see Levitt and de la Dehesa 1998; DeSipio 1998; Goldring 2002).

Public lobbying by immigrant groups in America on behalf of their fellow nationals in home countries has been practiced for a long time: for example, by American Jews in 1905 against the Kishinev pogrom in Russia, and by Poles, Czechs, and Slovaks during the Versailles Conference in 1918 for national independence of their homelands (Park 1922; Stolarik 1968; Kantowicz 1975; Vardy 1985; Wyman 1993; Zecker 1998). Today, however, and for the earlier-identified reasons, such immigrant lobbying activities are more open and self-assertive and orchestrated on several public fronts at once, involving actors (conspicuously absent in turn-of-the-twentieth-century immigrants’ attempts to exert an impact on home-country matters through public action) such as political representatives who are often members of the lobbying group, national media and American civic associations and public opinion that can be reached by phone, fax, or the internet (Smith and Guarnizo 1998; Fitzgerald 2002; Hu-Dehart 1999). Political lobbying by contemporary immigrants is likely, I would argue, to bring at least some of the desired effects to the home country more often than similar public actions of their predecessors a century ago because it is conducted in an atmosphere of civic pluralism with recognition of the diversity of ethnic groups’ interests and concerns, on several fronts at once and, if effectively advertised, with the support of mainstream-society American people and institutions.

III. THE IMPACT OF PAST AND PRESENT IMMIGRANTS’ TRANSNATIONALISM IN THE SOCIO-CULTURAL REALM

As in the previously discussed situations, a mix of similarities and differences in the impact of past and present immigrants’ transnational engagements on their home-country communities’ culture and social relations yields distinct overall pictures.

My comparative assessment of these effects a century ago and today reveals three main enduring features. First has been the emergence of a culture of transnational migration understood as the naturalization of cross-border travels as a social norm and cultural expectation. Both now and then it has been most pervasive at the local level in the regions most affected by (e)migration to the United States. An important difference is that today these local cultures of migration also encompass independent travels of women. Both then and now, too, in countries regularly sending large numbers of people abroad the culture of migration has “trickled up” from local- to national-level systems so that the presence of diasporas in the United States or, broader, in the world has become a component of sender societies’ national self-representations: Italy’s, Poland’s, Slovakia’s, Ukraine’s since the late 19th century, and the Dominican Republic’s, Jamaica’s, India’s, Philippines’ since the 1970s-80s.

The second major similarity in the impact of turn-of-the-twentieth-century and contemporary immigrants’ on the cultures their home countries has been a transplantation to local sender societies of elements of American material (objects and lifestyles) and symbolic (orientations and values) culture through immigrants’ transnational activities and through the returnees and, as a consequence, a transformation-as-glocalization of these local systems. As reported by turn-of-the-twentieth-century ethnographers, common requests from residents of South and East European villages to their relatives in America for “better fabrics for clothing, ready-made clothing, watches, various small innovations for household use etc...” (Duda-Dziewierz 1938: 50), have certainly endured into the present era. For example, dress habits and home furnishing preferences in Mexican towns and villages today sending large numbers of migrants to the United States have been reported to glocalize or transform into native Mexican-and-American “blends” under the impact of émigrés’ transnational activities. Reports from Jamaica and Poland about the “Americanization” of cultural tastes, dress, and the behaviour of residents in locations frequently visited by “their” émigrés in the United States have been similar. (In the latter case this impact may gradually give way to transplantations from West European countries where more and more Polish migrants travel since Poland’s accession to the European Union in 2004.) (Information compiled from Smith 2006; Levitt 2001; Morawska 2004.)

Past and present immigrants who sustain active contacts in their homelands also mediate in transferring elements of their host-country symbolic culture such as life-orientations and styles of everyday conduct. Like present-day Dominican immigrants who come home from America “more individualistic [and] more materialistic ... [thinking] that ‘things’ are everything rather than service, respect, and duty” (Levitt 2001: 60), their turn-of-the-twentieth-century predecessors, visiting or returning to their villages “behaved like a *pan*” [member of the gentry],

and impressed the locals with their “American habits of candour and ostentatious consumption” (*Pamiętniki Emigrantów* 1997, vol. I: 85) which people tried to imitate. The third enduring feature of the transformative impact of turn-of-the-twentieth-century and contemporary immigrants’ transnational engagements has been the glocalization of home-country local social relations. These effects could be presented as well under the cultural realm. Students of transnational involvements of Italians, Poles, Ukrainians, and Hungarians a century ago and of similar activities of Asian Indians, Koreans, Mexicans, and Jamaicans today, have reported the alterations of local norms and practices regulating social relations originated by those immigrant, particularly making these exchanges more informal and egalitarian. (Information compiled from Koht 1946; Gilkey 1950; Cerase 1971; Cinel 1991; Saloutos 1050; Smith and Guarnizo 1992; Grasmuck and Pessar 1996; Golda 1974.)

If the glocalizing effects on home-country symbolic cultures (including the norms guiding social interactions) of transnationally active past and present lower-class immigrants from traditional home-country settings can be assessed as by and large similar, those of highly skilled contemporary émigrés should be classified as overall different. This is largely because this category of international travellers and, thus, the sphere of transnational activities did not exist a century ago, and, because the impact they exert has been primarily on the upper echelons of the national (rather than local) home-country culture and social relations. Thus, for example, through their intensely transnational lives, Hong Kong and Taiwanese immigrant businessmen transplant portions of middle-class American culture, especially the culture of business transactions to equivalent class circles in their home country and other countries where they operate (Seagrave 1995; Kao and Bibney 1993; Chang 2004; Koehn and Yin 2002; Saxenian 2006). Professional Asian Indian immigrants’ transnational activities in their home country bring American ways to India. Immigrants’ “transnational links,” noted one observer after enumerating the multitude of transnational exchanges between India and the United States carried by Indian American émigrés, “are exerting increasing pressure on Indian culture, accelerating a process of Westernization that has become increasingly American-inflected” (Lessinger 2000: 158). Middle-class Asian Indian, South Korean, Polish, and Hungarian American immigrants who assume jobs in their home countries stationed there either as employees of transnational companies or on part-time appointments at the universities, research institutes, and service and entertainment industries have been reported to contribute actively to the dissemination there of Western/American professional, technological, and organization cultures. When these innovations take root, the styles of operation, business and scientific research procedures, and social relations which mediate them become glocalized, displaying distinct blends of

endogenous and exogenous features. (Information compiled from Saxenian 2006; Chang 2004; this author's informal interviews in Poland in the summer of 2008.)

Last to note among new, post-World War II developments in terms of the transformative effects of immigrants' transnational engagements on their home-country localities' cultural outlooks and social customs has been the impact of present-day émigré women who visit or return to live in their native communities. Their role in the dissemination among local female residents of interest in and skills in self-organization and of the idea of entitlement to public-sphere participation has already been noted in the previous section. Transnationally active émigré women have also been reported to challenge accepted traditional gender relations in the private sphere: in the family, especially between husbands and wives, and among kin and friends. Having experienced in America the increased sense of economic independence and, having observed egalitarian gender relations in the mainstream receiver society (through contacts with American institutions and exposure to the American media), Mexican, Dominican, Asian Indian, Korean, and Chinese immigrant women expect to be treated as equal to men and to have their opinions and decisions respected. When they display this new role model during their visits in or upon return to their home-countries, either verbally or in practice in their everyday interactions with local residents, the latter's reaction is often confusion or open disapprobation of these women's comportment viewed as inappropriate for their gender, but also, especially among fellow females, curiosity and approval. As local women begin to recognize "the yawning gap in [their home] traditions in the treatment of men and women" (Khalndelwal 2002: 164), a number of them proceed to disapprove, first among themselves and then to their husbands and male kin, the taken-for-granted traditional model of patriarchal gender relations. "[Men] are too macho here. They just want a woman to be waiting around to fulfil their every need. I see a [different] way the couples act when they come to visit [from America]. He shows her respect. They make decisions together"(Levitt 2001: 61)-- this comment of a woman in the Dominican Republic has been echoed by her counterparts from other groups. The undermining of the taken-for-granted habituated ways of behaviour regarding gender relations in their home-country localities by émigré/returnee women has been the major effect of their transnational engagements. Once questioned, these conventions may gradually give way to more egalitarian forms of gender relations if the demonstration effect provided by the émigrés is enduring and if it is backed up by "lessons" from other sources such as TV programmes and public education.

CONCLUSION

Expanding upon the underexplored implication of the premise of “interdependency” informing the concept of transnationalism, I have comparatively assessed here the major transformative effects of transnational engagements of turn-of-the-twentieth-century and contemporary immigrants in America in their home-country localities on the latter’s economies, civic-political functioning, material and symbolic cultures, and social relations. In order to locate the analysis of immigrants’ transnational activities in an encompassing theoretical framework, I proposed to conceive of their impact on home-country structures as a phase of the structuration process which posits the ongoing (re)constitution of societal structure(s) and human agency. And, in the hope of integrating more closely the research agenda of the study of international migration—here, immigrants’ transnationalism—and the current concerns of mainstream social sciences, I proposed to conceptualize some of the transformative effects of immigrants’ transnational activities on their home-country societal structures in terms of globalization, understood as the process of simultaneous homogenization (in this case, by bringing recognizably American elements into recipient local societies) and heterogeneization (here, by differentiating thusly emergent “products” from recipient local traditions).

The foregoing discussion will have achieved its intended purpose if it contributes to the incorporation of the effects on the home societies of immigrants’ engagements into the conceptualization and empirical analysis of the phenomenon of transnationalism. I myself am particularly intrigued by the conditions, macro- and micro-level as well as agentic, that account for putting down roots and the endurance or dwindling and eventual disappearance of the transformative effects of immigrants’ transnational engagements in their home countries. For example, the modern national—Ukrainian—consciousness tangibly intensified and spread at the beginning of the 20th century among the Ukrainian peasantry under the impact of American (and Canadian) émigrés, was subsequently squashed under Stalinist rule, only to revive at the turn-of-the-twenty-first-century prompted by a very different constellation of circumstances. Or, weakened in the initial decades of the post-communist era, the so-called *homo sovieticus* set of coping strategies widespread in Polish popular culture under the previous regime and consisting of an entrepreneurial spirit of the opportunistic-*debrouillard* (rather than modern-rational) kind based on the “unofficial” (informal/extra-legal) means of making everyday life possible, has been reported to have revived with a vengeance with the masses of lower-class Polish migrants returning from work-seeking sojourns in the West. Employed in secondary or informal sectors of receiver-country postindustrial economies, those migrants pursue their goals of earning and

saving as much money as possible to be taken home by effectively (re)using their habituated old/new-regime coping strategies and, when they return, reimplant these reward-winning orientations and practices into their home localities with the widespread demonstration effect on their neighbours. I intend to investigate more closely this next-next-phase of the structuration process in relation to the outcomes of immigrants' transnationalism in the near future.

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