

Transnational linkages: the Guinea-Bissau's Hometown Associations

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Migrant transnationalism: what do we refer by that?

- Practices/activities (cultural, economical, political, religious) regular and sustained over time...
- That cross international borders and that shape and are shaped by persons and events taking place whether in the host or in the home countries...
- That are put into motion (and also create) by communities without propinquity that act together in the basis of a shared collective of values and meanings

Migrant transnationalism: who makes it happen?

- Migrants that create/manage businesses that involve resources/goods/markets both in host and home countries
- Migrants that develop political engagement, religious matters, professional interests across borders
- Migrants that constitute associations focused mainly, though not exclusively in the promotion of projects/activities in their home communities
- ...

The Migrants' Associations in Portugal

- There are 184 Migrants' Associations in Portugal (Albuquerque, 2002)
- 84% have the African Portuguese Speaking Countries as their nationality of reference
- Out of these, 51 are from Guinea-Bissau
- From which, 35 are Hometown Associations (HTAs)...
- 26 constituted by migrants from a specific region in Guinea-Bissau, the manjake region

The creation of the Guinea-Bissau Manjakes' Hometown Associations in Portugal

- Most of the manjake HTA's emerged during the 80's...
- In the surroundings of Lisbon, generally in neighbourhoods of illegal genesis
- It's main goals were the support to its members, fulfilling housing and employment needs and assisting in the bureaucratic and legal procedures...
- The sharing of accommodation was a very common situation

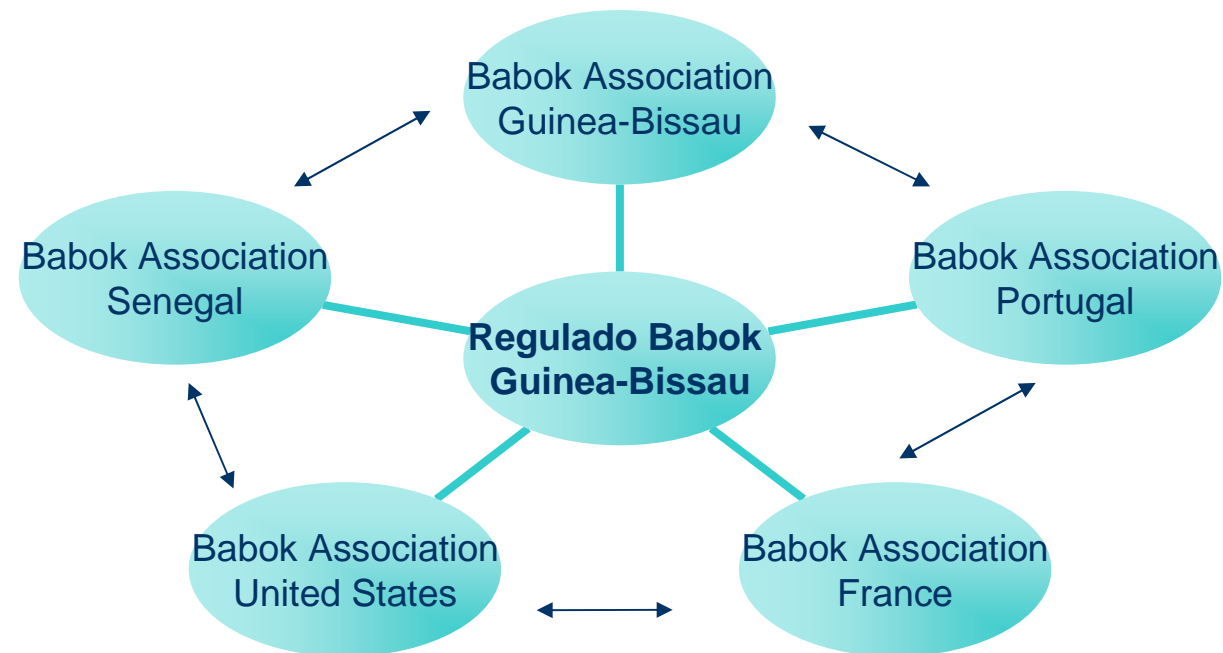
The growth of the Guinea-Bissau's Hometown Associations in Portugal

- Throughout the 90's, most were formally constituted
- Consolidating its intervention in Portugal...
- Though starting to dedicate the majority of its time and resources to the promotion of projects and activities on its home communities

The Guinea-Bissau's Hometown Associations: a global profile

- Main activity: the implementation of local development projects
- Predominantly in the health and education areas...
- Financed almost exclusively by the HTA's own resources
- In articulation with their twin organizations, whether in other host countries or in the local communities in the home countries

The Babok Association



Are the Guinea-Bissau's HTA's transnational actors?

- Their activities are shaped by persons and events happening in Guinea-Bissau...
- But their own life conditions also affect their ability and the scope of their interventions in Guinea-Bissau
- They are linked in a regular and sustained form with their home communities...
- And amongst themselves throughout the diaspora...
- Creating a transnational social space that involves the migrants, the civil societies and the governments both in home and host countries...

Why thinking transnational?

- The transnational actors are increasing in number and as the impact of their activities...
- Integration processes, gender issues, social capital, second generation issues, economic dynamics (...) gain a new meaning...
- The relationship between migration processes and development dynamics is highlighted...
- Because in a globalized world, migratory flows and its causes and consequences are not shaped or determined by the nation-state “container”...

Why thinking transnational?

- Because it's our responsibility as researchers/politicians/technicians, but especially as citizens, to find new ways to think the world, to create knowledge and to act daily that lead to more egalitarian and sustainable societies...