



REMHU - Revista Interdisciplinar da
Mobilidade Humana

ISSN: 1980-8585

remhu@csem.org.br

Centro Scalabriniano de Estudos
Migratórios
Brasil

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MIGRATION AND IDENTITIES IN THE GLOBALIZED WORLD
REMHU - Revista Interdisciplinar da Mobilidade Humana, vol. 18, núm. 34, enero-junio,
2010, pp. 11-25
Centro Scalabriniano de Estudos Migratórios
Brasília, Brasil

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Contextualização

MIGRATION AND IDENTITIES IN THE GLOBALIZED WORLD

*Zygmunt Bauman**

The article analyzes the changing patterns of global migration and its consequences regarding the identity processes. After highlighting the change caused by the passage from 'solid' to 'liquid' modernity, the author suggests that identity can be interpreted as a constant process of construction and renegotiation, in a dialectic and provisory search for freedom and security.

Keywords: Identity; Migration; Globalization; Diasporas

A good point to start is the astonishing discovery made couple of years ago by a group of researchers from the Zoological Society of London, who went to Panama to investigate social life of local wasps. The group was equipped with a cutting-edge technology, which it used over 6000 hours to track and monitor the movements of 422 wasps coming from 33 nests¹. What the researchers found out, has turned upside down their and ours centuries-old stereotypes of the social insect's habits.

Indeed, ever since the concept of 'social insects' (embracing bees, termites, ants and wasps) was coined and popularized, a firm and hardly

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¹As reported on 25 January 2007 by Richard Jones, in 'Why insects get such a buzz out of socializing', <http://www.guardian.co.uk/theguardian/2007/jan/25/features11.g21>

ever questioned belief was shared by the learned zoologists and the lay public: that the 'sociability' of insects is confined to the nest *to which they belong* – the place in which they have been hatched and to which they return every day of their life, bringing the spoils of their foraging ventures to be shared with the rest of the hive's natives. The possibility that some working bees or wasps would 'migrate', cross the boundaries between nests, abandon the hive of *birth* and join another one, a hive of *choice*, was seen (if it was ever contemplated) as an incongruous idea. It was axiomatically assumed instead that the 'natives', the born and therefore 'legitimate' members of the nest, would promptly chase the maverick newcomers away and destroy them in case they refuse to run.

As all axioms, or more to the point all convictions tacitly assumed, parts of *doxa* or commonsense, that belief was neither questioned nor tested. The thought of tracing the traffic between nests or hives did not occur either to ordinary folks or to the learned experts. For the scholars, the assumption that the socializing instincts are limited to the kith and kin, in other words to the community of birth and *therefore* of belonging, 'stood to reason'. For the ordinary folks, 'it was obvious'. Admittedly, the technical means to answer the question of inter-nest migration (electronic tagging of individual wasps) were not available - but they were not sought either, since the question as such was not considered worthy of being asked. Instead, a lot of research energy and funds were dedicated to the question how social insects spot a stranger in their midst so they could bar its access or chase it away: do they distinguish it by sight? By sound? By smell? By subtle nuances of conduct? The intriguing question was how the insects manage what we, the humans, with all our smart and sophisticated technology, only half succeed to achieve. That is, how they succeed in keeping the borders of 'community' watertight and to protect the separation of 'natives' from 'aliens' – of 'us' from 'them'.

What passes for 'reason', as much as what is taken to be obvious, tends however to change over time. It changes together with the human condition and with the challenges it posits. It tends to be *praxeomorphic*: it takes shape after the pattern of realities 'out there', perceived through the lenses/prism of human practices – of what humans currently know how to do, are trained, groomed and inclined to be doing – and *do*. Scholarly agendas as well as popular perceptions of reality are derivatives of mundane human practices. Problems encountered in daily human cohabitation decide the 'topical relevance' of issues and suggests the hypotheses which the research projects seek subsequently to confirm or disprove. In most cases, if no effort is made to test the received popular wisdom, it is not as

much for the lack of research tools, as for the fact that common sense of the time does not suggest that such a test is needed and the research tools to conduct it need to be sought. But something must have happened to common human experience that nowadays casts doubt on the received wisdom: on the 'naturalness' and universality of the life-long determination of 'belonging' by birth...

Contrary to everything known (or rather believed to be known) for centuries, the London team found in Panama an impressive majority, 56% of 'working wasps', to change their nests in their life time; and not just migrate to other nests as temporary, unwelcome, discriminated against and marginalized visitors, sometimes actively persecuted but always suspected and resented – but as full and 'rightful' (one is almost tempted to say 'ID card carrying') members of the adoptive 'community', collecting food and like them feeding and grooming the native brood just like the 'native' workers did. The inevitable conclusion was that the nests they researched were as a *rule* 'mixed populations', inside which the native-born and the immigrant wasps lived and worked cheek-to-cheek and shoulder-to-shoulder – becoming, at least for the human outsiders, indistinguishable from each other except with the help of electronic tags...

What the news brought from Panama reveal is above anything else the astonishing reversal of perspective: the selfsame beliefs that not so long ago were imagined to be reflections of the 'state of nature', have been revealed now, retrospectively, to have been but projections upon the insects of the scholars' own human, all-too-human preoccupations and practices (though the kind of practices that are now dwindling and receding into past). Once the somewhat younger generation of scholars brought to the forest of Panama their own (and ours own) experience of the emergent life practices acquired and absorbed in the now cosmopolitan London, that 'multi-cultured' home of interlocked diasporas, they have duly 'discovered' the fluidity of membership and perpetual mixing of populations to be the *norm* also among social insects: and a norm apparently implemented in 'natural' ways, with no help of royal commissions, hastily introduced bills of law, high courts and asylum-seekers' camps... In this case, like in so many others, the praxeomorphic nature of human perception prompted them to find 'out there, in the world' what they have learned to do and are doing 'here, at home', and what we all carry in our heads or in our subconscious as an image of 'how things truly are'...

How could that be?! – asked the Londoners baffled by what they found, hardly believing at first the facts so different from what their teachers told them to expect. When they sought a convincing explanation of the

wasps' of Panama bizarre ways and means, they found it expectedly in the warehouse of tested and familiar notions. Wishing to accommodate the unfamiliar in the familiar worldview, they decided that the newcomers allowed to settle 'could not be truly aliens' – strangers no doubt they were, but not as strange as the other, *genuine* strangers: 'they joined the nests of closely related wasps – cousins, maybe...' Such explanation put anxiety to rest: after all, the right of 'close relatives' to visit and to settle in the family home was always a birthright. But how do you know that the alien wasps were 'close relatives' of the natives? Well, they must have been, mustn't they, otherwise the insiders would've forced them to leave or killed them on the spot – QED.

What the London researchers clearly forgot or failed to mention, is that it took a century or more of hard work, sometimes sword-brandishing and some other times brain-washing, to convince the Prussians, the Bavarians, the Badenians, the Württembergians or the Saxons (just as it takes now to convince the 'Ossis' and 'Wessis' in Germany or Calabrians and Lombardians in Italy...) that they were all close relatives of each other, cousins or even brothers, descendants of the same ancient German stock animated by the same German spirit, and that for those reasons they should behave like close relatives do: be hospitable to each other and cooperate in protecting and increasing shared welfare... Or that on the way to the modern centralized nation-state and to the identification of nationhood with citizenship, the revolutionary France had to include the slogan of *fraternité* in its call addressed to all sorts of 'locals' now appointed *les citoyens* – to people who seldom looked (let alone moved) heretofore beyond the frontiers of Languedoc, Poitou, Limousin, Burgundy, Brittany, Guyenne or Franche-Comte... *Fraternité*, brotherhood: all Frenchmen are brothers, so please behave as brothers do, love each other, help each other, make the whole of France your common home, and the land of France your shared homeland! Or that since the time of French revolution all movements bend on proselytizing, recruiting, expanding and integrating the populations of heretofore separate and mutually suspicious kingdoms and princedoms, have had the habit of addressing their current and prospective converts as 'brothers and sisters'...

But to cut a long story short: the difference between 'cognitive maps' carried in their heads by the older generations of entomologists, and that acquired/adopted by the youngest, reflects the passage from the 'nation-building' stage in the history of modern states to the 'multicultural' phase in their history; more generally, from 'solid' modernity, bent on entrenching and fortifying the principle of territorial, exclusive and indivisible sovereignty,

and on surrounding the sovereign territories with impermeable borders – to ‘liquid’ modernity, with its fuzzy and eminently permeable borderlines, the unstoppable (even if bewailed, resented and resisted) devaluation of spatial distances and the defensive capacity of the territory, and an intense human traffic across all and any frontiers. And as to the human daily-life practice: from the assimilatory pressures and expectations of impending uniformity, to the prospects of living permanently with variety and difference.

Human traffic goes nowadays both ways, frontiers are crossed from both sides. Britain, for instance, is today a country of *immigration* (even if the successive home secretaries go out of their way to be seen as trying hard to erect new barriers and stem the influx of foreigners); but also, according to the latest calculations, almost million and a half born Britons are currently settled in Australia, almost a million in Spain, several hundred thousand in Nigeria, even a dozen in the North Korea. The same applies to France, Germany, Poland, Ireland, Italy, Spain; in one measure or another, it applies to any bordered-off territory of the planet except a few remaining totalitarian enclaves that still deploy the anachronistic Panopticon-style techniques designed more to hold the inmates (state subjects) inside the walls (state borders) than to keep the aliens *outside*.

Population of almost every country is nowadays a *collection of diasporas*. Population of almost every sizeable city is nowadays an aggregate of ethnic, religious, lifestyle enclaves in which the line dividing ‘insiders’ and ‘outsiders’ is a hotly contested issue; while the right to draw that line, to keep it intact and make it unassailable, is the prime stake in the skirmishes for influence and battles for recognition that follow. Most of the *states* have passed by now and left behind their nation-building stage and so are no longer interested in ‘assimilating’ the incoming strangers (that is, forcing them to shake off and forfeit their separate identities and to ‘dissolve’ in the uniform mass of ‘the natives’); and so the settings of contemporary lives and the yarn of which life experience is woven are likely to remain protean, variegated and kaleidoscopic for a long time to come. For all that matters and all we know, they may keep as well changing forever.

Cities, and particularly mega-cities like London, are the dustbins into which problems produced by globalization are dumped. They are also laboratories in which the art of living with those problems (though not of resolving them) is experimented with, put to the test, and (hopefully, hopefully...) developed. Most seminal impacts of globalization (above all, the divorce of power from politics, and the shifting of functions once undertaken by political authorities sideways, to the markets, and downward, to individual life-politics) have been by now thoroughly investigated and

described in great detail. I will confine myself therefore to one aspect of the globalization process – too seldom considered in connection with the paradigmatic change in the study and theory of culture: namely, the changing patterns of global migration.

There were three different phases in the history of modern-era migration:

The first wave of migration followed the logic of the tri-partite syndrome: territoriality of sovereignty, 'rooted' identity, gardening posture (subsequently referred to, for the sake of brevity, as TRG). That was the emigration from the 'modernized' centre (read: the site of order-building and economic-progress – the two main industries turning out, and off, the growing numbers of 'wasted humans'), partly exportation and partly eviction of up to 60 million people, a huge amount by nineteenth century standards, to 'empty lands' (read: lands whose native population could be struck off the 'modernized' calculations; be literally uncouncted and unaccounted for, presumed either non-existent or irrelevant). Native residues still alive after massive slaughters and massive epidemics have been proclaimed by the settlers the objects of 'white man's civilizing mission'.

The second wave of migration could be best modeled as an 'Empire emigrates back' case. With dismantling of colonial empires, a number of indigenous people in various stages of their 'cultural advancement' followed their colonial superiors to the metropolis. Upon arrival, they were cast in the only worldview-strategic mould available: one constructed and practiced earlier in the nation-building era to deal with the categories earmarked for 'assimilation' – a process aimed at the annihilation of cultural difference, casting the 'minorities' at the receiving end of crusades, *Kulturkämpfe* and proselytizing missions (currently renamed, in the name of 'political correctness', as 'citizenship education' aimed at 'integration'). This story is not yet finished: time and again, its echoes reverberate in the declarations of intent of the politicians who notoriously tend to follow the habits of Minerva's Owl known to spread its wings by the end of the day. As the first phase of migration, the drama of the 'empire migrating back' is tried, though in vain, to be squeezed into the frame of the now outdated TRG syndrome.

The third wave of modern migration, now in full force and still gathering momentum, leads into the age of *diasporas*: a world-wide archipelago of ethnic/religious/linguistic settlements – oblivious to the trails blazed and paved by the imperialist-colonial episode and following instead the globalization-induced logic of the planetary redistribution of life resources. Diasporas are scattered, diffused, extend over many nominally

sovereign territories, ignore territorial claims to the supremacy of local demands and obligation, are locked in the double (or multiple) bind of 'dual (or multiple) nationality' and dual (or multiple) loyalty. The present-day migration differs from the two previous phases by moving both ways (virtually all countries, including Britain, are nowadays both 'immigrant' or 'emigrant'), and privileging no routes (routes are no longer determined by the imperial/colonial links of the past). It differs also in exploding the old TRG syndrome and replacing it with an EAH one (extraterritoriality, 'anchors' displacing the 'roots' as primary tools of identification, hunting strategy).

The new migration casts a question mark upon the bond between identity and citizenship, individual and place, neighbourhood and belonging. Jonathan Rutherford, acute and insightful observer of the fast changing frames of human togetherness, notes² that the residents of the London street on which he lives form

a neighborhood of different communities, some with networks extending only to the next street, others which stretch across the world. It is a neighbourhood of porous boundaries in which it is difficult to identify who belongs and who is an outsider. What is it we belong to in this locality? What is it that each of us calls home and, when we think back and remember how we arrived here, what stories do we share?

Living like the rest of us (or most of that rest) in a *diaspora* (how far stretching, and in what direction(s)?) among *diasporas* (how far stretching, and in what direction(s)?) has for the first time forced on the agenda the issue of 'art of living with a difference' – which may appear on the agenda only once the difference is no longer seen as a merely temporary irritant, and so unlike in the past urgently requiring arts, skills, teaching and learning. The idea of 'human rights', promoted in the EAH setting to replace/complement the TRG institution of territorially determined citizenship, translates today as the 'right to remain different'. By fits and starts, that new rendition of the human-rights idea sediments, at best, *tolerance*; it has as yet to start in earnest to sediment *solidarity*. And it is a moot question whether it is fit to conceive group solidarity in any other form than that of the fickle and frail, predominantly virtual 'networks', galvanized and continually re-modeled by the interplay of individual connecting and disconnecting, making calls and declining to reply them.

The new rendition of the human-rights idea disassembles hierarchies and tears apart the imagery of upward ('progressive') 'cultural evolution'.

² RUTHERFORD, Jonathan. *After Identity*, p. 59-60.

Forms of life float, meet, clash, crash, catch hold of each other, merge and hive off with (to paraphrase Georg Simmel) equal specific gravity. Steady and stolid hierarchies and evolutionary lines are replaced with interminable and endemically inconclusive battles of recognition; at the utmost, with eminently re-negotiable pecking orders. Imitating Archimedes, reputed to insist (probably with a kind of desperation which only an utter nebulosity of the project might cause) that he would turn the world upside down if only given a solid enough fulcrum, we may say that we would tell who is to assimilate to whom, whose dissimilarity/idiosyncrasy is destined for a chop and whose is to emerge on top, if we only were given a hierarchy of cultures. Well, we are not given it, and unlikely to be given soon.

We are all now, or fast become, like the wasps of Panama. But more exactly, it has been by chance the lot of the wasps of Panama to 'make history', as the first 'social entity' to which the emergent, precocious and waiting-to-be-recognized-and-endorsed cognitive frame was applied; a frame derived from our novel experience of increasingly (and probably permanently) variegated setting of human cohabitation, the fuzziness of the line separating the 'inside' from the 'outside', and the daily practice of mixing and elbow-rubbing with difference. Immanuel Kant's more than two-centuries old *prediction* – that designing, elaborating and putting in operation rules of mutual hospitality must at some point become a necessity for the human species since we all inhabit the surface of a spherical planet – now turns into *reality*. Or it becomes rather the most seminal challenge of our time, one that calls for the most urgent and most thoroughly considered response.

The composition of the over two hundred 'sovereign units' on the political map of the planet is increasingly reminiscent of that of the thirty-three wasps' nests investigated by the research expedition of the London Zoological Society. When trying to make sense of the present state of our planetary human cohabitation, we could do worse than borrowing the models and the categories that the researchers in Panama were obliged to deploy in order to make sense of their findings. Indeed, none of the nests they explored had the means to keep their borders watertight, and each had to accept the perpetual exchange of its population. On the other hand, each seemed to manage quite well under the circumstances: to absorb the newcomers without friction and suffer no malfunction because of the departure of some older residents. Furthermore, there was nothing in sight remotely reminiscent of an 'insect centre' able to regulate the insect traffic – or, for that matter, anything else amenable to regulating. Each nest had to cope with the life-tasks more or less on its own, though the high rate of

'personnel turnover' probably assured that the know-how gained by any one nest could and did travel freely and contributed to the survival success of all other nests.

Moreover, London researchers seem, firstly, not to have found much evidence of inter-nest wars. Secondly, they found that the inter-nest flow of 'cadres' appeared to compensate for the locally produced excesses or deficits of nest populations. Thirdly, they realized that the coordination and indirect cooperation among social insects of Panama have been, it seems, sustained without either coercion or propaganda; without commanding officers and headquarters in sight; indeed, without *centre*...

Whether we admit it or not, and whether we relish it or fear - we, the humans scattered among more than two hundred 'sovereign units' known under the name of 'the states', also manage for some time now to live *without a centre* – even if the absence of a clear, all-powerful, unquestionably authoritative and uncontested global centre is a constant temptations for the mighty and the arrogant to fill that void or at least to try to fill it. 'Centrality' of the 'centre' has been decomposed and the link between previously intimately connected and coordinated spheres of authority has been (perhaps irreparably) broken. Local condensations of economic, military, intellectual or artistic powers and influences are no longer (if they ever were) coinciding. Maps of the world on which colors of political entities mark their relative share and importance in – respectively – global industry, trade, investment, military power, scientific achievements or artistic creation, would not overlap. And to make such maps serviceable for any length of time, the paints we use would need be applied sparingly and be easy to wash off, since the current rank of any land in the pecking order of influence and impact is by no means assured to last.

And so in our desperate effort to grasp the dynamics of planetary affairs, the old and hard dying habit of organizing the mental image of global power balance with the help of such conceptual tools as centre and periphery, hierarchy, superiority and inferiority, looks ever more as a handicap rather than, as before, an asset; as blinders rather than search lights. The tools developed and applied in the research of Panama wasps may well prove much more suitable for this task.

I suggest that 'identities' exist today solely in the process of continuous renegotiation. 'Identity formation', or more correctly their 're-formation', turns into a life-long task, never complete; at no moment of life is the identity 'final'. There always remains an outstanding task of re-adjustment, since neither conditions of life nor the sets of opportunities and nature of threats ever stop to change. That in-built 'non-finality', the

incurable inconclusiveness of the task of self-identification, causes a lot of tension and anxiety. For that anxiety, there is no easy remedy.

At any rate, there is no radical cure, because the efforts of 'identity formation' veer uneasily, as they must, between the two equally central human values: freedom and security. These values, equally indispensable for decent human life, are difficult to reconcile, and the perfect balance between them remains still to be found. Freedom, after all, tends to come in a package deal with *insecurity*, while security tends to be packed together with *constraints on freedom*. And as we resent both insecurity and un-freedom, we would be hardly satisfied with any feasible combination of freedom with security. Hence, instead of a 'linear progress' towards more freedom and more security, a pendulum-like movement could be observed thus far, and most likely will be in the years ahead: first overwhelmingly and staunchly towards one of the two values, and then away from it and towards the other.

Currently, it seems, in many, perhaps most places on the planet, the resentment of insecurity prevails over the fear of un-freedom (though no one can tell how long this tendency will last). In Britain, for instance, a vast majority of people declare that they are willing to give up quite a few civil liberties in order to (hopefully) reduce the threats to security. Most are ready, in the name of more personal safety, to accept identity cards, so far stubbornly rejected in Britain in the name of individual freedom and privacy; and most want the state authorities, again for the sake of security, to have the right to tap private telephone calls and open private mail... And it is in the realm of security, and under the banner of 'more security', that the link between the political authorities of the day and the individuals, their subjects, is forged and mutual understanding and coordinated actions are sought.

The dismembering and disabling of the orthodox supra-individual, tightly structured and powerfully structuring centres, seem to run parallel with the emergent centrality of the orphaned self. In the void left behind by the retreat or fading political authorities, it is now the self that strives, or is forced to assume, the function of the centre of the *Lebenswelt* (that privatized/individualized/subjectivized rendition of the universe). It is the 'Self' that recasts the rest of the world as its own periphery, while assigning, defining and attributing differentiated relevance to its parts according to its own needs, desires, ambitions, and apprehensions. The task of holding society together (whatever the notion of 'society' may mean under the liquid-modern conditions) is in the course of being 'subsidiarized', 'contracted out', or simply falling off to the realm of individual life-politics.

It is being left increasingly to the enterprise of the 'networking' and 'networked' selves and to their connecting/disconnecting initiatives and operations.

All that does not mean that the 'normal', weekday conduct of the individuals has become random, un-patterned and uncoordinated. It only means that the non-randomness, regularity and coordination of individually undertaken actions can be, and are as a rule, attained by other means than the solid-modern expedients and stratagems of enforcement, policing and chain of command – those preferred and deployed by the 'totalities' of the past, bidding for being 'greater than the sum of its parts' and bent on forcing/training/drilling its 'human units' into repetitive, routine, disciplined, normatively regulated conduct.

Everywhere, inter-human bonds, whether inherited or tied-up in the course of current interaction, lose their past institutional protections which are now viewed increasingly as irritating and unbearable constraints imposed upon the individual freedom of choice and self-assertion. Liberated from their institutional frame (now censured and resented as a 'cage' or 'prison'), bonds become tenuous and frail, easily breakable and more often than not short-lived.

In a remarkable synthesis of life experiences most common in our individualized society, François de Singly³ lists dilemmas that tend to cast each of the individual practitioners of the art of life in a state of acute and incurable uncertainty and perpetual hesitation. Life pursuits cannot but oscillate between mutually incompatible, even starkly opposite targets, as for instance joining and opting out, imitation and invention, routine and spontaneity – all those oppositions being but derivatives or exemplifications of the meta-opposition, supreme opposition in which individual life is inscribed and from which it is unable to cut itself free: the opposition between security and freedom – both in equal measure ardently coveted, but excruciatingly difficult to be reconciled and virtually impossible to be equally satisfied at the same time.

The product of self-creation, the process operated by the art of life, is supposed to be the 'identity' of creator. Given the oppositions which self-creation is struggling in vain to reconcile, and the interplay between constantly changing world and similarly unstable self-definitions of the individuals trying hard to catch up with the changing life conditions, identity can't be however internally consistent, nor can it at any point exude the air of finality leaving no room (and no urge) for further improvement. Identity

³ SINGLY, François de. *Les uns avec les autres: Quand individualisme crée du lien*, p. 108-109.

is perpetually *in statu nascendi*, each of the forms it assumes suffering of more or less acute inner contradiction, each to greater or lesser extent failing to satisfy and yearning for reform, each lacking in self-confidence that could be offered solely by comfortably long life-expectation.

As Claude Dubar⁴ suggests, 'identity is nothing else but a result simultaneously stable and provisional, individual and collective, subjective and objective, biographical and structured, of diverse processes of socialization which at the same time construct the individuals and define the institutions.' We may observe that 'socialization' itself, contrary to the universally held not-so-long-ago, and still frequently expressed opinion, is not a one-directional process, but the complex and unstable product of an on-going interplay between the yearning for individual freedom of self-creation and equally strong desire of security that only the stamp of social approval, countersigned by a community (or communities) of reference, can offer. The tension between the two seldom subsides for long and hardly ever vanishes altogether. And François de Singly rightly suggest⁵ that in theorizing the present-day identities the metaphors of 'roots' and 'uprooting' (or, let me add, the related trope of 'disembedding'), all implying one-off nature of the individual's emancipation from the tutelage of the community of birth as well as the finality and irrevocability of the act, are better abandoned and replaced by the tropes of casting and drawing of anchors.

Indeed, unlike in the case of 'uprooting' and 'disembedding', there is nothing irrevocable, let alone ultimate, in drawing the anchor. If having been torn out of the soil in which they grew, roots are likely to desiccate and die out so that their (very unlikely) reviving will be verging on miraculous – anchors are drawn hoping to be safely cast again elsewhere; and they can be cast with similar ease at many different and distant ports of calling. Besides, the roots design and determine in advance the shape which the plants growing out of them will assume, while excluding the possibility of any other shape; but anchors are only auxiliary facilities of the mobile vessel that do not define the ship's qualities and resourcefulness. The time-stretches separating the casting of anchor from drawing it again are but episodes in the ship's trajectory. The choice of haven in which the anchor will be cast next is most probably determined by the kind of load which the ship is currently carrying; a haven good for one kind of cargo may be entirely inappropriate for another.

⁴ See DUBAR, Claude. *La Socialisation: Construction des identités sociales et professionnelles*, p. 113.

⁵ SINGLY, François de, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

All in all, the metaphor of anchors captures what the metaphor of 'uprooting' misses or keeps silent about: the intertwining of *continuity* and *discontinuity* in the history of all or at least a growing number of contemporary identities. Just like ships anchoring successively or intermittently in various ports of call, so the selves in the 'communities of reference' to which they seek admission during their life-long search of recognition and confirmation have their credentials checked and approved at every successive stop; each 'community of reference' sets its own requirements for the kind of papers to be submitted. The ship's record and/or the captain's log are more often than not among the documents on which the approval depends, and with every next stop, the past (constantly swelled by the records of preceding stops) is re-examined and re-valued.

Perhaps the most important modification is the fading of the monopolistic ambitions of the 'entity of belonging'. As signaled before, the referents of 'belonging', unlike the orthodox 'integrative communities', have no tools to monitor the strength of the 'members' dedication: neither are they interested in demanding and promoting the members' unswerving loyalty and undivided allegiance. And they are not jealous in the manner of monotheistic deities. In its contemporary liquid-modern rendition, 'belonging' to one entity may be shared and practiced simultaneously with belonging to other entities in almost any combination, without necessarily provoking condemnation and repressive measures of any. Accordingly, attachments tend to lose much of their past intensity. Much of their vehemence and vigor, just like the partisan pugnacity of those 'attached', are as a rule tempered by the parallel allegiances. Hardly any 'belonging' engages 'the whole self', each person at any moment of her or his life being involved in, so to speak, 'multiple belongings'. Being loyal only in part of one's self, or loyal *à la carte* (to the selected parts of the list of 'belonging' requirements), is no longer viewed necessarily as tantamount to disloyalty, let alone betrayal.

Hence the present-day recasting of the phenomenon of (cultural) 'hybridity' (that is, of combining traits derived from different and separate species) as a virtue and a sign of distinction, rather as (as it was viewed until quite recently) a vice and a symptom of either cultural inferiority or condemnable *déracinement* and *déclassement*. In the emergent scales of cultural superiority and social prestige, hybrids tend to occupy top ranks and the manifestation of one's own 'hybridity' becomes the prime vehicle of the upward socio-cultural mobility. Being condemned in perpetuity to one and one only, self-enclosed and invariable set of values and behavioral patterns, is on the other hand increasingly viewed as a sign of socio-cultural inferiority or deprivation. The old style jealous and monopoly-seeking

'integrative communities' have been relegated and are now to be found mostly, perhaps even exclusively, at the lower rungs of the socio-cultural ladder.

Can public space be made once more a place of lasting engagement rather than casual and fleeting encounters? A space of dialogue, discussion, confrontation and agreement? Yes and no. If what is meant by the 'public space' is the public sphere wrapped around, and serviced by the representative institutions of the nation-state (as it was through most of modern history) – the answer is, probably, no. That particular variety of public stage has been stripped of most of its past assets that enabled it to sustain the dramas staged in the past. Those public stages, constructed originally for the nation-and-state political purposes, remain stubbornly local – whereas contemporary drama is humanity-wide, and so obstreperously and emphatically global. The answer 'yes', to be credible, requires a new, *global* public space: genuinely planetary (as distinct from 'international') politics and a suitable planetary stage. And a truly planetary responsibility: acknowledgment of the fact that all of us who share the planet depend on each other for our present and our future, that nothing we do or fail doing is indifferent to the fate of anybody else, and that none of us can any longer seek and find private shelter from storms that originate in any part of the globe.

The logic of planetary responsibility is aimed, at least in principle, at confronting the globally generated problems point-blank - at their own level. It stems from the assumption that lasting and truly effective solutions to the planet-wide problems can be only found and work through the re-negotiation and reform of the web of global interdependencies and interactions. Instead of aiming at local damage limitation and local benefits derived from the capricious and haphazard drifts of global economic forces, it would rather pursue a new kind of global setting, such in which the itineraries of economic initiatives anywhere on the planet won't be any longer whimsical and guided by momentary gains alone, with no attention paid to the side-effects and 'collateral casualties' and no importance attached to the social dimensions of the cost-and-effects balances. In short, that logic is aimed, to quote Habermas⁶, at the development of 'politics that can catch up with global markets'. We feel, guess, suspect what need to be done. But we cannot know in which shape and form it eventually will. We can be pretty sure though that the shape will not be familiar. It will be different from all we've got used to.

⁶ HABERMAS, Jürgen. *The Postnational Constellation: Political Essays*, p. 109.

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Resumo

Migração e identidades no mundo globalizado

O artigo analisa a mudança nos padrões da migração global e suas consequências no que diz respeito aos processos de identidade. Depois de elucidar sobre as mudanças causadas pela passagem da modernidade 'sólida' para 'líquida', o autor sugere que identidade pode ser interpretada como um constante processo de construção e renegociação, numa provisória e dialética procura pela liberdade e segurança.

Palavras-chave: *Identidade; Migração; Globalização; Diásporas*

Received for publication in November 26th, 2009.

Accepted for publication in March 29th, 2010.

Recebido para publicação em 26/11/2009.

Aceito para publicação em 29/03/2010.