Tatiana Vargas Maia

Southern Illinois University Carbondale
vargasmaia@gmail.com

Transnational identities and citizenship rights

Abstract: The aim of this paper is to map the debate on identities and political affiliations, trying to situate and advance the idea of consolidated transnational identities as possible grounds for empirical practices of enlarged conceptions of citizenship. In their original denotation, citizenship rights were understood as limited not only by the boundaries of states, but also by the ambit of nations, "imagined communities" of shared identities. However, together with the socio-political changes provoked by globalization, emerged a normative demand to expand this set of rights in order to somehow include immigrants and foreigners. Articulated with this demand is the theoretical debate on the development of a cosmopolitan or transnational citizenship. The intuition that guides this article is that perhaps the furthering of transnational identities could inform and support these attempts. In order to investigate this insight, an intellectual history of Pan-Africanism is examined through the lenses of some of the contemporary theoretical developments on citizenship (Appiah, Nussbaum, Miller, Benhabib and Yuval-Davis), as an attempt to expose potentialities and flaws of using transnational identities as grounds for citizenship extensions.

Introduction[1]

The debate concerning the development of an international society[2] is one of the main themes in contemporary political science, especially for the fields of international relations and political theory. The discussion on globalization and its impacts on nation-states (commonly considered to be the traditional actors of global politics) holds a central position in this inquiry – it is a current assumption that the main organizational dynamics of states are being affected by the globalization in several ways.[3] Examples of trend are the growing concerns regarding issues of sovereignty, that include the control over national borders, patterns of migration and the political management of the increasingly social and cultural heterogeneity that is being developed within contemporary societies.

The main purpose of this paper is to address the challenges and changes in one of these states' central domains: citizenship. The literature that discusses this matter is characterized by the acknowledgment of an intensified interconnection between countries and, especially, an increased exchange of individuals (through both legal and illegal means) provoked by globalization. One of the most important consequences of this fact is an examination about the moral, political and cultural dimensions of the concepts of citizenship and political membership within the contemporary political order, specially in relation to the situation of the growing

---

1   I would like to thank Roudy Hildreth and Fabricio Pontin for the careful reading and valuable comments on this paper.

2   Hereby understood accordingly to Hedley Bull's (1977:13) definition: "A *society of states* exists when a group of states, conscious of certain common interests and common values, form a society in the sense that they conceive themselves to be bound by a common set of rules in their relations with one another, and share in the working of common institutions."

3   Several authors, from different theoretical perspectives, recognize and take into account the impacts of globalization into the nation-state, such as Benhabib (2002 and 2004), Honig (1998 and 2001), Huntington (1993 and 1996), among others.

foreign population in several countries. Originally understood as a set of rights and obligations shared by those recognized as being members of a political unity within the Westphalian system, citizenship was conceived as being limited not only by the boundaries of states, but also by the ambit of nations, that is, "imagined political communities" (Anderson, 1983:6-7) of shared identities[4]. However, together with the contemporary changes briefly described above, emerged a normative demand (following the cosmopolitan intuitions of increased moral standards on political behaviors) to enlarge such set of rights in order to somehow include foreigners, that is, individuals that are not immediately included in such communities, but that live within its borders. Directly articulated with such demand is the debate concerning the development of a cosmopolitan or transnational citizenship.

Inside this discussion, one of the main points of controversy is on how to ground this extended set of rights and obligations. The key question here is the following: If citizenship derives its justification and legitimacy from the coincidence between polity and identity, what could ground – and therefore legitimize – any attempt of a deterritorialized political membership? The intuition that guides this research paper proposal is that perhaps the furthering of transnational identities[5] could inform and sustain these attempts[6]. Therefore, the research question that guides this work is the following: Can transnational identities be understood as an expansion of local/national loyalties (and as a form of transnational political culture) and thus as a ground for the development of more concrete forms of transnational citizenship?

---

4   And it is important to highlight that, conventionally, the limits of nations were coincident with the borderlines of states, and thus the concept of nation-state, that is, one territorial political unity identified with one limited identity group.

5   Understood as an identity that is shared by two or more states, producing among them a dynamic of mutual understanding and recognition (Cronin, 1999:23-24).

6   According to Stokes (2004:127): "Just as nationalist ideas rely upon the nation as an 'imagined community' (Anderson, 1983), so also transnational forms of citizenship can evoke a broader, imagined political community of individual, groups or states."

In addition to the investigation of the normative and theoretical instance of this problem, the present work also attempts to address one specific case: the intellectual development of an African transnational identity (Pan-Africanism) and the social and political potentials of an active transnational political culture. The source of information for this inquiry will be mainly the theoretical developments of intellectuals that have elaborated approaches to the matter of Pan-Africanism (such as Kwame Anthony Appiah), in the attempt to investigate how these theoretical developments are related to the debate concerning citizenship and cosmopolitical developments.

An initial analysis of this topic suggests that if transnational identities can indeed be elaborated and developed in concomitance with national identities, promoting a shift in the usual, unidimensional conception of citizenship and political membership[7], then maybe they can foster a partial transference of political loyalties and start an expansion of membership rights beyond national frontiers – meeting, perhaps, some of the cosmopolitan claims of equality and inclusion.

In order to pursue these objectives, this paper is structured in the following manner: the first section consists in a literature review regarding different approaches to the matters of identity and citizenship. The main purpose here is to map the discussion concerning collective identities and political affiliations, and to try to situate and bring forward the idea of consolidated transnational identities as possible grounds for empirical practices of enlarged conceptions of citizenship. The second part of this work offers an examination of the transnational, Pan-African identity. Finally, a brief conclusion relating both subjects and advancing some suggestions to the general debate on identities and citizenship is provided.

---

7   The idea of a 'multi-layered citizenship' was advanced by Yuval-Davis, and will be further explored on the sequence of this article.

Identity and citizenship in a global context

The idea of shaping more fair and equal relations in the present international political order (both in the micro – individual – and macro – collective – levels) is a recurrent proposition in normative and theoretical discussions regarding political science. This interest has motivated much of the debate concerning an expansion of civil, political and social rights beyond the traditional limits of particular nation-states. A significant part of this argumentation is encompassed by the debate on cosmopolitanism. Broadly understood as the idea that, independent of major differences, all individuals are part of a world community,[8] this major normative proposition directed at the constitution of an international society within the international arena has motivated the development of several different approaches and specific propositions on how to handle the matter of the recomposition of political rights and membership.

One of the main points of controversy on the discussion concerning citizenship in the contemporary globalized world is related to the role of collective identities in the process of granting membership and participation rights to individuals in diverse states. This dispute can be understood as an attempt to update the conception of citizenship[9] to the current international context, characterized, mostly, by and increasing degree of exchange (of not only economic

---

8 Martha Nussbaum (1997:9) drawing from stoic philosophers such as Hierocles and Cicero, defends the idea that, although we may concede more attention and concern to what is near to us (compatriots and co-nationals), "we should always remember that these features of placement are are incidental and that our most fundamental allegiance is to what is human" and that "we should consider that even the special measure of concern we give to our own is justified not by an intrinsic superiority in the local, but by the overall requirements of humanity". For this author, then, our first and foremost loyalty is towards humanity, defined on terms of its "fundamental ingredients, reason and moral capacity" (Nussbaum, 1996:7), and thus must be expanded beyond communital and national borders, that are considered to be arbitrary divisions of the larger human community.
9   As previously mentioned on pages 2-3.

assets and financial flows, but also people and cultural goods) between countries.

Three broad and different accounts of this subject can be identified in the literature[10]: 1) a conception that is still very much attached to the traditional meaning of citizenship, and that views identity (in this case, nationality) as a necessary feature that defines the boundaries for political action and legitimizes participation (Miller is one of the authors to defend this view); 2) a recognition of the importance of identities in the political process, but also an intention to overcome some of the limitations related to an opaque and homogeneous conception of political culture, proposing an enlargement and a flexibilization of the rigid denotation of modern citizenship through a project of minimum cosmopolitanism (Seyla Benhabib is the best example of this perspective, but also Bonnie Honig); and, finally, 3) an understanding that the defense of any kind of identity politics means the support for exclusionary politics (since any identity is broadly defined in term of "us" against "them", opening for the possibility of hostile interactions), and an argumentation that favors of a dismiss of identity-based allegiances and a change towards a moral and manageable framework for citizenship (Nussbaum is a good example of this view). In sum, different appropriations of culture as identity lead to contrasting (re)formulations of citizenship.

The first of these three approaches, as articulated by David Miller (1999: 61-63), departs from a strong conception of republican citizenship defined by four components: First, the fact that the republican citizen enjoys a defined set of equal rights. Second, concomitant to this set of rights is a set of also equal and defined obligations. Third, the republican citizenship involves an active participation within the political community, aimed at the defense of the rights of other

---

10 The option to focus on these three broad perspectives was based on the assessment that they are well-developed accounts of this subject that represent the most common positions on the topic, in a progression from particularistic to universalistic views on citizenship rights.

members of the group and the promotion of the common interests of the community. At last, this republican citizenship is also defined in terms of an active participation in both formal and informal arenas of politics – that is, not only through established means of participation, such as the vote, but also through the general discussion and debate of political matters that regard the community, for instance. In the context of this very demanding citizenship, conceptions of a shared identity (the idea of nationality) enable large groups of people (the reality for most of contemporary countries) to work jointly as citizens, since it attributes them the notion of belonging to the same collectivity and sharing the same destiny. In this sense, identity is highly important because it plays the role of the social amalgam that, in the last instance, supports the political life of the states (Miller, 1999: 65-69). Based on this panorama, Miller states that any attempt of citizenship that is disconnected from these shared political cultures is impracticable, and thus the idea of a cosmopolitan citizenship is necessarily flawed.[11]

The second approach considered here recognizes the relevance of identities and cultures in the composition of the political space, but attempts to reach new grounds for the political participation through the abandon of purely persuasive and bargaining political practices. The work of Benhabib (2002 and 2004) is specially interesting here for the reconsideration of culture and identity. According to Benhabib, even if we accept the intrinsic cultural element on the definition of the political space and membership, a reconsideration of the concepts of culture and identity is extremely necessary. Instead of conceiving this categories as opaque and monodimensional, this author highlights the basic heterogeneity and malleability of cultures

---

11 Miller, however, does not abdicates on the idea of an expansion of global justice and peace, that he considers to be very important. Nonetheless, he believes that these goals must be internationally promoted by responsible republican citizens from within the borders of their political communities, and not thought the invention of forms of cosmopolitan citizenship that would damage and undermine the basis of proper national citizenship (Miller, 1999: 79).

(Benhabib, 2002:4). From this non-reductionist intuition, Benhabib pleads for an enlargement of the notion of citizenship, She proposes a minimum universalism and a cosmopolitan federalism, that is, a maintenance of the status of the state, and even the recognition of the important role played by identities in politics, combined with a moral refurbishment of the political membership.[12] As stated by Honig,

> democratic principles are best realized at this moment in a commitment to a *politically engaged, democratic cosmopolitanism* in which the will to national unity or identity is attenuated and democratic actors have room to seek out political, cultural, and other forms of not just identity-based affiliation at the subnational, national and international registry (Honig,1998:193).

Following this line of reasoning, Honig seems to suggest a radical pluralization of our objects of attachment, where the nation-state is only one, rather than the central point of allegiance. For her,

> the democratic cosmopolitanism that results from such efforts may not escape the paradoxes and conundra of which the symbolic politics of the foreignness are symptomatic, but it might relieve some of the pressures that intensify those paradoxes. Perhaps it might even stops us from rescripting those paradoxes into political problematics that usually end up pitting 'us' against 'them'. (Honig, 2001:122).

Finally, the last perspective on this matter proposes a wide universalism that is diametrically opposed to Miller's nationalist. Arguing that any kind of politics based on collective identities as being intrinsically pernicious and archaic, this approach proposes to overcome exclusionary politics through a radicalization of the moral discourse. Martha Nussbaum (1996 and 1997) articulates the notion of global solidarity through the recognition that the division of humankind among different nations is purely arbitrary, and that despite the constructed ideas of fundamental differences among this multiplicity of nations, there's only one relevant community that should be the locus of our allegiances and loyalties: humankind, defined in terms of the universal capacity of reasoning and morality. In this sense, Nussbaum (1997: 23) attempts an empirical

---

12 In her own words: "*a necessary mediation between the moral and the ethical, the moral and the political.*" (Benhabib, 2004:16).

articulation of the cosmopolitan ideal. For her, two fronts of action are necessary to the construction of a cosmopolitanism: a pedagogical effort to overcome (specially in future generations) the manicheist and hostile divide between "us" and "them", and a network of institutions that will not only reflect and spread this "respect for humanity", but also enforce political practices that are coherent with the cosmopolitan project.

Despite the several proposals and suggestions towards a reconsideration of the concept of citizenship advanced by these authors – especially the second and the third ones –, none of them seem to really tackle the empirical dimension of the focused problem. The nationalistic paradigm's suggestions sound, sometimes, too restricted when faced by the current degree of interconnectedness among international actors and its impacts on states' configurations. Concerning the universalistic agenda, in its various degrees, the feasibility of its suggestions may be questioned. Albeit the fact that Benhabib is clearly concerned with the factual political arena,[13] most of these authors do not demonstrate in a satisfactory manner the viability of their models in the contemporary international arena.

In order to address this lack of empirical attention in the literature, the hypothesis advanced by this article is that perhaps remanaging the focus of discussion from very strong moral propositions towards some more politically grounded suggestions might be helpful. In this sense, investigating the possible role of transnational identities on this process may help bridge the major discordances between the previously discussed approaches. Instead of simply conforming to the national level, on one hand, or extrapolating to an abstract demand for widely recognized cosmopolitan rights, on the other, maybe the adoption of a progressive perspective (that departs

---

13 Benhabib at least attempts to abandon a pure instrumentalization of politics toward a more dialogical and morally mediated political practice, relying on institutions in order to improve on cosmopolitan developments.

from the nation-state to a regional level of mutual recognition and affiliation, without dismissing the cultural dynamics that have historically based these claims) is the key to design a political agenda for the gradual flexibility of rights.

The notion that transnational identities can serve as an agent of such changes is derived from its definition: as mentioned before, a transnational identity is as an identity that is shared by two or more states, producing among them a dynamic of mutual understanding and recognition (Cronin, 1999:23-24). In theory, these gradual dynamics of mutual understanding and solidarity can establish solid cooperation processes, and this may broaden the instances of affiliation and membership from the national to the regional level, thus creating mutually connected (and non-exclusive) political allegiances.

In this sense, transnational identities, represented through and incorporated in international/regional institutions, can connect particularistic and traditional instances of membership to more universalistic political propositions, beginning a progressive process of deterritoralization of the notion of citizenship. In this line of reasoning, Bauböck presents an interesting account of a pluralistic global normative order:

> A supranational integration of states that accept each other as equal partners and retain strong powers for their internal self-government will not produce a world government (...) The kinds of political institutions at would respond to the most urgent global problems are not likely to emerge from either a monopolistic or a bipolar order of sovereign states. A multi*level* order, however, with an intermediary layer of government between independent states and global political institutions might be the best possible environment for strengthening the later (Bauböck, 2007:108).

This proposition of a multilevel institutional arrangement can be conjugated with the above-mentioned notion of transnational identities in a project of gradual reconfiguration and recombination of local, national, regional and international political spaces, grounded and legitimized by an extended and pluralistic idea of a "shared fate" – now not based on nationality,

10

but on a transnational "imagined community". In sum, a mediated path among these three presented perspectives, articulated by the concept of transnational identities, may produce a reasonable and progressive proposition toward a more feasible cosmopolitanism.

In the next section, drawing mostly from Appiah's work on Pan-Africanism (and his notion of rooted cosmopolitanism), but also relying on Cabrera's (2005) idea of institutional cosmopolitanism and Yuval-Davis (1999) concept of multi-layered citizenship, I attempt to outline a middle-ground among Miller's, Benhabib's and Nussbaum's propositions on cosmopolitanism and citizenship.

African identities, multi-layered citizenship, and accountable integration

Although the discussion concerning cosmopolitanism is universalistic in the sense that it requires the observance of a set of binding general principles (morally or normatively grounded), most of the empirical examples employed in the literature concerning this subject focus on the European Union (EU) both as a locus of cosmopolitan developments and as the most full-fledged representation of the ideal of a renovated take on political membership.[14] Without disregarding the relevance of these examples, it must be acknowledged that their exceptionality pose important barriers to the management of this cosmopolitan project in other (and, specially, less privileged) parts of the world.

Nonetheless, the absence of cases or of concrete developments outside Europe must not stop the serious appreciation of current scenarios that may foster alternatives and changes for the

---

14 Examples of this are Benhabib (2004, cpt. 4); Bienen, Rittberger and Wagner (1998); Linklater (1998); Preub (1998).

established political dynamics of citizenship. Here, I analyze the case of the Pan-African identity. With more than a century of theoretical developments in a diversity of fronts and formats (history, philosophy and theology, for instance), the various conceptions of a transnational African identity share one common leitmotif: the development and consolidation of a sense of solidarity, mutual recognition and union of both native Africans and diasporal Africans, in order to overcome social political and economical challenges faced by Africans and individuals of African heritage. Yet, the differences concerning the base for such identity are considerably significant.

In the book "In my father's house: Africa in the philosophy of culture", Anthony Kwame Appiah produces a systematic analysis of the intellectual history of Pan-Africanism, in order to elaborate his own perspective on this matter. Although this author accepts and endorses most of the remarks regarding identity politics made by authors such as Benhabib (2002, 2004 and 2006) and Nussbaum (1996), that identities are necessarily constructed and based on mystifications, Appiah nonetheless seems to be somewhat in accordance with Miller about the political utility of this concept that, in his own words, "can be an important force with real political benefits" (Appiah, 1992:175). In this sense, his endeavor is to find a ground for Pan-Africanism that does not resort to dangerous falsehoods such as racial mythology, shared metaphysics or an imagined history.[15]

In this sense, Appiah's proposition is that the contemporary situation of Africa provides more

---

15 Appiah is very critical of the theorizations of other Pan-Africanists such as Crummell, Du Bois, Soyinka and Diop because he considers that their attempts to formulate a common identity for Africans incurred in critical errors that disable deeper attempts of solidarity and union: the idea that race is an element of alliance, defended by Crummell, Du Bois and other classical Pan-Africanists creates an incapacity to deal with intra-racial conflicts; the African Metaphysics of Soyinka may work against Africa, locking it into a backwardness that may deepen current problems; and Diop's imaginary history of glories may divert Africa from the current problems it faces (Appiah, 1992:176).

than enough elements that may be appropriated in the composition of a new Pan-African identity: shared economical, ecological and political realities can set a better ground for the definition – a non-disabling definition – of what is means to be African in the XXI century. Furthermore, this author believes that a non-racialized and non-mythologized Pan-African identity is an international progressive project in that it can bear new political, transnational developments. In Appiah's words (1992:179-180):

> (...) within contemporary industrial societies an identification of oneself as an African, above all else, allows the fact that one is, say, not an Asian, to be used against one; in this setting – as we see in south Africa – a racialized conception of one's identity is retrogressive. To argue this way is to presuppose that the political meanings of identities are historically and geographically relative. So it is quite consistent with this claim to hold, as I do, that in constructing alliances *across* states – and especially in the Third World – a Pan-African identity, which allows African-Americans, Afro-Caribbeans, and Afro-Latins to ally with continental Africans, drawing on the cultural resources of the black Atlantic world, may serve useful purposes. Resistance to a self-isolating to a black nationalism *within* England or France or the United States is thus theoretically consistent with Pan-Africanism as an international project.

Taken to the political level, Appiah states that much of this process of re-identification is already underway, being translated through a myriad of regional and subregional organizations (of which the African Union (AU) is only the most preeminent example[16]), and of joint actions towards continental developments.

> It is as fellow Africans that Ghanaian diplomats (my father among them) interceded between the warring nationalist parties in Rhodesia under UDI; as fellow Africans that OAU teams can mediate regional conflicts; as fellow Africans that the human rights assessors organized under the Banjul Declaration can intercede for citizens of African states against the excesses of our governments (Appiah, 1992:180).

This concept of *fellow Africans* is the key idea for an intersection of the cosmopolitan project with the Pan-African identity: if this category opens for the possibility of not only a union of the African people, but also for communal actions within the political space analogous identity (as

---

16 Other examples are the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the East African Community (EAC), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Intergovernmental Authority for development (IGAD), the South African Development Community (SADC), the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

stated by Appiah), then a political plan that holds as horizon larger cosmopolitan ideas may be indeed in development.[17]

In this sense, two different theoretical elaborations may be helpful to articulate Appiah's proposition of Pan-Africanism with broader conceptions of cosmopolitanism: Cabrera's notion of accountable integration and Yuval-Davis concept of multi-layered citizenship.

In his discussion of cosmopolitanism, Cabrera (2005) states that the path for both economic justice and cosmopolitan developments lies not in the transference of funds from rich to poor countries, but instead in the promotion of processes of democratic integration among countries, both in the economic and in the political level. In this sense, this author defines that a moral cosmopolitanism (an inclusive and universal approach towards distributive justice) should be committed to a institutional cosmopolitanism (a project for the restructuring of the international system through the development of supranational institutions that could manage most of the cosmopolitan distributive goals). For this to be accomplished, Cabrera defends a refurbishment of the modern concept of sovereignty in order to include and protect a larger set of persons with shared interests (and here, the role played by a transnational identity in the articulation of these shared interests can be very useful). According to Cabrera (2005:196-197),

> if movement toward integration can help to promote the view that interests of broader sets of persons should be promoted and protected in common, then the moral imperative on the moral cosmopolitan becomes advocacy of deep integration among states and rejection of the Westphalian

---

17 It is specially interesting to note that, since Appiah's definition of the Pan-African identity is not based on concepts of race, cultural particularities or an imaginary common past, but instead on a shared ecological, economical and political situation ("We share a continent and its ecological problems; we share a relation of dependency to the world economy; we share the problem of racism in the way the industrialized world thinks of us [...]; we share the possibilities of development of regional markets and local circuits of production..." [Appiah, 1992:180]), it does not automatically excludes the possibilities of further enlargements of such conception beyond individuals of African heritage, what would be very consistent with both the moral cosmopolitanism defended by this author (Appiah, 2006). Some other elaborations on the matter of an African identity also carry this connotation. Cone's famous statement on what it means to be black is a good example of this: "Being black in America has very little to do with skin color. To be black means that your heart, your soul, your mind and your body are where the dispossessed are." (Cone, 1969:151).

status quo. In the near term, the cosmopolitan should advocate regional and political integration, as well as the democratic transformation of existing supranational organizations,

Thus, instead of proposing a cosmopolitanism that is immediately unrestricted and universally inclusive, the author sees on the contemporary international system's regional organizations several opportunities for cosmopolitan progresses, that although imperfect, may foster room for improvement and further development. In this sense, it seems very fair to approximate Appiah's statement that "a continental identity is coming into cultural and institutional reality through regional and subregional organizations" (Appiah, 1992:180) to Cabrera's perspective, that points out to one of the progressive possibilities and steps for the construction of a cosmopolitanism.

Yuval-Davis (1999), on her turn, argues for a revision of the concept of citizenship, defending that it needs to be understood as a multi-layered category, in which individuals have multiple and overlapping allegiances – local, ethnic, national, regional, statal, and transnational – that are not exclusionary, nor hostile. Therefore, this author defends a departure from the classical notion of citizenship that is an "individualist universalist" (Yuval-Davis, 1999:131) perspective which overrides differences that may exist among citizens, producing an overall exclusionary notion of politics and participation. In this sense, the perception of citizenship as a transversal category, that encompasses diverse levels of political participation and different spheres of loyalty and recognition, composes an interesting perception of a middle-ground between a strict notion of state citizenship, that is exclusively related to one's national identity, and the cosmopolitan, universalistic ideal of political participation, conceived as being disconnected from any instance of recognition, belonging and identification more specific than humankind. This concept of multi-layered citizenship, if articulated with the category of

transnational identities (which is also open for a multilevel articulation of instances of mutual recognition – local, national, regional, continental, among others) can also be very helpful in the progressive withdraw from a closed conception of political participation and rights toward a less restrictive and more including notion of citizenship. For Yuval-Davis (1999:132),

> what affects people's citizenships in the nation-state is influenced not only by their individual positionings but also by the positionings of the other collectivities in which they are members, whether these are other nation-states, local communities, cross- and suprastates. Religious codes can affect the lives of women just as much – and often more – than state legislation, and soliciting the support of an international agency can sometimes be the recourse of women who are disempowered within their local communities. This is the reason why to continue and relate to citizenships only in terms of the nation-state and not membership in other collectivities/polities, makes incomprehensible the dynamics of contemporary nation-states' citizenships themselves.

It is important to highlight that Appiah's definition of the transnational African identity in in much concordance with this idea of a multilevel identity. In his words:

> Like all identities, institutionalized before anyone has permanently fixed a single meaning for them (...) being African is, for its bearers, one among other salient modes of being, all of which have to be constantly thought for and rethought. And indeed, in Africa, it is another of these identities that provides one of the most useful models for such rethinking; it is a model that draws on other identities central to to the contemporary life in the subcontinent, namely, the constantly shifting redefinition of "tribal" identities to meet the economic and political exigencies of the modern world (Appiah, 1992:178).

In this sense, it seems that Appiah's elaboration on the Pan-African transnational identity opens enough room for a moral and an institutional cosmopolitanism, but through progressive, regional developments. By what seems to insinuate a mediation between different positions concerning identity politics and citizenship rights (mainly Miller's and Benhabib's accounts, as previously reported), and the reliance on both an institutional background and a multilevel, overlapping conception of citizenship, the notion of transnational African identity advanced by Appiah can indeed constitute a middle-ground for the progressive development of more cosmopolitan political practices inside the African continent and toward other regions of the world that share the African heritage (or even in a broader conception, that share Africa's

16

ecological, economical and political status).

Concluding remarks

The main objective of this article was the attempt to discuss the contemporary literature on cosmopolitan/transnational citizenship, and the effort to mediate the different perspectives on this matter through the concept of transnational identities. The analysis of one specific transnational identity, Pan-Africanism (according to Appiah's formulation), through the theoretical lenses provided by the discussion on citizenship was used as an illustration of this endeavor.

In this sense, it seems that the concept of transnational identities can indeed provide an interesting middle-ground for the projects of an enlarged notion of political membership. If the idea of identities can be formulated in a multilevel perspective, encompassing different layers of group relations and diverse loci of loyalty and allegiances, then indeed a new and expanded (multi-layered) citizenship can be envisaged, one that is neither necessarily exclusivist nor abdicates on the exercise of rights and obligations demanded by the idea of political participation.

Hence, Appiah's denounce of race and metaphysics as a ground for Pan-Africanism is very coherent and, moreover, useful: when choosing exclusive categories such as those to base an identity – and therefore a political practice – no room for equality claims is left. However, when these transnational identities are based on empirical quotidian situations (such as ecological, political and economical contexts), there is a noticeable shift from exclusion to inclusion and from hostility to hospitality.

Finally, any normative project must have a correspondent empirical reality. In this sense, the development of a moral cosmopolitanism through pedagogical practices (following Nussbaum's insight without, however, completely renouncing identities as a mean of political practice) and its articulation with an institutional cosmopolitanism (that, as stated by Appiah and Cabrera, can be progressively mediated through regional, international and supranational economic and political organizations) seems to constitute the most viable plan of work for the construction of a society of states within the international system. If regional institutions can be taken as a step towards a broader institutional cosmopolitanism, so can the transnational identities attached and embodied by these organizations be understood as a stage or a moment of reorganization and reconceptualization of the idea of citizenship towards a wide, inclusive cosmopolitan politics.

Bibliography

Appiah, K. 1992. *In my Father's House: Africa in the Philosophy of Culture*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

_____. 2006. *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers*. New York: W.W. Norton.

Anderson, B. 1983. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. New York: Verso.

Bauböck, Rainer. 2007. 'Political Boundaries in a Multilevel Democracy'. In Benhabib, S., Shapiro, I., and Petranović, D. (Eds.). 2007. *Identities, Affiliations, and Allegiances*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Benhabib, S. 2002. *The Claims of Culture: Equality and Diversity in the Global Era*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

_____. 2004. *The Right of Others: Aliens, Residents and Citizens*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

_____. 2006. *Another Cosmopolitanism.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bienen, D; Rittberger, V and Wagner, W. Democracy in the United Nations System: Cosmopolitan and Communitarian Principles. In Archibugi, D; Held, D and Köhler, M. 1998. *Re-imagining Political Community: Studies in Cosmopolitan Democracy.* Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Bull, H. 1977. *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Cabrera, Luis. The Cosmopolitan Imperative: Global Justice through Accountable Integration. In Brock, Gillian and Moellendorf, Carrel (eds.). 2005. *Current Debates in Global Justice.* New York: Springer.

Cone, James. 1969. *Black Theology & Black Power.* San Francisco: Harper & Row.

Cronin, B. 1999. *Community under Anarchy: Transnational Identity and the Evolution of Cooperation*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Derrida, Jacques. 2001. *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness*. New York: Routledge.

Fox, J. 2005. 'Unpacking "Transnational Citizenship"'. *American Review of Political Science*, 8:171-201.

Held, David. Democracy and Globalization. In Archibugi, D; Held, D and Köhler, M. 1998. *Re-imagining Political Community: Studies in Cosmopolitan Democracy.* Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Honig, Bonnie. 1998. 'Ruth, the Model Émigré: Mourning and the Symbolic Politics of Immigration'. In Cheah, P. and Robbins, B. 1998. *Cosmopolitics: Thinking and Feeling Beyond the Nation.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

_____. 2001. *Democracy and the Foreigner.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Huntington, Samuel. 1993. 'The Clash of Civilizations?'. *Foreign Affairs.* Summer 1993, p. 22-49.

_____. 1996. *The Clash of Civilizations an the Remaking of World Order.* New York: Simon and Schuster.

Linklater, Andrew. Citizenship and Sovereignty in the Post-Westphalian European State. In Archibugi, D; Held, D and Köhler, M. 1998. *Re-imagining Political Community: Studies in Cosmopolitan Democracy.* Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Miller, David. Bounded Citizenship. In Hutchings, K and Dannreuther, R (eds). 1999. *Cosmopolitan Citizenship.* London, Routledge.

Nussbaum, Martha. Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism. In Nussbaum, Martha. 1996 . *For the love of country: Debating the limits of patriotism.* Boston: Beacon Press.

_____. 1997. Kant and Stoic Cosmopolitanism. *The Journal of Political Philosophy,* Volume 5, number 1, pp. 1-25.

Preub, Ulrich. Citizenship in the European Union: a Paradigm for Transnational Democracy? In Archibugi, D; Held, D and Köhler, M. 1998. *Re-imagining Political Community: Studies in Cosmopolitan Democracy.* Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Stokes, G. 2004. 'Transnational Citizenship: Problems of Definition, Culture and Democracy'. *Cambridge Review of International Affairs,* 17, number 1, April.

Yuval-Davis, Nira. 1999. The 'Multi-Layered Citizen': Citizenship in the age of 'Globalization'. *International Feminist Journal of Politics.* 1:1 June, pp. 119-136.