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TRANSNATIONALISATION AND IDENTIFICATION AMONG YOUTH OF CROATIAN ORIGIN IN GERMANY

The paper discusses the impossibility to express or categorise multi-dimensional identities displayed by the descendants of Croatian economic migrants in Germany. Their bifocality, transnational experiences and transnational contexts of their identifications are confronted with the still dominant national categorizations of identity which require that they declare themselves as either Germans or Croats. Possibilities for overcoming the prevalent national logic of identification are discussed within the context of a supra-national entity – the European Union.

Keywords: transnationalisation, identity, Croatian migrants, Germany, European Union

The nation "always imagines and represents itself as a land, a territory, a place that functions as the site of homogeneity, equilibrium, integration; this is the domestic tranquility that hegemony-seeking national elites always desire and sometimes achieve", wrote Khachig Tölölyan in the editorial to the first issue of the journal *Diaspora*. He added that in order to reaffirm the homogeneity of the nation and the difference between it and what lies over its frontiers, differences found within national territories are "assimilated, destroyed, or assigned to ghettos" (Tölölyan 1991:6).¹

This and other representations of the nation and its corresponding political entity – the nation-state – encompass several common elements. They imply the principle of territorial sovereignty according to which corresponding land (well-delimited territory) appertains to each nation(-state). The historical formation of the modern nation-state was a process that

¹ This text is a revised version of a paper I presented at the conference "Transnationalism in the Balkans: The Emergence, Nature and Impact of Cross-National Linkages on an Enlarged and Enlarging Europe", London School of Economics, London, November 2004 and at the Ethnologia Europaea Conference in Vienna, May 2004. I wish to thank the participants at both conferences and reviewers for valuable comments.

enclosed social space within the neatly delineated geographic borders of the nation-state. That process is inherent in the contemporary understanding that the nation-state relies on the mutual embeddedness of geographic and social space: one geographic space (bounded by state borders) corresponds to one social space (the nation), and vice versa – each social space has and needs just one geographic space (Pries 2001:4).

Culture is a third "element" in our conception which conflates territory (state) and nation. In general, each nation-state is identified with one kind of homogeneous and unique culture and cultural identity (Gellner 1983:140). This idea, borne of the ideological repertoire of 19th century conceptions of the nation-state, sees culture as "a compact, bounded, localized, and historically rooted set of traditions and values transmitted through the generations" (Stolcke 1995:4). Therefore, the nation-state has been represented as a territory with a distinct social and cultural space, which differs in a singular and some would even deem incommensurable way from similar such entities found beyond its borders. The ideal Western Model of the state has fellow citizens sharing a common language, culture and identity. The ideology of the nation-state thus merges territory or state, nation, and culture. Concomitant to this notion is the assumption that the members of the nation-state – its citizens – share the same culture and hence the same and unique national identity derived from it (Martiniello 1995:4), and that all those who do not belong to the nation, yet reside on its territory, disrupt the harmony and unity of the national culture and space.

Over recent decades, migration has become a major catalyst for the dissociation of the territory, society (nation) and culture as ideologically conflated within the notion of a nation-state, and for discussions regarding the concepts of homogeneous national identity and national culture that are taken for granted. On the one hand, migration has prompted the creation of multiple social and cultural spaces within the single geographic space of the nation-state. With the continual stream of migrants across borders, nation-state territories have been transformed into complex social spaces, sometimes divided into several parallel societies defined along ethnic and cultural lines. On the other hand, migration in its transmigratory form has prompted the creation of social spaces that reach beyond the immediate location or geographic territory in which the migrants live, spanning two or more nation-states and resulting in the so-called transnational social spaces or circuits (Rouse 1992, Basch et al 1994, Pries 1999 and 2001). On the one hand, these processes have led to the "stacking" of different social spaces within the same geographic space, and, on the other, to the *expansion* of social space over several geographic spaces (Pries 2001:5).

Under such circumstances – which Roger Rouse (1991) has called *an alternative cartography of social space* – in which people are bound to encounter various "Others" in the location in which they live and, at the same time, to take part in the life of an "us" group living elsewhere – ques-

tions of (national) identity and of belonging – both of "us" and of "Others" – need to be revisited. A sense of belonging is formed among migrants with regards to social spaces that are no longer necessarily contained within the single geographic place in which they live, but it also arises within transnational social spaces forged and sustained beyond the borders of the place of residence.

Thus, immigrants, expatriates, guestworkers (*Gastarbeiter*), exile communities, and other mobile individuals in the midst of particular nation-states blur the sharp differences that the nation-state ideology tries to maintain between the nationals and the outsiders in their midst. The differences are further blurred when the outsiders are outsiders only formally – because they do not hold the citizenship of the nation-state of residence – but in all other respects have become insiders of sorts – in terms of civil and socioeconomic rights, in terms of long-term residence and participation in the education and social life of the country of residence (Soysal 1996).

The children of Croatian economic migrants to Germany are precisely such insiders in the German society. Although, in general, neither they nor their parents hold German citizenship, they are (more or less) successfully incorporated into the social and cultural space in which they live in Germany. Born, raised and educated in Germany, these young people have been familiar with a transcultural social space created by youth of various origins residing in Germany, and with the transnational social milieu created by them and their parents, linking their society of residence with the society of origin of their parents. How do they manage their cultural and social *bifocality*, that is, their incorporation into two social spaces located in two nation-states – Germany and Croatia? What consequences does the bifocality have on the processes of their identification? How do they discursively express their twofold notions of belonging? Does the image of "the safely enveloped individual body (the site of unique personal identity)", which is linked to "the homogeneous territorial community (the site of national identity)" (Tölölyan 1991:7), validly depict their situation or does it dissolve?

It will be argued that, while their identities become more and more defined by a logic of *both-and-andⁿ* (Kearney 1995:558) by which they are Croats, Germans and, depending on life experience, perhaps something else (members of the global youth culture, cosmopolitans etc.), in contemporary language and nation-state categorizations they cannot find an adequate expression in which to cast their multidimensionality. Therefore, they only partly escape *either – or* classifications imposed upon them by the nation-state logic, which requires that they declare themselves as either Germans or Croats. Possibilities for overcoming the prevalent national logic of identification are further discussed within the context of a supra-national entity – the European Union.

Bifocality of the youth

I carried out fieldwork research among Croatian economic migrants of the so-called first and second generations in Munich during 2002.² I conducted extensive discussions with a dozen young people, descendants of Croatian immigrants, about their situation as "second generation Croats in Munich". In most cases, I met their parents and came to know the entire (hi)story of their family migrations.³

My interlocutors, aged between 18 and 27 years, were born in Germany⁴ to economic migrants from Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, who largely arrived in Germany in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The professions of their parents differ widely: they are nurses and hospital personnel, construction industry or factory workers, restaurant owners or personnel, drivers, secondary-school teachers with an academic degree, etc. All my interlocutors – and this is quite an important feature – have attended Germany's best secondary schools (*Realschule* and *Gymnasium*), and are students at one of Munich's applied faculties or universities. The topics studied range from social work and sociology to economics, communication science, tourism, design, mechanical engineering, etc. They are much better educated, or are about to get a much better education, than is the average among descendants of Croats in Munich (or for that matter, any other group of foreigners). In that respect they represent a smaller sub-group within a wide and heterogenous group of young people of Croatian origin in that town.⁵ It is likely that youth with a lower educational level would have had a different attitude towards their identity.

My interlocutors have lived primarily in Munich or in the surroundings.⁶ Two of them spent a portion of their childhood (6 and 10 years) in Croatia, returning to Munich in their early teens. They have all grown up in multiethnic and multicultural Munich and its surroundings,

² The research was carried out with the financial support of Alexander-von-Humboldt Stiftung, Bonn.

³ The Croats have a long and complex history in Munich and the surrounding area, and are a heterogeneous group of people with various experiences and migration trajectories. Some estimates point to about 30,000 Croats living in Munich. An accurate number of Croats is hard to ascertain since official statistical data register foreigners according to the state of origin and not according to ethnic/national belonging. Thus, in 1998 official figures registered 18,992 Croatian citizens and 12,816 citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Munich (Münchner Ausländerinnen und Ausländer in Zahlen 1999:8).

⁴ One was born in Croatia and came to Germany as an infant.

⁵ I did not manage to bring together a representative group of interlocutors during the period of my stay in Munich. Those who did agree to talk with me were largely young people with above average educations, even though, wanting to speak with as widely a diversified group of individuals as possible, I invited the co-operation of young people by means of ads in cafés frequented by Croats, and on the Croatian Web Page. Only two persons responded to these ads.

⁶ In one case a girl lived first in Frankfurt and then in Munich, besides having lived for several years in Croatia.

among Croats, Turks, Poles, Austrians, Germans and other nationalities, whom they encountered at school, in sport clubs or at various other public venues. Their circle of friends is not mononational: *"There are a lot of foreigners in my crowd, but they were born here just like me, so I can't say my crowd is German or Croatian, there are lots of nationalities"*, said one young man. They keep up more or less regular contact with persons outside the immediate locality of residence – with their relatives residing in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Germany, or in third countries, as well as with friends and acquaintances in the United States, Canada, Sweden, Italy, Great Britain, Ireland etc.

They are bilingual, speaking German and their parents' Croatian dialect, or those who have had some years of schooling in Croatia, the standard Croatian language. Only one person, who started learning Croatian in high school, does not have a good command of the language. Except for Damir,⁷ who went to school in Croatia for ten years, they all use a smaller or greater number of German words when speaking Croatian. At some points in their lives they have spoken either one language or the other, and have switched several times to a different language: as a small child Jozo spoke only Croatian and then had to learn German when he started attending *Kindergarten*. Tonka spoke mostly German when she came to Croatia at the age of six, and hence had to learn Croatian. She lost much of her knowledge of German in this process and had to re-learn it when she returned to Munich at the age of 12. Re-learning German was no simple matter, and Tonka is still somewhat bitter when she recalls the difficulties she encountered, and the derisive attitude shown towards her by her teacher. Branko grew up speaking mainly German and had to learn Croatian anew when, in his late teens, he became interested in his parents' country of origin. Of all my interlocutors, he had the most difficulty in expressing himself in Croatian, so that we more frequently spoke in German.

Having resided all or most of their lives in Munich, these young people feel strongly connected to it. Branko calls his home a small town near Munich where he has lived all his life. Tonka's "heart is tied" to a German town in which she had spent her early childhood, although a small town in Croatia, in which she lived later on, has left important traces in her emotional world. This is how Damir depicted his attitude toward Munich: *"My heart remains with Munich as a city, you know, one grew up here and I don't know... It's just like someone from Zagreb when he has to leave. There's that something, you have a feeling for that city and you miss it. And now particularly, even more so when I am not there so often, it's only now that I have realised how much I miss it. I used to notice it even before, when I used to spend six weeks in... – let's say when I was already a student – for those six weeks in Croatia, I really missed it (Munich, JČŽ)."*

Via the transnational practices of their parents these young people have come to know well other places, located outside Germany, most often

⁷ The names of my interlocutors have been changed.

the place of the father's birth, less often that of the mother's birth or a third place, for example, at the Adriatic coast where the family has built a holiday home.⁸ They sojourned in that place more or less regularly for rather long vacation periods throughout their schooling, socializing with relatives and forging friendly relations with the local population. For example, Tom has not seen many other places in Bosnia (or any other place in the world) except for a village in Bosnia where his father has had a house constructed, and in which he regularly spends six weeks in the summer. Some have not been there for years, but are rediscovering it in their late teens, or still feel connected to it in a certain way as a *lieu de mémoire*, though they do not visit it anymore. For example, Branko has lost one of the "home-towns" of his childhood – his mother's native village in Bosnia – since, due to the war, the extended family left it in the early 1990s. Dina had this to say: *"The childhood I spent in Zagreb during those holidays was a lovelier childhood than the one here in Germany. (...) I adored going to Zagreb, for me, Zagreb was... If anyone had asked me 'Do you want to go to school in Zagreb?', I would straight away have – not just gone back, but stayed on to live in Zagreb. To me, it was always... Even today, I adore Zagreb, even though I am older, and have learnt to live here (just outside Munich, JČŽ), now it is not so very different here as far as, aah alltägliches Leben, everyday life is concerned, but for children the situation there was still different. I always thought it was much nicer there."* Tonka has vivid memories of her childhood in Croatia: of the little town in which the family settled, of their house which she does not allow her mother to sell today,⁹ of herself and her sister playing in the streets of what they called their "territory". In two words – freedom and independence – she describes the period spent in Croatia, to which she did not often return after going back to Germany. In the meantime she feels more "at home" in Germany than in Croatia: *"To them (the Germans, JČŽ), I am a foreigner, but I do not feel like a foreigner – as far as the system is concerned, I feel more at home with behaviour here (in Germany, JČŽ), not as a homeland – but at home, more than in Croatia. I have lived in Germany for 21 years, everything is more familiar here, not like down there, I can't cope there. It's a different system, a different way of life, everything is completely different from what it is here."*

These young people refer to their locality of birth and residence and to the locality of their father's birth as representing "two worlds, two mentalities, two cultures, two lifestyles" – the German and the Croatian or Bosnian-Croatian. The differences between those two worlds are linked to perceptions – themselves dependent on personal experience and interests –

⁸ For some of my interlocutors, their father's native place, where the family had built a house, was where they always spent their holidays. Together with their mothers, they regret this fact (cf. Čapo Žmegač 2004).

⁹ *"I would like this house to continue to be mine, that was childhood, Erinnerung (memories, JČŽ), there is something positive in relation to this house, there we were frei (free, JČŽ)"*, said Tonka.

– of family and gender relations, friendship, work sphere, etc. Tonka in particular, whose father is a Bosnian Croat, identifies the differences between the (Bosnian) Croats and the Germans as being in the family sphere. She claims that the locus of kin relations and obligations among the former is the extended family, and that they generally nurture conservative gender relations and traditionalism. In distinction, the Germans tend to live in nuclear families, where gender equality and less affectionate kin relations prevail. To Jozo, the main differences pertain to the domain of friendship, where Croats are bound to be generous, particularly in hospitality towards their friends – and themselves – while the Germans are rather *"stingy in treating themselves and their friends"*. Other differences would be discipline and responsibility for keeping promises as German characteristics, with family links, patriarchy, conservatism, and physical contact among friends as Croatian characteristics. Jozo claims to have acquired competence in both systems but he still finds them to be incompatible. Branko has only discovered the "Croatian" way in recent years, losing in the process the clear outlines of the stereotypes he harboured about Croatia: friendships are not as "strong" as he once thought and expected on the basis of the mythologized mutual treating among Croats; he also found a different – irresponsible and unreliable – stance towards work. Describing the mindset of the Croats, Damir cited largely negative characteristics, which he found bothersome and intolerable: an easy-going attitude towards work and obligations, graft and corruption, a preference for comfort rather than effort, expectations of making money easily and quickly, and the like. This is not an exhaustive list of the differences between the "Croatian" and "German" systems, and although these perceptions certainly deserve separate analysis, it is not my intention here to discuss them further.

In sum, traits ascribed to the "Croatian" or "Bosnian-Croatian culture" are close and warm relations among extended kin, patriarchy, hospitality and generosity, but also lack of work discipline and responsibility, corruption and expectation of easy and quick profit. The "German culture" is characterized by shallow and less affectionate kin relations, gender equality and work discipline.

Knowing the two apparent mentalities and cultural systems is seen as advantageous by my interlocutors. Tom, the youngest, is rather proud to be what he calls "a Croat in Munich", and this seems to him to be much more interesting than just being a German in Munich. Tonka and Branko claim to take the best from both systems, or to take what to them seems good and acceptable; from the Croatian side, in both cases they see this to be more affectionate relationships between family and friends. Damir, the one who spent ten years living in Croatia, does the same, and takes his bifocality for granted: it is like speaking two languages, it comes to him naturally and he has no problem to "switch" from one "culture" to the other, depending on where or with whom he is: *"I try to explain this to people – it's like when you raise a small child in two languages. It is no*

problem for it to speak Croatian and German, if you start doing it from the first day". He claims that these two systems are not conflictual, but that living within one or the other requires that a person "adapts" to it, and keeps them apart: "As you are growing up, neither is a problem. I will never speak Croatian in such a way that I have first to think in German and then translate into Croatian. (...) And the way it is with language is the way it is with life – you simply live two cultures. You always have to... As you get older, you have to try as much as you can, if you want to avoid discussions, either on the German or on the Croatian side, you have to realise more or less that now I am here and I have to adapt to this a little bit more. Or, now I am down in Zagorje, and I have to adapt to it a little bit more". The two cultural systems are easy to differentiate: "You more or less know, I know which culture is here and which culture is there".

We might say that *bifocality* characterizes the children of the Croatian economic migrants born and raised in Munich. They are *bilingual* – to different degrees, but in general they speak both languages well; they are *bilocal* – although they see Munich as a more important place of living and identity, they develop an emotional relationship to the place(s) of birth of their parents and consider themselves *culturally competent in two systems* – the "German" one and the "Croatian" one. It seems that they live their *linguistic, cultural and social bifocality* without conflict, and they combine the two systems or keep them separate as necessary.¹⁰ They separate them when they find themselves in one and judge that the application of the other would lead to misunderstanding among persons who are not familiar with it. They combine them for personal needs, taking what they consider better in each system. For example, Damir has organised his student life with a compromise between the two systems: unlike most of his German fellow-students, he has continued to live with his parents during his university years, although he has not allowed them fully to support him during that time, which is a compromise with regards to the Croatian system. Ana had left her parents and founded a student household with her friends, but her parents help her financially. Or, Milica works several hours a week, just like the majority of students in Germany, while she still lives with her parents. The bifocality of the children of Croatian migrants to Germany was best exemplified by two girls imagining their future husbands: they should, just like themselves, be "Croats from Ger-

¹⁰ Only one person vehemently defended a need finally to choose one of his identifications: "This is what I have said, you must make a decision, you must take hold of one of those (identities, JČŽ) and say, listen, I am going to be a Croat now and I am going to work at it, and I am going to live down there (in Croatia, JČŽ) or something like that. Otherwise, you need to really try to get rid of it (your Croatian-hood, JČŽ)...". It seems impossible to this person that he parallelly lives out his two notions of belonging and he mentions the word schizophrenia when describing his bifocality. As shown by certain research into the Turkish population in Germany (White 1997), schizophrenia was the term adopted in the media discourse to describe the stress purportedly induced by the twofold sense of belonging of migrants.

many", that is, persons who have the experience of both systems and understand how they can be connected into a non-conflictual whole.

Multidimensional identity and national categorizations

These young, well-educated people, with an "endemic doubleness" (Tölölyan 1991:6) use an "anthropologically out-dated" (Shore 1999:60) and "politically perilous" (Wolf 1994) idea of culture, understood as a fixed, unitary and bounded whole. By enumerating the supposed Croatian or German elements of culture, they reify culture and at the same time conflate it with nation and territory. They actually just reiterate the ideology of the nation-state which fuses nation, space and culture.

It appears as if they live their bifocality and transnational contexts of their identifications as an experience of wholeness. Some hesitation might arise when they try to name their identities. Whereas they live a complex and multidimensional identity – Croatian, German, urban, and international, itself the result of different social experiences and personal histories, in modern language and political terminology they have difficulties finding a notion to express this bi- or multidimensionality. All they have at their disposal are national identities, which are exclusive and not inclusive categories. Let us look at that more closely.

For Branko, a German citizen since childhood, who learned the Croatian language and discovered his Croatian-ness only recently,¹¹ it is hard to tell who he is: *"I cannot say that I feel like a German, neither can I say that I feel like a Croat! It's hard to say. I have noticed that I am only a part of Croatia and only a part of Germany, because I was born here, and yet I know a lot about Croatia and its mentality, via my parents. At heart I am a Croat (he laughs, JČŽ)... that is how I feel, but I have problems with the Croatian language, so that I cannot say that I am a 100% Croat. It does not work"*.

Others mirror this impossibility to define themselves unambiguously as either German or Croatian by stressing their foreign-ness in both societies. In Munich, Tom is a (Bosnian) Croat, but in Bosnia he finds out that he is more a German than a Croat. Or, another example: Jozo – who was born, raised and educated in Munich – takes pride in his Croatian nationality and has a deep yearning for being integrated into an imagined Croatian community at "home". Yet, on second thoughts, he says: *"Maybe I am more German than I think I am"*.

Tonka's story is one about change in her national identity. There was a time, between the ages of 6 and 12, when she lived in Croatia and was – she claims retrospectively – a Croat. Today, after 15 years of schooling

¹¹ This happened in spite of his mother's efforts at distancing him and his brother from his father's Croatia-oriented influence.

and living in Germany, she claims to have become a West German.¹² "I was a real Croat then, I wasn't a Yugoslav, but now I am a West German. There's something Croatian, of course, from my family, but because they are all, the majority of the family, here in F. (a city in Germany, JČŽ), and they, too, have become Germanized, then I can't say now that we are... we still are some sort of Croats, but we all live here, most of us."

Tonka depicts her identity as a process and change, linked to the change in the place of residence. When she lived in Croatia she was a Croat, having lived in Germany the latter part of her life she identifies as a (West) German. The territory, that is the place of living, with cultural and social habits inscribed onto it, defines her identity, just as our common notion of national identity would have it: where you are is what you are is her formula for identity. She thinks that she cannot be both at the same time, rather, she is *one or the other*, depending on where she lives. This girl, West German by identification, does not feel alien in Germany, and frequently takes a "we" (meaning the Germans) position in society. Yet, as soon as a discussion turns to foreigners, she excludes herself from the "we" group and identifies with the social "others": "When it is not a matter of that (foreigners, JČŽ), then my position is klar, eindeutige (clear and unambiguous, JČŽ) – I'm German – then I take the view and speak in that vein, we Schwaben,¹³ we Germans, this and that, West Germans of course... But as soon as they start to speak about those foreigners, then I immediately take another role in society, because formally speaking, by Gesetz, by law, I am a foreigner".¹⁴ There are also situations in which she is reminded that she has remained and probably will always be a foreigner, even with German citizenship: "I will never be accepted, not even with a German passport. I have dark hair, I am not Aryan. If one has dark hair one is not English nor French. I think that this is so". She is supported in this conviction by a recent comment by one of her co-students that one could infer from her appearance that she comes from Croatia!

No matter how they identify themselves or what their formal citizenship is, Tonka, Branko and Tom think that they will always be recognized as outsiders, as foreigners in the imagined German national community, because they are physically different from them! With their dark hair, they are classified in the German imagination as people from the south, as Mediterranean people, said Tom.

Even when they are born and educated in Germany, speak perfect German and have German citizenship, ethnic Germans do not perceive

¹² Note how she stresses that by having lived in a liberal democracy she can only identify with a *West* German (for a similar idea among Portuguese see Klimt 2000).

¹³ *Švabo, Švabe* (Schwaben) is a colloquial name for Germans in Croatian language, sometimes it is also given a pejorative overtone.

¹⁴ At the time of our conversation, her application for German citizenship was approved, but, since it had not formally been implemented, she was still a foreigner under German law.

them as Germans. Denis said: "*To a German I would not be German even if I had German citizenship! And I could not present myself as a German either, because this would mean denying my Croatian origin!*"! To be able fully to understand the complexity of his statement, one needs to describe this young man in more detail. He has lived in Germany since he was a baby, has finished Germany's best classified high school and is an excellent student at an international designer school in Munich. Although he speaks Croatian well, he has had few contacts with either Croatia, to which he feels no links, or with Croats, except for the members of his family. And still, he underlines the impossibility of his being German in Germany, even with a German citizenship. This is due to the ethnically exclusive definition of membership in the German nation, which incorporates members based on ethnic descent (Kastoryano 2002) or a mixture of ethnic descent and cultural assimilation (Green 2001). Although there has been a shift in the German nationality law towards the territorial principle (*jus soli*),¹⁵ the traditional German notion of nationhood, which does not allow anybody who has not been born to German parents – in the ethnic sense – to become German, persists among the immigrants (and the Germans alike). Since the Croatian notion of nationhood relies on the same premise, presenting himself as German would not be acceptable to Denis either, for it would mean denying his own Croatian origin!

Several points can be gleaned from the examples cited above. The lives of the children of Croatian immigrants reflect transnational experiences, but they do not identify themselves as transnational. They *have neither fully conceptualized nor articulated a form of transnational identity that they live on a daily basis* (cf. Basch et al. 1994), not even with the aid of the currently rather popular hyphenated identity, by which they would perhaps call themselves Croatian-German or Bosnian-German or something like that. This mirrors the world in which they live that is cross-cut by transnational ties and connections that span political, national and cultural boundaries and yet, paradoxically, is still organized into and divided by nation-states, the ultimate arbitrators of unique and bounded national identities. Individuals cannot identify themselves as transnational because they live in a world in which discourses about identity continue to be framed in terms of loyalty to nations and nation-states. Official principles of national classification are predicated on presuppositions of *unitary identities*, that is, of individuals as members of bounded nation-states

¹⁵ Since 1993 children raised in Germany have been entitled to citizenship "by declaration" between the ages of 16 and 23, subject to eight years' residence and six years' education. This provision constituted an essential shift away from defining membership based on ethnic descent (*jus sanguinis*). The 1999 legislation introduced the right to citizenship at birth (subject to conditions), lower naturalisation requirements and a greater tolerance of dual nationality (Hansen and Weil 2001). These changes have lead Hansen and Weil to conclude that "German nationality law is now squarely within the broader European trend, emphasising the importance of birth and socialisation to citizenship and increased opportunities for dual nationality" (2001:14).

(Kearney 1995:558). Official individual identities are *either – or* categories. That classification obeys a binary logic in which one either *is or is not* a distinct member of the category nation (ibid.): you are either a Croat or a German, you cannot be both. The children of Croatian immigrants to Germany, endemically bifocal and transnational, are coerced into using those official binary classifications of the *either – or* type, which are inadequate in expressing the realities of their lives, their simultaneous ties to at least two societies, to two imagined communities or nation-states.

Resisting exclusionary national categories

My young interlocutors, transnational actors living in the world of nation-state logic, have not found a way to go beyond the usual nation-state vocabulary and the thinking about unitary and bounded national identities that is ingrained in it. Yet, one of them has found her own way of escaping this impasse.

Tonka claims that if it were possible she would not opt to be a member of any nation-state: "*If it were possible I would be keine Staatsbürgerin, Angehörige keiner Nation* (citizen of no state, member of no nation, JČŽ). *I understand formality, we have borders, the world has not moved so far forward for people to live without frontiers. That is institutionalized, every state has its borders and they engage in conflicts for territory. Everybody wants what belongs to him and works at getting it! Ich kann mich nicht entziehen! I cannot avoid this. They force me to go along with it. I must show my identification papers! I am worth something because I have that paper, otherwise, as far as they are concerned, I do not exist. Du bist materiel da* (you are physically there, JČŽ), *but without papers you are nothing! Why do I need that paper? Because institutional Regeln* (regulations, JČŽ) *are such, I am gezwungen* (forced to, JČŽ), *I have to have the papers"*, exclaimed Tonka during one of our conversations, in a forceful mix of the German and Croatian languages.

This might be an extreme statement, going even further: "*People are limited in their awareness. They look at their nation and think that they are part of it. I am a primate of the female sex, that means I am an inhabitant von Planetenerde, of the world"*. With this statement she perhaps rationalizes her renouncing of Croatian and adoption of German citizenship, but it may also be viewed as a *strategy of resistance*,¹⁶ a kind of a *counter-nationalistic discourse* adopted by a subject with transnational experience in the still nationalitarian European system of nation-states which tends to impose neat and clear-cut notions of belonging of the *either – or* type.

This last statement is very similar to the exclamation of a young Turkish German, who became very upset at the constant questioning about his

¹⁶ I wish to thank Luisa Chiodi from the University of Bologna/Centre for Central Eastern Europe and the Balkans, Forlì for bringing up this point.

cultural affiliation: "*Ich bin der ich bin. Diese scheisse mit den zwei kulturen steht mir bis hier...*" (I am who I am. I am fed up with this shit about two cultures..., JČŽ, Faist 2000:233). Similarly, a question about identity directed to a woman of 19 who was born and brought up in Canada led to the following response: "*Do I have to identify myself in any particular way? I say I am a person*" (Fog Olwig 2003:72).

Post-national identity and the European Union

Does the European Union have the potential to offer a supra-national notion of identification to people whose lives reflect their transnational experiences and a position in-between nation-states?

The European Union has often been presented as a *post-national* society, as a kind of *supra-national* entity, in which the European identity would replace particular national identities. However, as some analyses show, not only has the EU not abandoned the nationalistic logic, it has, notwithstanding its rhetoric, reaffirmed it (Martiniello 2000). According to that author, the concept of EU citizenship introduced in Maastricht in 1992 is still largely derived from the national concept of citizenship – *by virtue of one's being a national in one of the member-states, one is also a citizen of the EU* (cf. also Hansen and Weil 2001:19-20). The Amsterdam Treaty (1997) basically followed the line presented by the Maastricht Treaty, with certain illuminating changes: for example, a sentence was added that EU citizenship *supplements national citizenship and does not replace it*. This amendment has reinforced the approach of the Treaty of Maastricht, according to which EU citizenship is derived from national citizenship of one of the member states. For Marco Martiniello (2000:354) this is only a "renewal of nationalism under the form of a European supranationalism" and it accounts for the exclusion from the benefits of EU citizenship of third-country nationals legally residing in Europe.

Since the European Union is being constructed using the same nationalistic logic of its member-states, it can hardly offer a notion of European identity irrespective and independent of the national identity of its member states. Therefore, it does not offer a post-/supra-/counter-national notion of identity which could encompass bifocality and transnational contexts of life-experiences of the youth of Croatian origin living in Germany.

Yet, paradoxical or perhaps ironic as it may seem, it is precisely the descendants of Croatian economic immigrants, who have grown up as transnational aliens in Germany, who are potentially the ideal citizens of the future post- or supra-national European Union, freed from a national base (and bias). They might very well represent a new type of the *homme européen*, *Homo Europaeus*, whom, some 30 years ago, Jean Monnet expected to be nurtured by the EU. Monnet described the future *Homo Europaeus* as "a transnational, 'post-national' political actor who would rise

above parochial attachments to locality or nation". He would become a rootless cosmopolitan, a deterritorialized Bohemian who would epitomise the virtuous ideals of Enlightenment rationalism (Shore 1999:64). The descendants of Croatian immigrants – at least this well-educated group – – already have such characteristics: they show attachment to at least two localities in two nation-states, they dissociate nationality from citizenship, they think they could live anywhere because they feel foreign in both the Croatian and the German society,¹⁷ they forge further mobility plans within and across the EU, etc.

However, as long as the EU does not overcome the underlying national logic of belonging (and, for that matter, does not offer a possibility that one holds European citizenship irrespective of one's national citizenship) it cannot represent a source of supra-national identity for our young transnational actors – Croat by descent, German by birth and residence. Until then they will remain forced to express their identity in terms of exclusionist national categories of the either – or type, which are unable to encompass their transcultural and transnational experience by which they are defined in terms of "both-and-and"¹⁸ – as Croats, Germans, urbanites, cosmopolitans, etc.

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¹⁷ Damir and Tonka claimed that the pending change in their citizenship status would not change much in terms of their identification. "Where I come from, whose man I am, where my parents come from – I know all of that and I don't need a piece of paper to prove it to me", said Damir. He clearly dissociates his nationality (Croatian) from his future citizenship (German), while Tonka goes a step further by asserting that no matter what her "papers" say she is a foreigner everywhere and always, an alien, a person without roots, for whom it is therefore unimportant where she lives.

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TRANSNACIONALIZACIJA I IDENTIFIKACIJA MEĐU MLADIMA HRVATSKOGA PODRIJETLA U NJEMAČKOJ

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SAŽETAK

Migranti, izbjeglice, tzv. radnici-gosti (*Gastarbeiter*) i drugi mobilni pojedinci naseljeni privremeno ili trajno unutar nacionalnih država zamagljuje oštre razlike koje je ustanovila ideologija nacionalne države između pripadnika nacije i različitih "Drugih" (pripadnika drugih nacija) u svojoj sredini. Razlike su još zamagljenije kad su mobilni ljudi samo formalno *autsajderi* u mjestu svoga boravka – zato što nemaju državljanstvo nacionalne države u kojoj žive – no u svim su drugim aspektima postali nekom vrstom *insajdera* – ljudi iznutra – u smislu civilnih te socijalnih i ekonomskih prava koja uživaju dugogodišnjim boravkom i participacijom u obrazovanju i u društvenom životu u zemlji u kojoj borave.

Djeca hrvatskih ekonomskih migranata u Njemačkoj, rođena, odrasla i obrazovana u Njemačkoj, upravo su takvi *insajderi* u njemačkom društvu: premda su im roditelji podrijetlom Hrvati i većinom nemaju njemačko državljanstvo, oni su (manje ili više) uspješno inkorporirani u društveni i kulturni prostor u kojemu žive u Njemačkoj. Rođeni, odrasli i obrazovani u Njemačkoj, ti se mladi ljudi snalaze u transkulturnom društvenom prostoru koji stvaraju mladi različita podrijetla među kojima žive u Njemačkoj: Turci, Španjolci, Francuzi, Talijani, Grci, Poljaci i drugi. Istodobno poznaju i snalaze se u transnacionalnom društvenom polju što ga stvaraju njihovi roditelji, održavajući redovite i mnogostruke veze s lokalitetom iz kojega su potekli.

U tekstu se razmatraju sljedeća pitanja: Kako ti mladi ljudi izlaze na kraj sa svojom kulturnom i društvenom *dvojnošću*, odnosno *bifokalnošću*, tj. sa svojim *sudjelovanjem u dvama društvenim prostorima lociranima u dvjema nacionalnim državama* – u Njemačkoj i Hrvatskoj? Kakve posljedice ima bifokalnost na procese identifikacije tih mladih ljudi? Kako oni diskurzivno izražavaju svoju dvostruku pripadnost? Omogućuje li Europska Unija da se identificiraju pomoću kategorija koje nadilaze nacionalne granice?

Na temelju etnografskog terenskog istraživanja među Hrvatima u Njemačkoj u radu se tvrdi da ta tzv. druga migrantska generacija živi po logici po kojoj su oni "oboje-i-iⁿ" – tj. i Hrvati i Nijemci, te, ovisno o životnom iskustvu, možda još i nešto treće i četvrto – pripadnici globalne supkulture mladih, kozmopoliti itd. Međutim, u suvremenoj političkoj terminologiji oni ne nalaze odgovarajući termin kojim bi izrazili svoju multidimenzionalnost te samo djelomično uspjevaju izmaknuti "ili-ili" klasifikacijama koje im nameće logika nacionalne države, a koja zahtijeva da se odrede *ili kao Nijemci ili kao Hrvati*. Na kraju teksta autorica se osvrće na neke implikacije nacionalne logike određivanja identiteta s obzirom na Europsku Uniju.

Ključne riječi: transnacionalizacija, identitet, hrvatski migranti, Njemačka, Europska Unija