Transnationalism and Dominican Women Intersections between Gender, Migration and Development

Dora Ines Munevar M, Maguemati Wabgou
Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Colombia

Abstract

The contribution of Dominican women migration in reducing poverty and enhancing economic growth in their home country remains relatively under-researched. The knowledge of the economic effects of their migration, especially its impact on economic development, is rather limited. This article analyzes the link between migration and development in Dominican Republic through transnationalism perspective. It considers the way these immigrants, as individuals and integrants of communities, maintain their connections with their country of origin while living abroad. On the basis of gender perspective, the paper explores the involvement of Dominican women migrants in optimizing the development impact in their native country through transnational networks and remittances. In order to fill the gaps in existing knowledge about Dominican women migration and development, issues related with the intersections between gender, ethnicity, migration and development have been discussed.

Key words

Dominican women migrants; gender and ethnicity; transnationalism, remittances and development.

Introduction

In the last years, a fundamental aspect of the dynamics of the migrations in Latin America and the Caribbean has been the tight relation between the immigrants and their societies of origin and destination. The presence of *ethnic communities* in the heart of the industrialized cities and the emergence of *transnational practices* between the immigrants has urged serious questions towards the assimilationist model. Supported by familiar, political and economic bonds between the place of origin and the one of destination,

> diverse practices and ways of life arise and go beyond the
> geographical and political limits of the involved countries in
> this process and challenge the power and the capacity of
> the States to control and govern a specific population that
> lives in a delimited territory. (CEPAL[1] 2006, p. 8)

In recent years, it has become increasingly obvious that migrations originating from the Dominican Republic towards other Latin American countries, the mega cities and the industrial countries in the North are inter-related to different global processes, such as the configuration and the establishment of transnational social networks. Thus, social networks based on family and friendship patterns keep people together in such a way that they have been outlining transnational communities which go beyond modern nation-states based concepts and frames.

This article includes data-gathering and analysis on the development impact of migration in the Dominican Republic while responding to the following questions: how do the Dominican women migrants, as individuals and integrants of communities, link up their host society with their country of origin? How do they contribute in optimizing the development impact in their native country through transnational networks?

It is noteworthy to mention the two reasons why this study is focused on Dominican migration. First of all, the Dominican migration is one of the highest in Latin America (between 8% and 15%) the same like Cuba, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Uruguay; and after México, the Caribbean Community countries and Colombia. The second reasonis that Dominican migration is characterized by its high feminization: in Spain for example, women formed up to 61% of the Dominican residents in the year 2000, compared to the 85% they represented in the 90s (UN-INSTRAW, 2006, p.6). Three years later, "on the basis of data provided by the National Statistics Institute (INE in Spanish, 2005), out of the total number of the immigrants in Spain, the Dominicans were those with a higher proportion of feminization, since their number of women is much more elevated (around 63%) than men" (Oso & Villares, 2005, p. 4).

At this point, it is interesting to observe how this particular situation of Dominican migration is being inserted within the context of the

---

[1] Comisión Económica para América Latina (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean).

feminization of migrations in Latin America: "For at least one-half century women have made up the majority of internal migrants in Latin America and the Caribbean. This has been the result of both gendered transformations in agriculture alongside the precipitous decline in women's craft production, on the one hand, and heightened demand for female urban workers, on the other. Latin American and Caribbean women have participated in interurban migrations, temporary, in rural-rural migrations, and in the increased female employment in export-oriented agricultural production and in manufacturing […] Whereas in the 1960s and 1970s, single women predominated among internal migrants, the economic crisis of the 1980s has propelled married women with young children into the labor force as well […] Many of these women have elected to migrate internally in order to be able to continue to care for their families locally (Escobar et al, 1987). Others have made the difficult decision to migrate internationally and to pass on childcare responsibilities and other domestic duties to stay-at-home partners, kin, and paid domestic servants […] Thus, in Latin America and the Caribbean where today some 25 million people reside outside their countries of origin, the decades-old predominance of women as internal migrants is being complemented by growing numbers of female international migrants who cross borders within the Americas and beyond to Europe" (Pessar, 2005, p. 2).

In order to expand the knowledge on Dominican migration and identify the way they spread out all over the world, this paper explores how Dominican foreign workers, especially women -and essentially unskilled and semi-skilled workers-, work as hawkers, hustlers or self-employed in their small businesses and are employed in all sectors of the economy in the host country such as the restaurant industry, retail, construction, manufacturing, hotels, food production, landscaping, including the sex industry, etc., which are necessary to keep the economy of that country. Some skilled immigrants work as engineers, technicians, musicians, professors, computer scientists, etc. Thus, these migrants have been taking part in the growing and strengthening of Dominican Diaspora, associated with transnationalism processes which have been boosting the rise of new forms of community beyond the boundaries of modern states.

Furthermore, in order to join the Dominican transnationalism with development, the paper focuses on gender perspective so as to search on

the impact of remittances on individuals or collectives in the Dominican Republic. It considers that before or after their homecoming, female migrants and ex-migrants who have projects for investments do implement them in a variety of areas such as individual or collective investments in small business, housing, furniture and other productive activities such as entrepreneurship. Then issues related to how women migration contribute to reduce poverty in the Dominican Republic are analyzed through transnational channel, which linksthem to their country and enable them to take significant actions as agents for development, through small businesses, remittances, and collaboration in projects for development. In addition, the paper deals with the mechanisms through which Dominican women migrants maintain their relationships with their native country while trying to play a relevant role in the local and national development.

Transnationalism and the Dominican Diaspora

The Dominican transnationalism contributes, through peoples' ways of organizing their lives, to establish continuous flows of information, goods and services between their host countries and their home country. Being abroad does not imply a rupture of their relations with communities in their society of origin: they participate in economic, social and political spheres of the Dominican Republic. For them, living transnationalism implies living in a destination country while participating in social networks and interactions so as to contributein the improvement of the living conditions (access to good or moderate shelters, jobs, health care packages, etc.) of their family members who are left in their place of origin; and, to some extent, in the progress of their county and/or country of origin. In this sense, transnationalism has been seen as breaking down boundaries. This is the reason why we should look at how they allow, not for a borderless world but for a reconfiguration or remapping of boundaries, in such a way that, for instance, what might have formerly been outside the margins (of the nation) to benowadays more effectively included within a larger framework of imagined community.

So, our discussion aims atexploring Dominican migrations and gender through the functioning mechanisms of transnationalism, and a deeper

understanding of transnational networks, which arebuilt up and settled down by these female Dominican migrations that end up configuring processes of local and/or global development in the Dominican Republic.

On one hand, the use of transnationalism, configured by social ties, to analyze women migration and development is important in the case of the Dominican emmigrations because the key role played by the family and friendship networks in supporting the women emmigrations ends up shaping international migratory systems. On the other hand, the on-going transnational processes, which have been taking place within the framework of the international Dominican migrations are supported by the increasing globalization at a worldwide scale.

Constructing an Analytical Framework

This part of the paper discusses the core topics that are related to the transnational perspective on migration and development studies, mainly those shared by Portes, Guarnizo & Landolt (2003, pp. 15-44), Guarnizo, Portes & Haller (2003, pp. 1-5) and Portes (1995, pp. 6-67). Excluding the *occasional gifts* (money and goods) sent by the immigrants to their relatives and friends or the house purchase by an immigrant in his country of origin from the transnational phenomenon due to its occasional character, Portes, Guarnizo & Landolt (2003, pp. 18-19) referred to transnationalism as an emergent research field that should define such concept as "*occupations and activities that require habitual and sustained social contacts through national borders to be completed* [⋯] what truly constitutes an original phenomenon and, therefore, justifiable as new topic of research is the great intensity of exchanges, new ways of transaction and diversity of activities that go beyond national borders and of which success depends on this geographical movement". In this same view, Lozano (2003, pp. 7-8) affirms "[⋯] a new phenomenon has been produced, at great extent, supported by the networks and international migratory systems, but in such a way reducible to this. It is about the creation of *transnational communities* [⋯] In this sense, they do not differ so much from what the traditional literature recognizes as national groups, ethnies and, at a higher level of aggregation, nations [⋯] connected in a body of interactions and common social institutions and a collective acting [⋯] the existence of these communities involves a transnational context in their own construction, economico-social

reproduction and identity [⋯]."

Moreover, transnationalism is "the reality of many types of communication and interactions [continuous and permanent ones] that unify people and institutions through States-Nation borders, and especially, through the planet" (Sow, 2004, p. 239). Here, as stated by Lozano (op. cit., pp. 9-10): "Portes and his team [⋯] insist that a rigorous definition of the transnational character of the migratory communities in the context of globalization demands some requirements: intensity of the phenomenon, simultaneity of the actions which involve the community, mainly the economic ones, etc. [⋯] the transnationalism, besides this economic and social delimitation [⋯], depends on a cultural and identity framework, that also produce effects or consequences on building up national identity of the countries involved in the transnational dynamics". In this context, this dynamic is apprehended in terms of social history of the double fact of emigration and immigration, social history of the reciprocal relationships between societies, the emigration and immigration societies, and between emigrants-immigrants and each of both societies.

Understanding the political, economic and cultural dimensions of the emigration- immigration of people, of which the meanings and consequences are also of multidimensional nature (Sayad, 1999, pp. 15-21), would be necessary and possible through the powerful analysis of the networks. This relationship confers the social networks the character of *migratory networks*: "(1) the [migratory] networks link dynamically populations of origin and those of destination societies. (2) They serve as mechanisms to interpret data, receive information and other items, in both directions. (3) They are simple structures, which have enough potential for becoming more complex mechanisms inasmuch as evolution systems are being developed. (4) They provide a means to examine migratory systems, in such a way that it transcends the motivation of individual actors, although it is kept at the same level, with the human actors facing the reality" (Gurak & Caces, 1998, p. 77). Obviously these migratory systems are persistent since the distance and the territorial limits lose their importance within the framework of these migrant communities' networks.

One of the most important aspects in contemporary migrations is that the migratory channels offer new immigrants the possibilities for the entrance and establishment, while facilitating, in the same way, the

persistence of the whole migratory process. On that point, it is suitable to point out how the lasting character of the migratory flows is explained by the succession of generations caused, for example, by means of the family regrouping and any significant change in the destination country (politics, public opinions).

In brief, the authors have gone through the functions of the migratory networks upon the raising and the permanence of migratory systems. The population is inserted in migratory networks that are defined as "sets of interpersonal relations that linkup immigrants, returned emigrants or candidates to the emigration with their relatives, friends or compatriots, either in the country of origin or the one of destination. The networks transmit information, provide economic help or shelter and support migrants in so many different manners" (Arango, 2003, p. 19) this facilitates migration because it reduces its costs, including its associated uncertainty, they constitute a social capital and they have a multiplying effect. The networks usually stimulate migration *through the effect* demonstration, these encourage the familiar reunification and nourish the migratory flows; their importance increases to the extent that difficulties grow in the receiving countries once somehow they reduce costs and risks of the migration, such as uncertainty (Saldaña, et al., 2007). So the authors reiterate, with Massey's ideas (1988), retaken by Gurak and Caces (op. cit., p. 97), that the impacts of the migratory networks upon the raising and the permanence of migratory systems are evident:

> [···] through the operation of circular migration, the producer and reception areas are integrated in a migration system that influences in those social processes in both ends of the course. The transnational reticular structures are kept thanks to the going and coming constant migrants. The circular migration does not only serve as means of resources transmission (monetary remittances, information about opportunities, etc.), but rather it also integrates the structure of opportunities of the destination areas into the institutional matrix of the origin. According to created expectations specific groups will emigrate in certain phases of the cycle, or when a particular situation is produced [···] reticular community may be used to increase the quantity and quality of the available resources for channelling them towards the society of origin as well as to increase the immigrants' integration to the society of destination.

> Inasmuch as the underlying conditions continue stimulating migration, the developing migratory reticular community has access to more and better resources. This way, the incorporation of migrants to the society of destination can be as important as the circular migration for the maintenance of the migratory impulse.

The authors consider the processes of *globalization and its derived transformations* as a pluridimensional, multidisciplinar and polysemantic phenomenon. Its origin is situated within the period of the conquest of the Americas: it is nothing recent. It is characterized by being a complex phenomenon that affects humanity while entailing economic, political and cultural effects, among others. In this sense, it is necessary to describe globalization like processes of social, dynamic and historically constituted constructions. Therefore we agree with (Wiesenfeld, 2006, pp. 47-48) when she states that:

> For its supporters it is a universal, irreversible phenomenon, of which veracity is unquestionable and that has arrived to remain; whereas its critics question their universality, irreversibility and permanence. According to Boaventura de Sousa Santos [···], the local phenomena are globalized and at the time, transnational policies influence local conditions, that is, ethnies, religions, nations [···] the local phenomena are globalized and the transnational policies influence the local conditions, is to say ethnic groups, religions, nations [···] questions the form to conceive the relation between the local and the global thing, as an opposed relation and to situate the debate within the framework of discrepancies between the supranational integration policies and the citizen behaviour [···] He rather suggests to include the existing mediations between both extremes, in order to facilitate interconnections between actors who may strengthen social initiatives, legitimize institutions and encourage them to negotiate diversity on the basis of a dialoguing confrontation and the acceptance of different conceptions. For this author, this demands openingness to diverse cultural experiences, is to say, to the globalization from the difference or the cosmopolitism of the globalization.

On this matter, Amin (2006, p. 97) affirms that "[···] [Capitalism, along with modernity and the globalization] has yielded the development

of the productive forces to a rate never before known in history. The potential of this development would allow solving the great materialistic problems of the entire humanity. But the logic that dominates the capitalist accumulation prevents that to occur while deepening incessantly *the polarization of the wealth on a scale until* now never known before in history". This very situation entails the continuous sprouting of the migratory flows in the world, especially in countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America (such as the Dominican Republic).

Applying the Analytical Framework

The rise of transnational community is applied to the Dominican Diaspora, while the transformations occurred on migration field at/from the regional level (Latin America) are taken into account. On the basis of the census data of the CELADE.[2] Division of Population of the CEPAL-, out of the total accumulated migratory flows in the last years, the number of Latin American and Caribbean migrants has increased considerably from an estimated total of more than 21 million people in the 2000 to almost 25 million in 2005; which means they represent more than 13% of international migrants in the world. In fact, a panoramic view on the migratory map in Latin America and the Caribbean is important to understand the Dominican situation:

> [⋯] from the second half of twentieth century, three great waves have dominated the migratory tendencies [⋯] The first of them corresponds to overseas immigration, originated mainly in the old world. Towards the year 2000 its total accumulated descended to 1.9 million, which represents 41% of the immigrants. The second is originated by the interchange of people between the countries of the region. Finally, the third wave is related with *emigration out of the boundaries of Latin America and the Caribbean,* of which increasing intensity has been associated with the diversification and extension of destinations, including all the countries [⋯]. Comparing the information on emigrants (almost 4% of the regional population according to a minimum estimation), it is observed that the largest

---

2 El Centro Latinoamericano y Caribeño de Demografía (Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre).

> number of emigrants come from Mexico, followed by all
> the countries of the Caribbean Community and Colombia,
> exceeding a million people in each case. Nine other
> countries of Latin America surpass half a million and only
> one does not reach 100,000 people. These figures reveal a
> significant presence of Latin American and Caribbean
> people outside their countries of origin, although their
> impacts on the respective national populations are relatively
> varied: in many Caribbean nations more than 20% of the
> population live abroad, whereas in Latin America the
> highest percentages (between 8% and 15%) correspond to
> Cuba, El Salvador, Mexico, Nicaragua, Dominican Republic
> and Uruguay. (CEPAL, 2006, p. 14)

At this point, we are pointing out the first reason why we decide to study the Dominican migration. By crossing borders, Dominican migrants have been developing, in a context of transnationalism, almost a commonplace in today's world where both corporations and ordinary people alike seek economic survival and benefit. Dominican foreign workers preserve and reinvent their cultural patterns in their host countries where they remain linked to one another by ties of kinship, shared resources, and cultural exchange. The cultural patterns we are concerned with are those constructed and based on traditional solidarities and social networks. Among them, the solidarities and supports are informal (from individual to individual, inside groups of individuals and/or among people's groups) or formal (among people but inside the associative framework). In both cases, the solidarity is a goal to be reached and consolidated through mutual support because migration is conceived as a whole phenomenon:

> Immigration is a group and not an individual process
> because decisions to migrate are usually made within a
> collective context that includes the family and local
> community. Immigration flows through social networks
> uniting places of origin and destination. Furthermore, the
> overall economic "climate" that affects the local group is
> likely to influence an individual's decision to migrate even
> when that individual is not affected in the same way, as are
> others. Tilly puts the issue succinctly: "Individuals do not
> migrate, networks do". People migrate together from
> particular places and settle together in particular

> destinations. It is only within the context of a network of
> social relationships that individual calculations become
> useful predictors of the direction and flow of migration.
> (Roberts, 1995, pp. 45-46)

In this sense, using the social ties to explain the migratory dynamics together with the development processes in the Dominican Republic implies a keen knowledge of the nature of the migratory network. This undoubtedly involves the simultaneous interaction between the origin and destination regions: here, the Dominican transnationalism recovers its full meaning. Thus, we appeal to the use of the *pragmatic and constructive dimension* of the networks perspective (collective environment that gives sense and meanings to the interpersonal relationships), joined with an analytical component (shape characteristics of networks).

Traditionally, **women** have devoted themselves as housewives to "their tasks", generally mediated by husband's dependence relationships. However, an increasing number of women are participating in different fields of paid work such as employment in public administration and teaching, or in economically productive activities such as business, breaking down the historically established gender relationships of power between men and women. Still, in some paid and productive activities, the woman's participation that provides her with a certain degree of economic independence is not entirely assumed by men.

Due to various factors such as economic crisis and social networks, **women** have been more and more involved into the migration streams; as we previously mentioned, the phenomenon is described as the feminization of migrations:

> Among developed regions, North America is exceptional
> in that female immigrants have outnumbered male
> immigrants since 1930 and still do in both Canada and the
> United States. Europe and Oceania are also reporting
> increasing proportions of female immigrants- surpassing the
> number of males since 2000. […] In the developing world,
> the numbers of female labor migrants have also jumped. In
> Asia, the number of females migrating from certain
> countries has surpassed males. […] By the mid-1990s an
> estimated 800,000 Asian women were migrating to the
> Middle East annually-mostly as domestic workers […]. In
> Africa, widespread poverty, disease, land degradation and

high male unemployment are all contributing to a steady increase in female migrants-and at a rate that is faster than the global average. By 2005, 47 per cent of the 17 million immigrants in Africa were women-up from 42 per cent in 1960-with the greatest increase among migrants in the Eastern and Western regions. While most African women circulate within the region, they are also moving to North America and Europe. [···] In the Arab region, socio-cultural norms continue to limit female mobility. Although reliable data are scarce, it is generally accepted that male emigres far outnumber women [···] Latin American and Caribbean women are also highly mobile. By 1990, immigrant women in Latin America were the first in the developing world to reach parity with male migrants. Destinations include Europe, North America and elsewhere in South America. The trend toward feminization is also strikingly apparent among migrants moving from both Central and South America to Spain, with women representing nearly 70 per cent of all immigrants arriving from Brazil and the Dominican Republic in 2001. Women from this region also clearly dominate migration flows to Italy, where, in 2000, 70 per cent or more of the arrivals from 13 of 30 source countries were women. Caribbean women have outnumbered males in migration flows to North America during every decade since the 1950s and are well represented in skilled categories. The tourism industry has been a major pull factor behind the migration of Caribbean women. (UNFPA -United Nations Population Fund-, 2006)[3]

Besides, migrant women also participate in the configuration of transnational communities through geographical, political, economical and cultural borders with the purpose of maintaining contact with their families and origin communities. Across all geographical regions, these women play a focal, although often unrecognized, role in the survival strategies to realize their socio-economic potential more fully and improve the quality of their lives. To do so, they need access to assets, services, knowledge and technologies, and must be active in decision-making processes. In addition, for many women, migration opens doors to a new world of greater equality, relief from oppression and the discrimination

---

[3] Retrieved May 7, 2008, from http://www.unfpa.org/swp/2006/english/chapter_1/index.html

that limits freedom and stunts potential. For the origin and receiving countries, the contribution of women migrants can quite literally transform quality of life, in spite of the risks they are taking.

> For host countries, the labor of migrant women is so embedded into the very fabric of society that it goes virtually unnoticed. Migrant women toil in the households of working families, soothe the sick and comfort the elderly. They contribute their technical and professional expertise, pay taxes and quietly support a quality of life that many take for granted. (UNFPA, 2006)[4]

Women are often relegated to jobs where they are subject to multiple discriminations, arbitrary employment terms and abuses.

> Migrant women are participating in different fields of paid work such as employment in the public and private sectors: they are domestic workers, cleaners, caretakers of the sick, the elderly and of children; farmers, waitresses, sweatshop workers, highly skilled professionals, teachers, nurses, entertainers, sex workers, hostesses, etc. Domestic work is one of the largest sectors driving international female labor migration, but more and more female professionals-teachers, nurses, scientists, technicians and business owners-are moving abroad, despite the fact that many face considerable obstacles just to have their qualifications recognized. (UNFPA, 2006)

Regarding the composition of these female migrants, classified by marital status[5] age, level of education and social class, the fact is that

> the recent decades have seen an increase in women -married and unmarried- who migrate alone or in the company of other women or fellow migrants outside of their family circle. They are young and old, married, single,

---

[4] ibid.

[5] Focussing on marital status, it is worthy to mention that marriage has become an important factor of female migration: "Migrant women move out to marry, rejoin migrant husbands and family or to work […]. Marriage has played a significant role in female migration and still does. In today's globalized world, however, marriage migration has taken on an added dimension-the growing phenomenon of international unions, including mail-order brides and arranged and forced marriages" (UNFPA, 2006).

divorced and widowed. Many migrate with children. Others are forced to leave them behind. Some are educated and searching for opportunities more consistent with their qualifications. Others are from low-income or poor rural backgrounds and are seeking a better life for themselves and their children.[6]

Attracted by better job opportunities within the current framework of globalization pressure, women are moving all around the world:

Although there are many reasons why women work abroad (war and economic, social and political situations, etc.), labor migration is directly related to the global economic and political model that is a neo-liberal, increasingly militarized and perpetuated by the industrialized empires. In the same way that men maintain their gender privileges in the private sphere through various forms of exploitation, industrialized countries do it in the public sphere by exploiting cheap labor that, among other things, are provided by the poorest countries, specifically those from the Asian, African and Latin American continents. (Obando, 2003)[7]

Certainly, in all parts of the world, entertainment and sex industries have been stimulated by the perverse effects of globalization and are providing additional migration channels for some women.

In 2004, United Kingdom records revealed that the second largest category of work permit applications from foreign women were for "entertainment and leisure" at 5,908-with another 4,627 applying for "hospitality, catering" and "other" occupations. In Canada, over 1,000 temporary work permits a year were granted to exotic dancers in the mid-1990s. In 2004, Japan admitted nearly 65,000 women on entertainment visas, the majority of whom were from the Philippines. These high numbers (coupled with concerns over trafficking) have prompted the Government to review requirements for entertainers. The boundary between "entertainment" (singers, dancers, and

---

6 Retrieved May 7, 2008, from http://www.unfpa.org/swp/2006/english/chapter_2/millions_of_faces.html

7 Retrieved May 2, 2008, fromhttp://www.whrnet.org/docs/issue-migrantwomen.html#Overview.

hostesses) and sex work is often blurred, especially for those women who have been coerced and/or abducted. For instance, in 2004, more than 1,000 Russian women were engaged in sex work in the Republic of Korea. Most had entered the country on entertainment or tourist visas but were then forced into prostitution by business owners and recruiters. (UNFPA, 2006)[8]

Migrant women not only have to go through the hardship of not seeing their sons, daughters and relatives, they also face many forms of violations that are rarely heard and addressed (Obando, 2003)[9]. It is observed that in spite of the growing number of female migrant workers and the growing (but still limited) interest of migration policies for gender issues, migrant women are more likely than men to be exposed to forced labor, sexual exploitation, forced prostitution and other kinds of violence: modern-day slavery of women is clearly seen in trading women's bodies through prostitution:

> Sex work is another form of labor that has grown and internationalized. Research among female sex workers in countries heavily dependent upon tourism, like the Dominican Republic and Cuba, has documented how certain women approach their sexual labors as a means to forge transnational ties so as to continue to receive money, goods, and the most-coveted prize of all: an immigrant visa from foreign clients [···] Latin American and Caribbean sex workers also migrate internationally within the Americas and to Europe [···] In formulating policies on national and international sex work, we must not confuse -as do many U.S. politicians a self-righteous morality with women's limited agency. We should also take care to distinguish between the victims of trafficking and those who elect sex work as a form of labor, seeking to eradicate the former while providing alternatives, protections, and rights for the latter [···] It is imperative that advocates of women's, workers', and migrants' rights join forces to ensure that feminicides are no longer tolerated by governments and are eradicated from women's lives. (Pessar, 2005, p. 3)

---

[8] Op. cit.

[9] Op. cit.

Women are more likely to accept hazardous work conditions and low salaries without social security: many are exposed to serious health risks, such as women working in the *maquila*[10] factories and other jobs with dangerous or unhealthy working conditions. Many women are not equipped with enough information to help them fight against sexually transmitted diseases, especially the deadly HIV/AIDS (Obando, 2003)[11]. On the specific case of Dominican migrant women associated with sex industry, we resort in a case study, realized by Gregorio Gil and Ramírez Fernández (2000), on Moroccan and Dominican migrant women activities. They compare both female migrant groups within the framework of the dynamic of their insertion into the labour market; some of their findings revealed that their labour market integration is particularly focused on domestic service and prostitution. In order to apprehend this social fact, we rely on the following statement because it is noteworthy regarding specifically the involvement of Dominican women in the sexual work and the dominant open-minded perceptions of people who live in the Dominican Republic, regarding this sexual activity:

> [···] some women who have worked first in the domestic service decide to look for a sexual work, almost always like a strategy to increase the income and to be able to enjoy their lifetime, as opposed to their work conditions in a house. On the other hand, prostitution networks, which are established from the countries of origin, do not offer alternatives to the women who travel under their protection [···] In the Dominican Republic the "nocturnal butterflies" or "women of the street" have happened to receive the denomination of "dancers", when they work abroad, in the market of sex. This term, symbolically, supposes a certain professionalization of their work. A factor that contributes

---

[10] Maquila means the process of production and assembly operations which make use of their large numbers of semiskilled or unskilled machine operation or their manual equivalents in order increase the general production plant at a lower cost while employing low-wage workers, mainly women, children, internal migrants, and so on. Originated from The United States, this process of production is expanded in the rest of the World, mainly in developing countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America (for instance, Guatemala and Mexico) and the Caribbean. As far as women are concerned, this practice is erroneously considered an important source of employment for women because it is bringing them economic income, freedom and opportunities for improvement in their lives. Indeed, the reality entails precarious and awful conditions of employment.

[11] Op. cit.

> to the social acceptance of these women is that the income
> they perceive are usually higher than the one they receive
> in their country of origin and that the remittances that
> they send are bigger than those of other immigrants who
> occupy other jobs [···] For all these women, the acceptance
> on the part of their community of origin varies in terms of
> whether they send to their relatives who have remained
> there or not. (Gregorio & Ramírez, 2000, pp. 271-272)

Other sectors of activity also experience a greater female presence. For instance, in Madrid the process towards the entrepreneurship among the Dominican women has been developed, to a lesser extent, around their own call centres and food stores business (Oso & Villares, 2005, p. 16) with a rather strong focus on the hairdressing salon (ibid., pp. 6-7):

> The hairdressing salon is the business that is mostly
> owned by the Dominican women in Madrid. This type of
> business arises to mainly offer services to the Dominican
> community or immigrant, by providing foods stores within
> the framework of ethnic economy [···] one of the other
> factors of growing hairdressing salon business among the
> Dominican women is the low level of education of some of
> these women. For those who have a lower level of
> education, the hairdressing salon has become one of the few
> alternatives [or job opportunities] when they are about to
> set up a businesses [···].

At this stage of analysis, we observe that globalization has contributed to increase Dominican migration flows inasmuch as, in general terms, the current process of globalization, in which the vast powers of transnational capital are dominant, its economical, political, social and cultural dynamics foster the ultimate destruction of all life. The power of capital origin causes the radical impoverishment of Dominican people and their massive migration toward the so-called north and occidental countries. In this context, Dominican migrants and their relatives residing in the Dominican Republic build up a bridge, on the basis of their family, ethnic association and friendly ties while taking advantage of the era of globalization tools such as media, internet, telephone, money order institutions, among others. These bonds turn out to be the support of the emigrants from their origin place until their societies of destination,

while building up a transnational community as a Dominican Diaspora. These types of support constitute the "security margin" in which the emigrant is inserted in order to benefit from an economic, social, psychological and religious satisfaction, among others.

Dominican Women Migrants and Development

Both in Latin America and the rest of the world, it is noteworthy that Social sciences have been explaining the multiple relations between migrants, transnationalism, development and gender. We have opted for an analysis of Dominican migrations and transnationalism through a gender prospect because the social networks[12], conceived as information and support channels of the migratory flows, can become migratory networks by easing the insertion of immigrants to the world economic systems and other groups of social actors while determining, directing and making sense of behaviours. In other words, a study on migrations originating from a Latin American country such as the Dominican Republic leads us to take into account the great advantage of the transnational perspective, which:

> [···] is that of recovering the transcultural focus, for which anthropology has pled during decades, fixing the attention in several geographical spaces, but also, recognizing the interconnections and interdependences that happen when new social fields in its intersection are created. This way, places of origin are included in the area of migration study, while achieving a way of communication for the association of the migration studies and those related to the development of the less-favoured countries. Approaching the study of the relationship between migration and development demands, at the present time, more than ever, focussing on the transnational relationships that individuals maintain between more or less far sites in the geographical space.

---

12 By social networks, we understand a structured group of social relationships between individuals and groups of people. From this perspective, the migratory networks are formal and informal social networks that play a complex role when making easy and sustaining the development of the migratory flows between two spaces (expulsion and attraction of migratory flows), axes that end up being integrated and overlapped inside a temporary framework.

(Escrivá & Ribas, 2004, pp. 38-39)

Then, it is important to conceive migratory networks on the basis of community (the idea of community); that is a *non-territorial community,* because it is noticeable that

> family, friendship and community networks underlie much of the recent migration to industrial nations [⋯] Trends also reflect the maturation of migration streams, stimulated by social networks based on family/household, friendship and community ties and relationships. Existing across time and space, social networks are highly relevant for studies of international migration. (Boyd, 1989, pp. 239, 638).

> Moreover, transnational migration is a pattern of migration in which persons, although they move across international borders, settle, and establish relations in a new state, maintain ongoing social connections with the polity from which they originated. In transnational migration, people literally live their lives across transnational border. Such persons are best identified as *transmigrants.* (Guarnizo, Portes & Haller, 2003, p. 2)

The viewpoint that we opted for in this section breaks down the traditionally broad view according to which migratory networks are strong and united bonds based on a territory without gender: gender analysis is needed for the implementation view of a migration process, and the role of policies in encouraging a gender perspective in this field:

> In fact, migration constitutes a strategy for Dominican women head of family in Spain. Separated women, widows, divorced, unmarried mothers, or married who leave their husbands in the country of origin are more likely to be identified as women who have to abandon the Dominican Republic in order to settle in Spain, in search of a better life for their family (Oso, 1998). We assist to a migratory stream dominated by women, in spite of the increasing presence of men. (Oso & Villares, 2005, p. 5)

Exploring Gender, Ethnicity, Migrations and its Intersections

This paper offers an overview of Dominican women migration through a gender perspective; that is, the intersections of gender, transnational migration and development. We acknowledge the particular situations, challenges and risks that migrant women are living with in new lands; this situation has become increasingly obvious because migration is a part of the global world, and a part of different kinds of transnational flows, for instance, labor, capital, cultural believes, technology, information and consumer habits. Because nursing and care work remain traditional female domains, certain migration channels are wide open with formal mechanisms designed to fill the demand for female employees. These take many forms and are marked by changing heads of household-including grandmothers and the youth who take charge of children while the parent(s) are away. When both parents and mothers leave, elderly women, aunts and other female relatives are most likely to shoulder the burden of childcare. Alternatively, migrant parents will sometimes leave children in the destination country while they shuttle back and forth.

Gender refers to the differences and commonalities between women and men which are constructed conventionally on the basis of social, economic, political and cultural patterns. Since our modern societies are under the continuous influence of internal and international migration flows, it is evident that

> gender is an integral part of the migration process. The impacts of migration for women and men depend on many factors, all of which have gender implications. These include: the type of migration (temporary, permanent, irregular, regular, labour, natural disaster- or conflict-induced, independent or as dependent spouse); policies and attitudes of the sending and receiving countries, and gender relations within the household. Gender affects how migrants adapt to the new country, the extent of contact with the original country and the possibility of return and successful reintegration. (Jolly & Reeves, 2005, p. 17)

Thus, the concept of gender is being transformed through transnational migration. Although transnationalism does not drive transgression or emancipation, its effects are complex and must be assessed in specific time and space, related with a particular phenomenon such as

globalization. For that reason, we believe that gender is significant for understanding the nature of globalization and the way it has been influencing gendered hierarchies and ideologies which, in turn, shape gendered institutions, relationships, identities, and experiences of women and men locally and internationally. Nowadays, the global trends enable massive movements of people to take place and led to the emergence of the transnational families, whose members belong to two or more households, two or more cultures and two or more economies simultaneously. That is the way in which multicultural societies take place through transnational migration flows. However, it is not without conflicts or tensions. On the contrary, it creates new problems and challenges for societies. One of these problems and tensions is related to the way

> gender norms of the host society affect integration of women and men differently, e.g. men may be perceived as more threatening and be more likely to be harassed by police, women may suffer discrimination in the labor force. In North America foreign-born women were the least likely of all groups, defined by birthplace and gender, to be in the formal labour force in the 1990s – although there was a great variation between nationalities. (Jolly & Reeves, 2005, p. 18)

Since the introduction of gender perspective in the political and development programs make women to increase their effectiveness and sustainability, the reason why failing to make use of gender perspective implies a more serious concern. Unfortunately, sending and receiving countries still do not concern themselves with formulating inter-state measures and mechanisms that will promote and protect the human rights and dignity of women migrant workers, in addition to eradicate trafficking in women and girls, for example. Although it is becoming increasingly evident that migration has a gender dimension, most migratory policies and regulations still do not address gender specific problems. The issue of women migrants has been low on the international policy agenda in spite of some international meetings headed by government representatives from around the globe, such as the 2006 High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, (New York) which offered a critical opportunity to ensure that the voices

of migrant women are heard.

The unequivocal recognition of the human rights of women and the need for gender equality is a crucial requirement of any sound, equitable and effective policy framework that seeks to handle migration in a humane and methodical manner. There is a need to emphasize an integration of a two-way process -it is necessary to proceed with change in both the immigrant and the host society- there must be mutual adaptation and strategies. Because of cultural, social and religious differences between peoples and countries, it is important to understand that acceptance has its limits such as equality, the rule of law, respect for human rights and for the democratic process. Moreover, this should be complemented by anti-racist, anti-discrimination and equality legislation and non-sexist programs in order to foster an integration policy as a basis for active citizenship and participation in society.

When we talk of ethnicity, we are pointing out social relations or ethnic relations that groups and identities have developed in mutual contact rather than in isolation. But what is the nature of such a group?

> The term of ethnicity refers to relationships between groups whose members consider themselves distinctive, and these groups may be ranked hierarchically within a society [···] the concept of ethnicity can be said to bridge two important gaps in social anthropology: it entails a focus in dynamics rather than statistics, and it relativizes the boundaries between 'Us' and 'Them', between moderns and tribals [···]. (Hylland, 1997, pp. 35-38)

So ethnicity is a form of social organization; it is as a factor of culture. In this context, the Dominican migrants, living in a foreign country, are likely to develop their ethnicity based on their cultural and behavioral patterns such as language, music, foods, etc. On this point, we believe that cultural diversity make people feel strongly connected with the groups they originally belong and identify closely with their heritage; their group memberships influence their lives and perceptions, they help to shape who they are and how they fit in with the larger society (Healy, 2003, pp. 3-4). In Madrid, for instance, "the existence of an ethnic nucleus in Madrid facilitates the evolvement of businesses for the Dominican women. Thus, the social and communitarian networks turn to be support mechanisms of the required proceedings to set up a business"

(Oso & Villares, 2005, p. 17).

In this context, migration is conceived as a "process of moving, either across an international border, or within a State. It is a population movement, encompassing any kind of movement of people, whatever its length, composition and causes" (World Health Organization, 2008, p.1); it includes migration of refugees, displaced persons, uprooted people, and economic migrants. But since we are more concerned with the economic migrants than refugees, we believe that migrants can be considered as persons who are outside the territory of the State of which they are nationals or citizens, aiming at better life opportunities, such as better jobs and better conditions of study and research. It is important to mention that migration is in relation with migration policy, which "must (similarly) be conceptualized in household terms, paying attention to the gender of the individual as well as to their household position and family status. Migrants are not only 'labour units' and 'entrepreneurs', but husbands, wives, sons and daughters. All migration, even when it is primarily economically motivated, takes place within a social context, with gender and family relations among the key factors influencing migration behaviour" (Dodson, 2001, p. 85).

Now, how do Dominican migrants contribute in optimizing the development impact in their native country through transnational networks? In order to reach an explanation, this section presents the most important key elements about remittances and development, based on the transversal category of gender.

Gender, Remittances and Development

Having come to the conclusion according to which Dominican migrants (with a higher proportion of female migrants) live in their destination countries while participating in social networks and interactions, we are now aiming at remittances, identified as monetary flows which can contribute to the development of the senders' place of origin. Thus, the remittances – the money that migrant people make by working abroad and that they send to their homes -constitute the more perceptible monetary dimension, of this constant circulation between migrants and origin countries.

The remittances are sent individually or collectively. However, without discarding the individual remittances, which are usually occasional and of

reduced volume, we are more interested in the collective remittances because of the permanent and durable character of the monetary flows they convey. This character is prominent and determinant in this study of the migrations and development, associated with the gender category.

In the "global village" where we live, the international migrations have become a phenomenon that affects more and more homes and communities everywhere, with a greater presence of women, which is referred to as the feminization of the migratory flows. It is observed that in spite of the growing number of female migrant workers, and the great remittances relevance for the material well being of many families in the developing countries, there are few studies that analyze the gender dimension of remittances. So following the line of thought of Ramírez, García, and Míguez (2005, p. 2), we believe that "a critical review, from the gender perspective of the remittances flows and their impacts, is necessary with respect to the development and the successful implementation of the program aimed to take advantage of the potential remittances like tools for development" and we reiterate the idea according to which "the money that is sent, its frequency of sending, the channel used or the remittances impact on the development of one country of origin is also marked by the gender." Undoubtedly, every year, many women working millions of jobs overseas send hundreds of millions of dollars as remittances back to their homes and communities. Generally, these remittance funds go to fill hungry bellies, and to provide education to children, health care, clothe for their loved ones left behind, contributing to improve their living standards.

Most of the Dominican women living in their host countries are independent migrants or live with their husbands as a result of family reunification, formerly initiated by their husbands. Bound to the family life, the Dominican women usually worry so much about their relatives' needs that are left behind. The pressure of family obligations is so decisive that it becomes their utmost concern when defining plans for the future. So the impact of social networks on the trend of remittances is noticeable inasmuch as Portes (1995, p. 8) considers that "social networks are among the most important types of structures in which economic transactions are embedded. These are sets of recurrent associations between groups of people linked by occupational, familial, cultural or affective ties. Networks are important in economic life because they are sources of acquisition of scarce means, such as capital and information,

and because they simultaneously impose effective constrains on the unrestricted pursuit of personal gain". At this stage of analysis, we want to point out the significant research of García (2005) who explores

> [⋯] the gender dimensions of remittances in order to generate a better understanding of how gender differences affect Dominican men and women as heads of households and senders-recipients of remittances. Moreover, and perhaps more importantly, the study tries to make visible Dominican women's contribution to the economic development of both destination and origin countries. (ibid., p. 4)

Futhermore, some of the results of her research are summarised as following:

> [⋯] migrant women acquired more control over household resources, and gained more authority and decision-making power in the household after migration [⋯] Dominican migrant women send money to their families -thereby acquiring the new role of monetary providers- which has a significant effect on their family members and their origin country [⋯] have gained more social and economic independence from their fathers or husbands, who limited their potential for economic development [⋯] women'sutilization of remittances is making an impact in their families' livelihoods and the country's economy by investing in human capital (education and health care) and management of remittances [⋯] [which] are fundamental as a source of income for both recipients' livelihoods and national economies. (ibid., pp. 14, 16)

The remittances may also be sent collectively or individually for the realization of a social, concrete and collective utility project, that is, through medium and long run investments:

(1) "Surplus" of Remittances Invested. These cases are *only registered when they are big amounts of received remittances and the reception is continuous and sustainable:* these are two almost indispensable conditions to perform investments for individual or collective projects. But we observe that the

growing impoverishment of the Dominican populations forces the remittance beneficiaries to provide themselves and their relatives with necessity goods and services. Moreover, there are perverse situations where the receivers get used to enjoying the remittances without even thinking of the investment possibilities because they have insured incoming sources. However, the tendency is that people tend to realize projects when both conditions (or one of them) are met since the society has been undergoing socio-cultural transformations, including the people (change of mentality) who have been getting in touch with their relatives or immigrant friends.

(2) Money remittances aimed to investments. When remittances are sent collectively on behalf of an association or brotherhood (transnational networks), what is at steak is an important bulk of money; in this case, the targets of the investments are clearly defined. The financed projects vary from infrastructure, healthcare, teaching staff, for instance to wells, drillings, and irrigations originated from some associative networks created by internal initiatives (from some members of different associations).

(3) Homecoming and investment projects; homecoming and investments. Facing the future, some Dominican immigrants, despite their being in the face of uncertainty, want to materialize a transnational project, which reinforce the commercial bonds between their destination country and the Dominican Republic. It is the case of those who are retail sellers and foresee to change their position while becoming wholesalers and inserting themselves within the transnational trade networks (commercial transnationalism). The gradual accumulation of capital is a noteworthy condition for getting their own import and export store of goods between the Dominican Republic and their country of residence.

Thus, in all the mentioned cases, migrants' social ties help in constructing ethnic transnational communities, which link migrants to the Dominican Republic and enable them to take significant actions as agents for development through small businesses, remittances, collaboration in projects. We are referring to the mechanisms through which the Dominican women migrants maintain their relationships with their native country while trying to play a relevant role in national development. As a consequence of the transnational project, when these

women return home, they act as agents for local developments. Their successful homecoming usually has contagious effects among the immigrants at the extent that those who have not returned home are hopeful because, sooner or later, they cannot help but to return home. The main condition that has to be fulfilled before the homecoming is having enough economic means to materialize their investment in concrete projects: the Dominican hardly ever abandons this dream. Away from their origin country, Dominican women always consider their homecoming as a short or long run plan; but this conception of the unavoidable return to the Dominican Republic may turn out to be a more and more unlikely project as it is postponed indefinitely.

Meanwhile, it is mentioned that homecomings are linked with conveying of images, cultures and knowledge patterns, which is referred to as transferences of intangible material products (knowledge, cultural guides, political ideas, life perception, technologies, etc.); it is known upon the term of "social remittances". According to Levitt (1996, pp. 6-7): "Social remittances are the ideas, practices, identities, and social capital that are transmitted through the migration circuit. Social remittances are carried by migrants and travellers or they are exchanged by letter, video, or phone. They travel through well-marked pathways -- be they formal or informal organizational structures or during interpersonal exchanges between individuals". From the destination country to the origin place, migrant people expand their relationships while creating families inside these social interaction spheres. There are possibilities to transport values and cultural knowledge, favourable to the emancipation of those who did not have the opportunity to migrate.

In these mentioned cases, a difference is noticed in the level of people's well-being as well as that of the local collective group. In summary, the remittances received by a relative or a friend would be able to help them to meet their immediate necessities. After this prompt satisfaction, the remaining received amount (*if something remained*), could be invested in a small business (sale of imported articles, manufactured or not -canned, cloths- or foods -canned goods, vegetables-, for instance) to make sure it reproduces. In the first case, the money is simply good to respond to urgent or unforeseen necessities. In the second case, the remittances can contribute to an individual or group of people's (families) life's improvement if the trade is successful since it favours the beginning of Dominican men and women's productive economic activities, which they

are dedicated to.

In this context, we want to precise that our understanding of "development" embraces "the whole social, political, cultural and economical processes that produce a satisfaction to the people representing the production forces of a locality (village or city) or a country" (Kabou, 1991, p. 22). A critical view leads us to affirm that the developing effects of remittances are limited in time and space because habitually the immigrants do not send such remittances continuously *like part of their activities:* that is why we cannot equal in absolute terms the positive effects of the remittances reception with those of the development. We believe that, opposite to the trend, the social sciences have to make relative and nuanced analysis when relating individual remittances and local development since the increase in income does not *necessarily* involve development. Likewise, we wonder if the remittances arriving in the Dominican Republic can compensate the economic and social costs of Dominican migrations (regarding the same immigrant -expenses- and the country ⁻brain drain-), in spite of their significant help to realize a punctual project or respond to family necessities.

Some Final Reflexions

This article seeks to fill gaps in existing knowledge about Dominican women migration and development. The contribution of Dominican women migration in reducing poverty and enhancing economic growth in their native country remains relatively under-researched, and the knowledge of the economic effects of their migration, especially its impact on economic development, is rather limited.

Now, the knowledge of the economic effects of the Dominican, especially its impact on economic development urges us to answer the following question: can transnationalism be taken into account in current trends of policy making? In what extent can national policies for the reduction of poverty accommodate migration flows in order to achieve development targets in the Dominican Republic? The political involvements of the Dominican transnational networks are of our interest in order to investigate in this section that is focused in migratory politics in favour of the homecoming of qualified immigrants, semi-qualified or not.

The bulk of remittances arriving in the Dominican Republic from

different residence countries of their national emigrants requires politics that, without being either repressive or restrictive, can channel the monetary transactions flows and strengthen their positive effects:

> Some policy ideas suggested in the past period focus on the brain drain, such as legal restrictions on exit or a «departure tax»paid by receiving countries to sending countries, are now seen as archaic and unimplementable. Other ideas, such as a transnational community of scientists and engineers helping both the receiving and sending countries may be even more feasible due to globalization. Thus while globalization might aggravate some old problems it might also entrain some new solutions [⋯] One argument is that the costs of higher public education should be treated as a loan (secured in some fashion) unless the graduates satisfy certain minimum requirements of public service after graduation. This policy would seem to be fair but it may be difficult to implement. (Wabgou, 2008, pp. 146-147)

The domestic or local politics on development have to include the transnational networks in their programs since the migrations constitute the channel for excellence of loss of domestic productive forces:

> [⋯] this way, transnationalism is considered as a key element in the role played by transnational communities which are built up through the pressure of the international migration. It doesn't only represent a novelty, but among the so-called global studies it constitutes a theoretical field in construction with decisive political relevance for the future, precisely for the future of the bottom people, of those who, being wrapped in the globalization trends, have very little political power; however, their place in the economy is more and more decisive for its nations of origin [⋯]. (Lozano, 2003, p. 8)

Finally, we believe that these policies and reforms will lead to higher development outcomes through Dominican transnational networks, and will assess the Dominican government's capacity and political willingness to foster strategies in addressing the management of migration flows, mainly the brain drain.

References

Amin, S. (2006). Las derivas de la modernidad. El caso de África y del mundo árabe. In A. Boron & G. Lechini (Eds.), *Política y movimientos sociales en un mundo hegemónico: Lecciones desde África, Asia y América Latina* (pp. 81-118). Buenos Aires:. Colección Sur-Sur, Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales (CLACSO).

Arango, J. (2006). La explicación teórica de las migraciones. *Migración y desarrollo, 1*, 1-30.

Boyd, M. (1989). Family and personal networks in international migration: Recent development and new agendas. *International Migration Review, 23*(3), 638-670.

Cepal. (2006, March 20-24). *Migración internacional, derechos humanos y desarrollo en América Latina y el Caribe: Síntesis y conclusiones,* trigésimo primer período de sesiones. Montevideo, Uruguay.

Dodson, B. (2001). Discrimination by default? Gender concerns in South African migration policy. *Africa Today, 48*(3), 73-89. Retrieved May 12, 2008, from http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/africa_today/v048/48.3dodson.html

Escrivá, A., & Ribas, N. (2004). Investigación sobre migración, desarrollo y transnacionalismo: Contribuciones para un debate desde España. In A. Escrivá & N. Ribas (Eds.), *Migración y desarrollo: Estudios sobre remesas y otras prácticas transnacionales en España* (pp. 11-51). Córdoba: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (CSIC).

Garcia, S. R. (2005). *Migration, remittances, and gender in the Dominican Republic: Women contribution to development.* NY: UN-INSTRAW.

Gregorio, C., & Ramirez, F. Á. (2000). ¿En España es diferente···? Mujeres inmigrantes dominicanas y marroquíes. *Papers, 60*, 257-273.

Guarizo, L. E., Portes, A., & Haller, W. (2003). Assimilation and transnationalism: determinants of transnational political action among contemporary migrants, *American Sociological Review, 67*(2), 278-298.

Gurak, D. T., & Caces, F. (1998). Las redes migratorias y la formación de sistemas de migración. In G. Malgesini (Ed.), *Cruzando fronteras* (pp. 75-110). Icaria, Barcelona: Fundación Hogar del Empleado.

Healey, J. F. (2003). *Race, ethnicity, gender, and class: The sociology of group conflict and change.* London: Pine Forge Press.

Hylland, E. T. (1997). Ethnicity, race and nation. In M. Guiberneau & J. Rex (Eds.), *The ethnicity reader: Nationalism, multiculturalism and migration* (pp. 33-42). Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

Jolly, S., & Reeves, H. (2005). Gender and migration: Overview Report. *Bridge, Institute of Development Studies, 16,* 17-25.

Kabou, A. (1991). *Et si l'Afrique refusait le développement?* París: L'Harmattan.

Levitt, P. (1996). Social remittances: A conceptual tool for understanding migration and development. *Working Paper,* (Serial No. 96.04). Retrieved May 12, 2008, from http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/hcpds/wpweb/96_04.pdf

Lozano, W. (2003). Prólogo. In A. Portes, L. Guarnizo, & P. Landolt (Eds.), *La globalización desde abajo: Transnacionalismo inmigrante y desarrollo. La experiencia de Estados Unidos y América Latina* (pp. 7-13). México: Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales (FLACSO), Colección las Ciencias sociales.

Obando, A. E. (June, 2003). *Migrant women.* Association for Women's right in Development (AWID). Retrieved May 2, 2008, from http://www.whrnet.org/docs/issue-migrantwomen.html

Oso, L., & Villares, V. M. (2005). Mujeres inmigrantes lationamericanas y empresariado etnico: Dominicanas en Madrid, Argentinas y Venezolanas en Galicia. *Revista Galega de Economía, 14*(1-2), 1-19.

Pessar, P. R. (2005, Nov. 30 − Dec. 2). *Women, gender, and international migration across and beyond the Americas: Inequalities and limited empowerment.* Paper presented at the Expert group meeting on International Migration and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean. Population Division Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Mexico.

Portes, A. (1995). Economic sociology and the sociology of migration: A conceptual overview. In A. Portes (Ed.), *The economic sociology of immigration: Essays on networks, ethnicity and entrepreneurship* (pp. 1-67). NY: Russell Sage Foundation.

Portes, A., Guarnizo, L., & Landolt, P. (2003). Introducción. In A. Portes, L. Guarnizo, & P. Landolt (Eds.), *La globalización desde abajo: transnacionalismo inmigrante y desarrollo: La experiencia de Estados Unidos y América Latina,* (pp. 15-44). México: Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales (FLACSO), Colección las Ciencias sociales.

Ramirez,C., Garcia, M., & Miguez, J. (2005). *Cruzando fronteras: Remesas, género y desarrollo.* Santo Domingo: UN-INSTRAW.

Roberts, B. R. (1995). Socially expected durations and the economic adjustment of inmmigrants. In A. Portes (Ed.), *The economic sociology of immigration: Essays on networks, ethnicity and entrepreneurship* (pp. 42-86). NY: Russell Sage Foundation.

Saldana, F. M. C., Munevar, M. D. I., Ortiz, S. A., Moreno, E. E., & Aragon, C. A. N. (2007). Una visita a la reserva de la biósfera sierra de Huautla, Morelos, México. *Revista Estudios Sociales, 1,* 189-219.

Sayad, A. (1999). *La double absence: Des illusions de l'émigré aux souffrances de l'immigré.* París: Seuil.

Sow, P. (2004). Prácticas comerciales transnacionales y espacios de acción de los Senegaleses en España. In A. Escrivá & N. Ribas (Eds.), *Migración y Desarrollo. Estudios sobre remesas y otras prácticas transnacionales en España* (pp. 235-254). Córdoba: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (CSIC).

UNFPA. (2006). *State of world population 2006. A passage to hope. Women and*

International Migration. Retrieved May 7, 2008, from http://www.unfpa.org/swp/2006/english/introduction.html

UN-INSTRAW. (2006, July 27-28). *Género, migración, remesas y desarrollo.* Paper presented at Consulta regional sobre migración, remesas y desarrollo en América Latina y el Caribe, United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, Santo Domingo, Republic Dominicana.

Wabgou, M. (2008). Governance of migration in Senegal: The role of government in formulating migration policies. In A. Adepoju, T. V. Nearsen, & A. Zoomers (Eds.), *International migration and national development in sub-Saharan Africa: Viewpoints and policy initiatives in countries of origin* (Afrika-Studiecentrum Series) (pp. 141-160). Leiden: Brill.

Wiesenfeld, E. (2006). El rescate de las comunidades en el marco de la globalización. *Athenea Digital, 9,* 46-57. Retrieved May 12, 2008, from http://antalya.uab.es/athenea/num9/Wiesenfeld.pdf

World Health Organization. (2008, May 19-24). *Health of migrants.* Paper presented at the 61st World Health Assembly, Geneva, Switzerland.

Biographical Note: **Dora Inés Munévar M.** is a Colombian scholar who received her PhD in Political Science and Sociology. Her research interests include education and juridical issues, communication and social matters, gender, science and technology, city and body. As a professor at the department of Human Communication and the School of Gender Studies of the Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Bogotá, she has participated in various academic debates related with her fields of specialization. Her publications are linked to gender violence, communication and technology, human mobility and development, power and academic women, science and live arts.

Biographical Note: **Maguemati Wabgou** is a Togolese sociologist who obtained his PhD in Sociology and Political Science from the Universidad Complutense de Madrid where he researched into the immigration to Spain from sub-Saharan Africa, mainly from Senegal, including its correlative ethnic relations. He researched "Les modes d'insertion des Sénégalais au marché du travail montréalais" at the "Centre d'Études Ethniques des Universités de Montréal" as a major part of his Post-doctoral research activities. He is currently Professor at the department of Political Science at the Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Bogotá where he is presently carrying out research on Afrocolombian people. His publications are related to Africa, migrations and labor market, social networks, ethnic relations and gender.