

Since the pivotal work on transnationalism by Glick-Schiller, Basch and Blanc-Szanton (1992), a number of studies have investigated transnationalism as a perspective on migration that goes beyond earlier concepts of one-way assimilation. Whilst the boundaries between host country and receiving country are becoming increasingly intertwined, studies on transnational migration have for the most part focused on the perspective of the receiving country. Immigrant integration is frequently framed as processes that are taking place in the receiving countries alone, placing the responsibility for integration on actors on immigrants' countries of destination, e.g. migrants, migrant organizations or the government of the receiving country. The receiving country bias in migration research prevails (Castles, 2010; Czaika & De Haas, 2014). There remains a gap in the literature on the impact of actors in countries of departure on the well-being and incorporation of immigrants in the societies in which they reside.

Alexandra Délano Alonso book, "*From Here and There: Diaspora Policies, Integration, and Social Rights beyond Border*", goes beyond the prevailing focus on the destination country in research on transnationalism as it looks at institutions supporting the integration of Latin-American immigrants in the United States and Canada, highlighting the role of the destination country. The book is a case study of initiatives in the United States and Canada, focusing primarily on Mexican diaspora organizations and other Latin American diaspora organizations. A central claim and contribution of this work is its focus on the responsibility and accountability of various actors, particularly actors in immigrants' countries of origin, which have not been largely discussed in the literature. In order to analyze this claim, Alexandra Délano Alonso analyzes actors on several levels, such as civic participation and diaspora organizations as well as the consulates of the countries of origin and the country of destination.

After providing an overview of the theoretical background of looking at diaspora policies as integration, the book focuses especially on two case studies, namely two programs offered to Latin American immigrants in the United States by Mexican diaspora organizations: *Ventanillas* and *Plazas Comunitarias*. While *Ventanillas* focuses on health care of migrants, *Plazas Comunitarias* are a provider of adult education, for example English language training. Then, the analysis is extended towards collaborations between different diaspora organizations in the United States and Canada. Alexandra Délano Alonso demonstrates that there is a significant number of examples of collaborative projects across various Latin

American diaspora organizations. The role of Mexico is in this context in some cases a best-practice example and Mexican diaspora organizations further provide resources used by other diaspora organizations. Subsequently, the author discusses aspects of return and reintegration.

Alexandra Délano Alonso discusses the efforts of diaspora initiatives and the countries of origin to support immigrant integration into both the destination countries and immigrants' countries of origin. The author particularly highlights imbalances in efforts of immigrants' countries of origin, which tend to focus on the integration of immigrants in the destination countries, especially "in relation to migrants with precarious status" (p. 158).

In her work, Alexandra Délano Alonso raises questions about "Rethinking transnational responsibility for the well-being of migrants, including their social and political rights in another country" (p. 174). This approach, therefore, shifts the responsibility towards the perspective of the governments of the sending countries. The book further highlights various points and limitations in research, for example that the programs and initiatives discussed in the research have favored certain groups of migrants and that efforts of the governments discourse have for the most part focused on the integration of migrants in the country of destination. Drawing on these findings, Alexandra Délano Alonso makes a claim for an extension of these efforts towards more intersectionality and increased inclusion of groups of migrants, which at the point of this study benefit less from the organizations and programs discussed in this case study than other groups of migrants.

The term "integration" features prominently in the title of the book. Alexandra Délano Alonso highlights that her work looks at integration as a two-way process in contrast to previous notions of one-way assimilation. Whilst being one of the key word in the title of the book, in the conclusion the term "integration" is discussed in a rather short paragraph. As, in fact, the book does not simply look at integration as a two-way process between the destination country and migrants, but includes actors on various levels and across several borders, the study provides a new perspective on migrant integration. While the author does acknowledge the need for new theoretical perspective, discussing migrant integration and concluding that a "multilayered approach" (p. 186) is much needed, this aspect is not emphasized in the contribution. The conclusion primarily emphasizes the relevance of the work in the context of current political developments in the United States. In addition,

however, the data collected and the original angle of this work could provide material for a more in depths discussion of the implications of this work and its original contribution to transnational migration research from a theoretical angle. As mentioned earlier, the work does for example provide material to rethink “integration” as a concept through the findings of this case study.

The book shifts the perspective of the analysis towards the responsibility of actors in immigrants’ countries of origin to support the incorporation of immigrants into the receiving countries. Even though the author does not provide an in depth discussed of the findings of the study on a theoretical level, the shift in responsibility suggested by the researcher can be adapted to other case studies as well. As the receiving country bias in migration studies prevails, this work provides an interesting angle on the role of immigrants’ countries of origin. Alexandra Délano Alonso’s work is thus a continuation of immigrants’ involvement in the receiving countries from a transnational perspective and provides valuable insights for a further reconceptualization of theories of immigrant integration.

References

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