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"Political Consciousness and Migration.
Some Empirical Insights among Philippine Returnees"

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No, never, no, I only heard the people are in the streets fighting this and that, I always thought, why are they shouting, what is the purpose, but then you experience it yourself, and you must be aware then, you must learn your rights, you must really feel the situation, not only the situation of the Philippine government, but of the OFWs, all the migrants, so many are suffering in disgrace, in discrimination, in intimidation from their employers, labour exploitation, that is why people protest, I only understood it after being in the same situation. (Tia)

If you are a loser, you are not strong then there might be a tendency to fall into a depression, so to fight is the other option, to face the challenge, that keeps you from feeling depressed (Mabel)

In honour of all those temporary contract labourers, who work in exploitation and find their ways to deal with this difficult situation or even manage to challenge its foundations.

Gratitude

Contents

Abbreviations

APL	Philippine Alliance for Progressive Labour
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
CNN	Cable News Network
DAWN	Development Action for Women Network
EU	European Union
HDI	Human Development Index
HKCTU	Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions
HTA	Hometown associations
ICMR	International Convention on the Rights of all Migrants and Their Families
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
IT	Information Technology
NELM	New Economics of Labour
NGO	Non governmental organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OFW	Overseas Filipino Worker
OPA	Overseas Performing Artist
OWWA	Overseas Workers Welfare Agency
POEA	Philippines Overseas Employment Agency
SA	Saudi Arabia
SAR	Special Administrative Region (Hong Kong)
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNIFIL	United Filipinos

List of Tables

1. Introduction: Field of Research

The Philippines and migration know a decades long history of ambiguous connections. The country has seen strong people's movements since the colonial times which became a state-led development path in the 1970s. Since then an extensive policy field has evolved which has immense societal consequences. From this background many Philippine and international anthropologists, sociologists, economists and other researchers have focused on this issue.

Coming from a background of critical development studies I find it especially interesting to explore in which ways people who adopt to the Philippine system of outmigration, experience the work and life conditions abroad and how they interpret the same, in how far migrants develop a political consciousness and if this political consciousness can increase agency. The constitutive aspects of the link between political consciousness and agency in the context of migration shall be the aim of this thesis.

Therefore, the research questions deal with the connection between migration and political consciousness, the connection between migration and socio-political agency and the impact on democratisation. To find these correlations, a tripod of methods is applied: the search for answers in theories on political consciousness, migration and democratisation; the analysis of existing empirical studies on this topic and interviews stemming from a field research in the Philippines.

1.1. Migration: A multi–dimensional phenomenon

There is wide acknowledgement of the fact, that the history of mankind in itself is a long history of travelling the planet which led to a fast diffusion of human kind some 100 000 years ago. Hence, it lies in the very beginning of our species that we populated the whole earth and thus started to dominate it. Talking about the migratory movements in modern times some new characteristics become evident towards the last century. During the first big wave of modern migration, which was the emigration from Europe into the New World, the main protagonists were the adventurous and those daring to start a new life abroad (Akashe-Böhme 2000:12ff). The author concludes that nowadays to the contrary it is by no means only those

wanting to test their luck abroad, but rather those forced by manifold reasons to emigrate. Most recent migration is due often to economic globalisation, which means that the world-wide socio-economic structures leave many poor and hopeless so to see their only chance in labour migration Akashe-Böhme (ibid.:16). Besides those working abroad in the frame of bilateral agreements and in legal relationships, many use temporary, also illegal migration in order to support their families financially, which makes transborder families and transnational communities a modern reality (Stasiulis/Bakan 1997:118).

Migration is closely connected to our modern economic (world) system and regulated by political regulations to protect this economic system. Wallerstein (1998 [1980]:278f) points out that since the early 18th century, states actually incited migration as part of the economic world system. With the colonisation of many parts of the world, colonial powers tried to make sales markets for their products in these countries accessible, which is why they started actively encouraging their citizens to move to these areas. Different to those days, but still existent, the current global governance by states and international organisations manifests a strong regulation system that makes it hard for many individuals involved to benefit (Courville/Piper 2004:39ff). Countries conduct along with the current economic ideologies trade liberalisations, which include free movement for capital and goods, but restrict human migration (ibid.). This is taking place all over the world – whether it is countries like the Philippines reinforcing emigration or destination countries trying to regulate the composition of immigration. These regulations include some in favourable ways, leave some in less privileged situations and last but not least a big amount of legally excluded people at the bottom end, whose destinies often are simply neglected as their situation renders them (legally) muted and partly invisible. Hence, people on the move have to deal with the following situation: the

> power of multinational corporations is increasing, while the capacity of the nation-state to govern in a way that protects core values of a caring society is being eroded. At the same time, individual states are reasserting their national sovereignty in the field of border control and the tightening of visa and immigration policies. (Courville/Piper 2004:40)

Indeed migrants' rights do not seem to be a valuable good for wealthy receiving states which stay – regardless of their political system – desired work sites by Third World migrants. This lack of interest in ensuring migrants' rights is expressed in the humble amount of signatures by receiving countries to the General Assembly's International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and the Members of their Families from 1990 (UN General Assembly 1990b, Castles/Miller 2009:303, Kessler 2009). No European country has yet

ratified the convention, only the European Commission tried to show its commitment to the large amount of third-country nationals by supporting the convention and exhorting the European Union's member states (Kofman et al. 2000:90f). The host countries where the interview partners of this study are from, also have not signed the respective convention. While Japan, the Netherlands and Saudi Arabia could formally sign the latter as United Nations members, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and Taiwan have the excuse of technically not being part of the United Nations as independent countries. The International Labour Organisation's (ILO), Convention 97 from 1975 against the discrimination of migrant workers was – among the countries of interest – only ratified by the Netherlands (ibid.).

Generally the system of temporary migration is advancing, pushed forward by the host and sending countries, as it is supposed to provide both sides with benefits. "*Temporary immigration schemes represent a way to reap the benefits of migration flows while at the same time, avoid costs of clandestine migration*" (Coniglio 2008:88). Those countries that see a large migrant influx hope to fulfil recent shortages in labour force without having to provide permanent residency and hope to decrease the amount of illegal workers at the same time, as the amount of different, demand driven work permits can be acquired. Countries of emigration gain returns in monetary transfers and a decreased risk of long-term brain drain, as the people can be expected to return for good (Angenendt 2007).

From this background also Filipin@s[1] travel the world in often unprivileged positions of temporary labour migration, usually tied to contracts with only one company. These migrant workers are usually excluded from workers' rights and political decision-making so to leave them powerless. Attempts to understand and fight against this formal powerlessness is one main focus of this thesis. In the vast literature and in the interviews conducted many hints of people developing ways of critical understanding and political agency in their daily acts, by meeting their necessities like work and resident permits or citizenship statuses, could be detected.

> *In reacting against the hopelessness of current global governance by states and intergovernmental organizations, people are creating their own alternatives through new social movements and NGOs, drawing on human rights (...) they are trying to reclaim a certain level of agency. (Courville/Piper 2004:11)*

Agreeing with these authors, I deduce that out of this political exclusion, a wide field of political engagement evolves, which gives space to differing forms of political activity and indi-

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1   Filipin@s is a term including Filipinos and Filipinas. I use Filipin@s in the style of Reese 2010, who refers to social movement practices in Latin America for using this abbreviation.

vidual reasoning to overcome these disadvantages. The individual reasoning and (collective) ways of dealing with former labour migration in a political sense, thus focusing on societal change like power structures, is the overall topic of this thesis.

While this thesis only focuses on a small part of the Philippines' phenomenon(s) of migration, the literature on the topic at hands is extensive. Before delving into the actual research, some more information on the Philippines' system of outmigration shall provide the reader with necessary background information on the triangle of migration – development – politics. The next paragraphs will include some historic stances on the Philippines, its political development, migration and the overall socio-economic development of the country, including the topic of remittances. In the second part of this introduction, the research design of this thesis will be presented, before turning to the actual treatment of the research questions.

1.2. *Philippines: History, Politics and Culture of Migration*

The Philippines know a long history of colonialism. The Spanish Empire took over the islands in 1565 under the guidance of Ferdinand Magellan (Osterhammel 2002:101). Upon arrivals the Spanish took use of the chiefs and land owners to cooperate and build up their colony in the then tribal society. In 1898 after decades of a growing movement of independence, the Philippines declared themselves a republic. Unfortunate to these plans, the Spanish-American war broke out which the Philippines became a major venue of (Asis 2006, Loewen 2004:552). The United States who showed support for the Philippines' independence after expelling the Spanish won over big parts of the Philippines' elite to secure their main interest: economic gains (Houben 2003:17) They kept the situation in the country calm by including Filipinos in governments and soon let them introduce their own parliament (Reiterer 2003:34). Already in 1935 the Philippines accepted the contract by Manuel Quezon bargained with the United States, that would lead into independence within ten years time. Particularly the Japanese occupation during the Second World War impeded the ratification at first but in 1946 the Philippines finally gained formal independence again.

Colonial times in the Philippines have left various impacts. While the Spanish rule mainly inherited their terms for numbers to the Philippines and - more societally relevant - a strong Christian clerical (Osterhammel 2002:25), the United States' impact was larger. The Spanish

crown and particularly the United States had reinforced earlier elites and land owners, which led the country into elitist politics that were over decennials based on Chinese and Philippine mestizos, "*illustrados*", often with an educational background abroad (Loewen 2004:552, Johnson/McKay 2012:186). After independence a stable but slow two-party system evolved (Loewen 2004:552). To the author this system reflects a "*consensus of the elites*", which was only broken after Marcos' 1969 election fraud (ibid.:553).

During the Marcos era a strong military was built up and close friends and family members were chosen to be judicial and political heads (Loewen 2005:553, Thompson 1996). Thompson (1996:182) calls the Marcos regime a "*personalistic dictatorship*" which first enjoyed legitimacy that it lost latest with the introduction of martial law in 1972. Interestingly, the transition to democracy after Marcos' rule was ignited by economic problems in the late 1970s and early 1980s, which caused the regime to tumble, and was fully triggered by the assassination of an exiled former opposition politician leader, Ninoy Aquino in 1983. Marcos was either too – physically – weak or realised that there was no chance for consolidation over the decline of his regime, that he started to allow demonstrations and protests, which culminated in the 1986 People Power demonstrations on EDSA[2] road, during which Aquino's wife, Corazon "Cory", was elected president of the republic (ibid.:186f). After the survival of multiple coup attempts from old Marcos personnel, there have not been any realistic threats to the Philippines' democratic stability, which Thompson (1996) highlights.

The history of the Philippines' outmigration is tied to its political history. According to Arcinas (1991:103) the phenomenon of outmigration already has deep roots in the context of colonial times. Also Barber (2010:156) who researches on caregiver work and the Philippines' female outmigration states that "*Philippine labour export policies, now normalized, arise out of an exploitative colonial history*". While those first Filipino emigrants left the country for Europe rather as scholars or students, it dates 1906 that the first group of actual Filipino workers went overseas in order to make their money on sugar cane and pineapple plantations in Hawaii (Asis 2006). As the Philippines were a US colony until 1946 and de facto dependent far beyond this date, the first migrants also went to the United States, where they were out of the colonial history in those days officially considered nationals (ibid.). Under Marcos the Overseas Employment Programme was implemented in order to balance out high unemploy-

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2   EDSA is in its long name called Epifanio de los Santos Avenue, leading all around the inner districts of Manila (Solomon 2009:276). This is probably the largest street in the city of Manila on which people still celebrate EDSA anniversaries of the People Power revolutions at the EDSA shrine. I attended 2011's celebrations for the 25th anniversary.

ment rates and gain foreign currency stock (Garchitorena 2007:1, Rother 2009:257). Also the successive government under Corazon Aquino reinforced labour migration by calling those migrants "*national heroes*" (Parreñas 2001:1136). With president Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in the first decade of the 2000s it was publicly declared a state policy to facilitate migration (Garchitorena 2007:2). As early as 1973 Philippines' autocratic President Marcos already developed a program for "*balikbayan*", „*homecomers*" and began to use the term to refer to Filipino citizens and non-citizens with overseas residency alike (Glick Schiller/Basch/Szanton Blanc 1995:59). From then on, the country has facilitated large postal items[3] and visa regulations, but also took advantage of those transmigrants by using them for lobbying in the United States for US aid and putting taxation on incomes earned abroad (ibid.)[4]. After the long tradition of emigration, its dependency shows that "*... these transmigrants have been systematically exploited as a source of state revenue by state policies*" (Basch/Glick Schiller/Szanton Blanc 1997:273). The political migration system is created along with international demand of labour force, which the Philippine governments usually adjust to and provide the world with.

All in all the Philippines' less favourable position in the world system hampers an independent strong government position. Especially when it comes to labour migration, structural inequalities between Northern and Southern nations, lead to reluctant condemnations of labour resource maltreatment in the rest of the world (Stasiulis/Bakan 1997:114). In general the government, even though it tries with different institutions, such as the Overseas Workers Welfare Agency (OWWA) to protect its citizens, lacks strong mechanisms to intervene in receiving countries (Parreñas[5] 2001:1138). Most ambitions terminate as soon as the migrant enters a different law and right system. "*The Philippine government is caught in a deleterious situation: it deploys workers around the world to generate foreign currency while it simultaneously lacks strength to protect citizens working in richer nations.*" (ibid.)

Political activity though reached more and more societal levels during the decline and in the aftermath of Marcos autocracy.

> *Particularly since the Aquino government came to power, political activism from the grassroots-the so-called People's Power movement – has grown dramatically. The Philip-*

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3 See: Alburo 2005 on the social meaning of balikbayan boxes.
4 Overseas taxation was abandoned in the 1990s, as it became clear that migrants also find alternative ways of transmitting money other than state institutions (Solomon 2009:282).
5 The sociologist Rhacel Salazar Parreñas is a Philippine born Professor for American Civilization and Sociology at Rhode Island's Brown University. Her name according to this institute is Rhacel Salazar Parreñas, althouth in most quotes and also the article at hands she was given a different spelling. I stick to the one from her department's homepage. For further information please see: http://www.brown.edu/Departments/AmCiv/people/facultypage.php?id=1217340880.

pines has emerged as a country where political pluralism is more established as a result but where the economic needs of citizens are still not being met: hence, the rise in reform-oriented (if not revolutionary) actions by NGOs. (Basch et al. 1997:273)

Also Courville and Piper (2004:48) state, that "*The Philippines have a long tradition as a vibrant civil society*". They stretch, that it is persistently becoming more Philippine non-governmental organisations (NGOs) who win from the open political system and also find powerful allies within the government structures. All in all the "*number and strength of women and human rights groups is great in the Philippines*" (ibid.). While it seems part of the migration agreement, that Filipin@s endure this kind of hard work, because they want to bring the maximum possible return to their families, they nevertheless are distinguishable from other migrants due to their high level of political activism in NGOs and community-based organisations (Courville/Piper 2004).

Yet one of the most striking aspects of the Philippines labour diaspora is the political activism that surfaces wherever Filipinos congregate. Usually, political expressions are directed at Philippine migration politics, but on occasion there have been well-developed examples of what Nina Glick Schiller & Georges Fouron (2001) describe as long-distance nationalism, where concerns target Philippine class politics more generally .(Barber 2010:143)

Indeed, the Philippines also witnessed multiple large scale demonstrations with positive endings inside the country – including the People Power Demonstrations to end the regency of Marcos mentioned above, and as some put it, People Power Two against Jose Estrada, who was forced out of the office in 2001 (Barber 2010:154).

The downsides of this outmigration processes are blatant. It is a common issue that many of the Philippines' migrants face professional de-skilling, as the jobs they work abroad do not reflect their level of education (Ball 2004:121; Barber 2000:401). Most labour migrants are active in a small set of jobs, in which they are usually tied to a specific employer and profession (Courville/Piper 2004:7). Regarding workers' rights or possibility of obtaining citizenship status, there are large differences with the countries of emigration. While the United States of America or Canada also offer long term residence permits, countries such as Saudi Arabia or most European countries only offer temporary contracts any more. In Malaysia, female migrant workers face the fear possible pregnancy, as this would cause repatriation (Gurowitz 2000:868). Among the worst work places in this regard used to be Japan, as they have a range of jobs for Filipinas that is called "*Overseas Performing Artists*" (OPAs) where they do not even receive normal work permits which would require the country to grant them certain rights, but tourist visas which always only entitle them to stay for half a year of doing this

highly humiliating job of entertaining Japanese men. Nowadays Philippine authorities don't issue this work permit any more, nevertheless, many recruitment agencies and women avoid it by applying for different visa. (Interviews Claire, Mabel)

Talking about migration to the UK, Johnson and McKay (2012) are of the opinion that Filippin@s "*are able and willing to fill the demand of particular economic niche*". Hence, this mixture of a state-led way of migration focused economic development with the economic necessity and perceived deprivation by the single families in the long run irrevocably leads into a "*culture of outmigration*", with millions of Filipin@s willing to work abroad (Asis 2006). Garchitorena (2007:3), states that whether consciously or not "*the migrant worker is perceived as a role model. They become image-makers or advertisers of particular lifestyles and therefore are influential in promoting migration among their circles of family and friends*". To Barber (2010) migrant work becomes a "*normative cultural expectation*". The difficulty for the labour force abroad is how much they can endure in order to meet their aim and their families' basic needs without standing up for themselves, as this might lead to the loss of a job, which is the opposite of what they aim for (Barber 2010:146). This leads to the acceptance of certain behaviour styles, such as "*servitude*" (ibid.:159). Not only the minds are set on migration but also the personal traits are depicted and shaped analogous. People are being prepared and educated in extra courses for labour migration by government organised agencies before departure. This includes basic information about the country of emigration, language, culture and to a little but increasing degree, their rights. Nevertheless, particularly Philippines' temporary migrant workers who are lower skilled run a high risk of workers' rights abuse due to their status in job fields which often lacks unionism or labour standards (Piper 2009:227f). Although there are legal rules on how high the fees for placement and recruitment agencies are allowed to be, the money migrants pay before going abroad can be excessive. Piper (2009:227) goes as far to say that "*the level of indebtedness of foreign contract workers pertains to 'debt-bondage' consistent with the United Nations (UN) definition of human trafficking*". The situation is probably aggravated through the fact, that since 1992 more female than males are officially hired and they often work in more private, vulnerable positions (Asis 2006).

Migration in the Philippines became a development path over time. Labour migration initially meant to be a temporary measure against oversupply of labour turned out to become a "*survival mechanism for the Philippine economy in the wake of the current balance of payments*

deficit and the national debt problem" (Arcinas 1991:103). Nowadays migration can de facto still be regarded as a development model for the country (Ball 2004:123, Ball/Piper 2002). Parallel to this development path, the Philippines turned to World Bank influenced ways in the 1980s by introducing large-scale privatisations and Structural Adjustment Programmes (Bello 2009:9ff). Bello claims that the country's focus on debt reduction and the reduction of investment in the economy lead to an increase in bankruptcies and unemployment (ibid.:23ff). This left the country even more vulnerable and dependent on the world market. As remittances also depend on economic cycles (Faist 2008:21), they are an uncertain source for a country. Nevertheless the Philippines' government is still strongly dependent on those remittances as an influx of foreign currency (Stasiulis/Bakan 1997).

Alburo and Abella (2005:5) criticise that the Philippines have been suffering from severe brain drain since the 1970s which is reinforced by most university education being completed in English. Carrington and Detragiache (1999:48)[6] try to figure out quantitative ways of measuring brain drain, arriving at ten percent of all tertiary educated Filipin@s living in the member states of the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) alone. Out of 1,163,555 Philippine immigrants in the United States 844,400 had tertiary education (Adams 2003:26). While it may lead to general brain drain in the Philippines it also leads to manifest shortages among some professionals in the country:

> *Not surprisingly, the great „success" of the Philippines as an exporter of nurses has created a major crisis in the delivery of health care in the Philippines. The nurses who have migrated to work overseas are the best educated and most experienced, and include many nurse educators. The vast majority of these nurses have no intention of returning to nursing as a profession after working overseas. (Ball 2004)*

The Philippines have tried to oppose the phenomenon of brain drain by introducing programs such as the Science and Technology Advisory Program in 1980 (Garchitorena 2007:7ff), the Balikbayan scientist programme and United Nations Development Program's, UNDP, Tokten project (Brinkerhoff 2006, Garchitorena 2007). More recently the government tries to channel remittances and reinforce hometown associations in certain fields because they are in the centre of current development debates in the country (Levitt/Nyberg-Sørensen 2004:6). Opiniano is an open critique to this development dogma, pointing out that it reinforces passivity on one end while it demands high activity on the other (See: Opiniano 2002, 2004, 2010).

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6   Carrington and Detragiache (1998) try to make out the host countries' levels of tertiary education and compare those with the incoming migrants to major receiving regions. For the Philippines they claim that 2,5% of people at home are tertiary educated while 10 % of Filipin@s in the OECD. They did not make out a single receiving country where the amount of only primary educated personnel from abroad was higher than tertiary educated migrants.

Moreover he mentions that long-term migrants lose touch and trust with the people and the socio-economic situation at home. Also Levitt and Nyberg-Sorensen (2004:8) state that remittances to local households are a way of preserving the status quo. Moreover not everybody has access to education and networks of migration, thus, socio-economic differences can be increased. Hence, remittances might over the years have enlarged the gap between the rich and the poor by excluding the poorest (Calzado 2007:7, Kapur 2004:11, Rodriguez 1998:331). Moreover because of remittances prices for real estate rise as migrants and their families can afford more and this leads to a higher concentration of land tenure. Remittances from a developmental perspective might be overrated, as they only go to investments or projects in the last sequence. Mainly they are used by families to make their everyday livings, followed by conspicuous consumption and only last, investment in land productivity (Nyberg-Sørensen 2002:13). While the biggest percentage of money is sent by average labourers, it is the highly-skilled who actually induce socio-economic change (Lowell 2001:22).

Another way of perceiving the connection between migration and development is to focus on the role of labour migrants after their return. In a developmental sense, there are "*migration optimists*" who tend to think that by return migration, transfers of investment capital and human resources move as well (DeHaas 2007:3). From this perspective migrants turn into actors of change that could help countries with their economic take-off, the author concludes. This modernist stance is not included in all approaches to migrants as actors of change, as will be shown in chapter 4.

Nowadays the Philippines are termed by the World Bank a lower middle income country with more than a quarter of the population being counted as poor measured by the national poverty line (Worldbank 2012). The United Nations lists the Philippines in its Human Development Index (HDI) as number 112 (UNDP Philippines 2011). Although its HDI is slowly increasing the Philippines rank with a total of 0.644 in 2011 still below the regional average of 0.671 and moreover their progress measured by the standards of HDI is slower than the worldwide average (ibid.). The current political system in the Philippines can be called democratic with the Freedom House listing the Philippines as partly free (Freedom House Philippines 2012). Certain flaws are pointed out by the sources. Merkel (2003) explains that socio-economic disparities, poverty and poor education hinder democracy. Moreover, the author sees flaws of the administrative side of elections (ibid.:61,110). Croissant (2004:161) who does not attach many chances to the Philippines to yet overcome its state as a "*defect democracy*", mentions

that since 1987 elections have regularly been used to choose a new government, but the system lacks in "*respect to stateness, the rule of law, institutional stability and political integration*". Loewen (2004:551) states that the Philippines do indeed fulfil the minimal definitional necessities of a democracy but Philippine democratic politics seem to be abused by "*clientelistic networks of an assertive and modernisation-opposing social elite*"[7]. Also Croissant (2004:161) remarks this aspect by stating that the democratic institutions in the Philippines are a stronghold of "*oligarchic dominance*" in the Philippines due to the socio-economic background of Filipin@ politicians. Some of the biggest problems in the country are said to stem from corruption and persistent clientelism which is - according to Filipino returnees - but also of the annual report of transparency international high indeed. The non-governmental organisation countering corruption, *Transparency International,* ranks the Philippines at 139th out of 183 countries in its 2009 corruption perceptions index (Debere/Sidwell 2010:49), and 129th in its actual country ranking two years later (Transparency International Report 2011). As can be seen in the table below every other country appearing in this research ranks better than the Philippines.

To finish this introduction and to show the extent of the issue, I present some charts that reflect data of interest for this thesis. These are going to be the numbers of Philippines' out-migration in 2010 and Freedom House's Index of democratisation, Transparency International's ranking and the Human Development Index of the main countries in this research. These are mainly included for illustrative reasons, thus, they won't be described in detail.

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7   "*klientelistischen Netzwerken einer durchsetzungsstarken und modernisierungsunwilligen gesellschaftlichen Elite*" [Loewen 2004:551, translated by M.F.-S.]
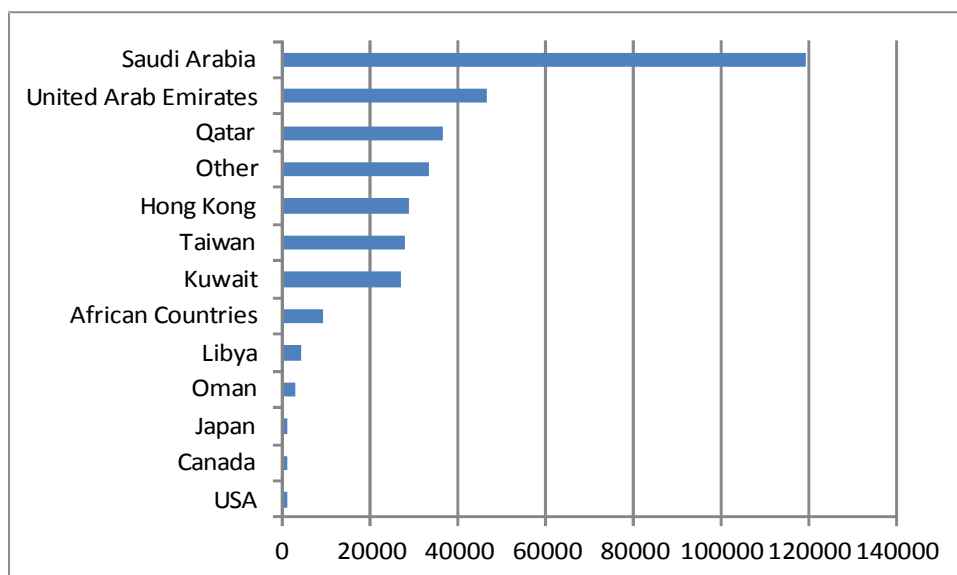
Philippines' annual outmigration by receiving country in 2010. Own compilation of POEA[8] data.

Countries of emigration	Freedom house rating	Transparency international	HDI
Canada	FREE/1/1	10/183	0.908
Hong Kong SAR	PARTLY FREE*	12/183	0.898
Japan	FREE/1/2	14/183	0.901
Malaysia	PARTLY FREE/4/4	60/183	0.761
Netherlands	FREE/1/1	7/183	0.91
Philippines	PARTLY FREE/3/3	129/183	0.644
Saudi Arabia	NOT FREE/7/7	57/183	0.77
Taiwan	FREE/1/2	32/182	0.687**

* There is no particular data on the Special Administrative Region Hong Kong available from Freedom House in the same year. In 2012 the city state ranked 2 on civil rights versus 5 on political rights.

** Taiwan's HDI is not quite comprehensive as it actually is subsumed China by the report.

Countries of emigration mentioned in this thesis, a table of democracy rating, corruption rating and Human Development Index, HDI. Source: Own compilation with data drawn from: Freedom House Index[9], Transparency International[10] and the United Development Program[11].

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8   POEA (2010): Philippines' Overseas Employment Agency: http://www.poea.gov.ph/stats/2010%20Deployment%20by%20Destination,%20Occupation%20and%20Sex%202010%20-%20New%20hires.pdf. POEA stands for Philippines Overseas Employment Administration. They are the main address to find statistics of offical hires.

9   Freedom House Index (2012): Report by Freedom House: http://www.freedomhouse.org/report-types/freedom-world. Freedom House comprises civil and political rights in their judgements of democracy. On top they provide on each country information on freedom of the media.

10 Transparency International Report (2011): http://www.transparency.org/country. Transparency international is an international NGO that collects figures on corruption among others through interviews with managers (Merkel 2003:82) and publishes those annualy with recommendations what could be ameliorated in countries.

11 Human Development Index by the UNDP (2011): http://hdr.undp.org/en/data/map/.

1.3. *Chapter outline*

Following to this introductory chapter, a chapter on the research design, methodologies and the definitions in use will be included. Theoretic approaches find place in chapter 3. These are focusing on political consciousness/political activity in migration theories and return migration, democratisation processes, migrants' (simplified) identity and transnationalism. Possible links between migration and political consciousness and political participation/agency and as a following, democratisation shall be found.

The main part of the thesis starts with chapter 4 by giving an overview on empirical research concerning the topic. As only very few studies have focused on similar correlations, this chapter will contain a broader range of studies. These include examples of Filipina and Filipino activism from around the world on migrant rights, but also some other examples of migrant activism. The most prominent example in this regard is Filipina unionism in Hong Kong, and citizenship debates, but also institutional achievements of Filipino migrant activism in the Philippines. These examples shall provide the reader with a glimpse on the vast landscape of Filipina and Filipino activism and its results in political developments so far. As migrant activism at home and abroad cannot really be divided, but rather have to be seen as two sides of the same coin, examples of activism abroad are mentioned as well as examples of activism in the Philippines.

Next to these studies the results of interviews conducted with return migrants in the Philippines in early 2011 will be described, analysed and discussed. These - other than the practical examples from the research overview - only focus on the research questions and thus have a more narrow scope of politically engaged migrants. Subsequently, I discuss the connections between migration and political consciousness, migration and political participation or agency - according to the term my interview partners used - empowerment, and migration and democratisation. Also born out of the necessity in the interviews, a part on the role of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) has to be included. The last chapter of the discussion will address the role of NGOs in democratisation and empowerment processes. This is only a short glimpse and shall not be understood as a full analysis of civil society actors in democratisation, but nevertheless depict a possible link.

2.   Research design

This thesis consists of three pillars, a theoretic evaluation of the topic, an overview of empirical research in this field and - the main pillar - empirical data drawn from interviews with Philippine returnees during a two months field research in early 2011. The latter consists of eight qualitative interviews to provide particular insights in the political consciousness of return migrants, who have been participating in migrant advocating NGOs or other forms of political engagement. The sampling of interview partners can be called "*purposive*" in accordance with Silverman's (2006 [1993]:299) categorisation in contrast to theoretical sampling. According to the research questions and the presumptions taken, interview partners were searched along the lines of theoretically founded presumptions and the research questions. On the contrary, theoretical sampling chooses interview partners on the base of mere theories. Theoretic stances were introduced before as well as after the actual field study. It proved especially interesting to have the steps of practical research and theoretic input intermingled, because my anticipated theoretical approaches were not necessarily sufficient to represent the actual life realities of my interview partners. Hence, I incorporated the concept of 'empowerment' in the discussion of the findings because many interviewees had repeatedly used the term. Moreover, many key aspects only became clear in the process of interpreting and analysing the data.

To clarify the scope of this research, I will next present the research questions and objectives, the process and the methodology used to attain results. Theoretically founded definitions, which are central to the research questions find space in the end of this chapter.

2.1.   *Main objectives and research questions*

The main aim of this thesis is to find a possible connection between temporary labour migrants' work and life conditions in their host countries and their political consciousnesses and activities after their return home. This can be split up into three related, progressive research questions:

1) How is the political consciousness of return migrants constituted and expressed after their returns?

2) Which factors in migration experiences lead to political consciousness and political participation?

3) How can these processes of political consciousness and political activity be understood in terms of democratisation in the Philippines?

The first research question tries to pin down aspects in how far political consciousness among return migrants shows. These will be derived from practical and theoretic stances on political consciousness and a particular understanding of the political sphere.

The second research question shall help finding connections of this consciousness with ways of participating politically. Moreover it sets out to detect reasons for certain political behaviours and ways of thinking. The tacit presumption that many Filipin@ labour migrants experience marginalisation and exclusion, is the base for this research question. Thus the focus of this research question is, in how far experience of any kind in labour migration can have an impact on their political consciousness and political acts after return. Also the connection between political consciousness and political activity shall find treatment in this particular case.

The third research question needs scrutinisation of migration and democratisation theories to pin down the role of the the latter in democratisation processes. Some scholars have tried to pin down channels of political remittances that might transmit democracy into less democratic countries. The question arises which factors in the migration experience contribute to democratisation. Is the observance of a democratic system or the migrants' marginalised situation within the system of the host country the decisive aspect in the connection of migration and political consciousness? Or differently, can a high level of political consciousness and/or agency be called democratisation?

All in all, a qualitative approach makes sense as the focus of the study does not lie in finding representative, comparable data, but trying to sketch the field of answers on which factors could trigger critical political consciousness, agency and democratisation among migrants. Thus, the research questions are meant to be of a generative kind (Flick 2010:137ff). The purpose of the research questions is to acquire the knowledge necessary to establish a hypothesis. As a following, this research is not built on the testing of a hypothesis but rather on finding clear hints of connections, from which a hypothesis can be derived. This will be presented in the chapter "outlook".

2.2. *Research process*

After the problem statement was determined, I conducted a vast literature review to find the state of the art in the respective fields. During this process it became clear that in order to tackle the research questions, empirical research would be most suitable. Hence, I opted for conducting a field study, as the literature to my research questions was humble. Moreover, I am in general an opponent of exclusive armchair research, as this to my mind, necessarily has to stay on a (an even more) detached level of what people actually experience.

On top of my own data, other empirical studies are going to be described and analysed. The data collected by Stefan Rother (2009) is of a high profile and analysed similar issues in a more quantitative way. Rother added to this study among Filipin@ return migrants a control group of future migrants which my data cannot provide with. This shows interesting connections and results.

In the following, I present my own field research. To find a welcoming starting point, I enrolled at a "Balikbayan conference" held at a Manila university and organised by American Filipin@s, who had founded a hometown association (HTA). There, I got in touch with some returnees and family members of migrants, priests, university personnel, NGO members and last but not least, Jeremiah Opiniano, a Filipino scholar who writes rather pessimistic accounts of overseas philantropy[12]. It was an immensely emotional conference, especially when a young girl, whose mother had died while in migration, started to sing an emotional song about being separated from beloved ones. I did not need to understand Filipino[13] to feel the emotions most people in this university hall must have felt. For the first time, I felt like an intruder who collects data on other people's grievances, but there was no way back, I was in Manila and I wanted to know, in how far exploitation in migration increases consciousness and lets people stand up for their rights.

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12 See Opiniano (2002); (2004), (2010)

13 "Filipino" stands for Tagalog, which I heard was only the name of one particular language. Thus, Filipin@s and the Philippine government started using "Filipino" to name their language in a more inclusive way, apprehending also influences from other languages. The second strongest common language in the country, English, derives from a short period of the country's history of colonialism, by the United States in the 20th century (GIZ 2011), and can be seen as a benefit to the large migration efforts of the countries, why it is actively sustained.

Successively, I contacted several NGOs and some scholars in the respective field, among them Maruja Asis[14]. Among the NGOs were *MIGRANTE international, Centre for Migrant Advocacy, CMA, Athika, Development Action for Women Network, DAWN, Unlad Kabayan*. While I was waiting for their consent for me to pass by, I approached various people in suitable situations to get deeper into the topic and also find interview partners to pilot the interview guidelines. I conducted three pre tests. As most organisations had not replied to my e-mails and calls, as a second step I had to approach them personally. Again, I felt like an intruder, as this was the hot phase of 'Arab spring' revolutions in Libya and at the NGO *MIGRANTE*, people were nervous the day I walked in, as they were awaiting repatriated *MIGRANTE* members from the region. Everything worked out well and in the end, I got some really interesting interviews through the help of these NGOs, which will be described in detail in chapter 5.

2.3. Applied methods

2.3.1. Accessing the state of the art by reviewing literature

In order to produce a comprehensive scientific paper on a research topic, I started with assessing the state of the art. To grasp the stake of literature in this field, I collected articles, books and statistics bit by bit. One article provided insights and authors that were the initiating point for further research (snowball principle). Articles were usually divided along the lines with the research questions in mind, but also with the preformed presumptive and theoretic categories applied in the empirical research.

2.3.2. Qualitative interviews

In general, qualitative interviews are better to access individual's attitudes and value systems, which would stay uncovered through formal questionnaires. Silverman (2006:182) claims that open-ended interviews are the best way of approaching the voices of otherwise rather neg-

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14 Maruja M. B. Asis, PhD. "i*s director of research and publications and co-editor of the Asian and Pacific Migration Journal and the Asian Migration News*" and works at the Scalibrini Migration Centre in Quezon City (See http://www.smc.org.ph/about-scalabrini-migration-center.php).

lected persons and to find out their individual views. While the interviews I conducted were not open-ended, as they aimed at the answering of research questions they were nevertheless performed along a loosely-knit interview guideline. They can be labelled as "*half-standardised*" (Flick 2010:203f) as they were determined by previously chosen research questions and went along a set of thematic fields.

The interview guideline (see annex) is built up on three parts. Firstly, an introductory question is posed to get to know the interview partner and build up trust. In the core part, the interview questions are built upon the findings of the theoretic aspects prepared, aiming at collecting data for my research question. The structuration of the question increase in the course of the interview, as recommended by Flick (2010:194f). In the last part - depending on the prior answers – closed and structured questions can be posed to tackle opinions. To prevent parts where analyses would stay highly interpretative, these few "*fixed-choice answers*" can be used (Silverman 2006 [1993]:282f). This way of interviewing has the advantage of leaving much space to the migrants to present themselves and point out what they find most important, but being able to go into depth with topics of high interest. Moreover, half-standardised interviews along interview guidelines make sense to gather comparable data (Schlehe 2003:78).

As the interviewer, I stay – particularly in the first part – observant rather than dominant. Parts of day-to-day conversation, which commonly occur in qualitative interviews, are moved towards the end of the interview, as they would otherwise get dominant and influence the outcome (Schlehe 2003:90).

The interviews are recorded and fully transcribed as Mayring (2002:89) recommends for content analysis. On top, notes are taken during the interviews in order to prevent complete loss of data and in order to remember little, nearly invisible utterances or in transcriptions fully invisible mimicry.

2.3.3. <u>Methods of analysing</u>

To draw results from my data, Mayring's "*qualitative content analysis*" is used to filter the single important points out of the material (Mayring 2002:114f). The method proves highly

useful, as it is a way of technical, rule-guided, successive reduction of material to its essential contents, which in every case have to stay an image of the initial text.

Mayring (2003:53ff) describes three main steps for the qualitative content analysis. The first step is to reduce the contents by summarising the main points of statements. These points are used as codes for the analysis. With theoretic knowledge in the back of the researcher's mind, the interview material is being approached, and new categories are successively developed on the material. Phrases with a similar content are integrated in one, so no more than one comprehensive statement with the same or a similar content stays in the analysis.

The next step according to Mayring (ibid.) is the explicating analysis of the material, in which unclear passages of the texts are explained by drawing on a pre-determined set of sources. This is not the focus of my analysis, but is taken into consideration when looking for clarifications of given answers.

The last step is the actual data interpretation. With this extracted data in the hands, the researcher can decide on what to do. Mayring (ibid.) describes different ways of structuring the material. I decided on finding indications for political consciousness in the first step and the reasons for the same in the second step. As a following, the part on empirical data of this thesis contains short cuts of the full interviews to see the development within the interviewees to their most recent political activity and consciousness. Subsequently, single categories and research questions are interpreted, analysed and discussed. Many original quotes are preserved, so the authenticity of the migrants' statements is not lost.

2.4. Definitions in use

2.4.1. Labour migrant – Return migrant – Transmigrant

Clear cut definitions in the field of migration seem hard as migrations usually have overlapping characteristics. Many temporary labour migrants are so called first-timers once in their lives, ending up working in more than one country while sustaining transnational relationships by keeping up a familial relationship or political involvement in the home country, hence, can be counted as transmigrants. These might become economic migrants as they start

investing abroad due to a rise in income and in the end with growing age turn into return migrants as they wish to spend their old age in their homeland. Looking at migration from this angle, it only sounds logical to realise the status quo of migrants as often transitional which does not obey to clear cut definitions. The main school to become critical of the traditional, simplifying definitions and scopes of research in the field of migration was transnationalism, stating, that "*our present conceptions of 'immigrant' and 'migrant', anchored in the circumstances of earlier historic moments, no longer suffice*" (Basch et al. 1997).

Labour migration (IOM 2011[15]) requires a migration with the purpose of employment, which includes active work activities in a foreign country. These work activities can be classified by the duration or visa names attested by the regulatory framework of admission and conditions by host or sending country. The United Nation's Convention on Migrants' Rights of 1990 ties the identification as a migrant worker to being engaged in a remunerated activity in a country, where the person is no national (UN General Assembly 1990) This definition, which also cuts out all people being sent abroad as state officials, but decisively includes seafarers for example or offshore workers, nevertheless leaves aside conditions on the durance. For this research labour migrants are those that leave a country in order to find an income abroad as an employee or possibly as self-employed freelancers.

Economic migration to the contrary is sometimes used to refer to the same as labour migration does but more specifically to the act of migration for investments or business travelling (IOM 2011).

Return migrants may return from any kind of migration experience after any length of stay abroad. In most studies included though are return migrants only after a period of at least one year abroad. One of the problems to determine who is a return migrant is the fact that other than those that return home once they retired for settling down, many migrants who are return migrants in one stage of their life may decide to later emigrate again, so the category is not in all cases a closed one. More aspects of return migration will be addressed in chapter 3.2.

It is rather, as Faist (2008:26) explains the question of networks, permanent circulations that does not only include immigrants and emigrants in their analysis but diaspora actors as well.

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15 IOM (2011): Labour Migration. Last accessed May 30th 2012 on: http://www.iom.int/jahia/Jahia/about-migration/developing-migration-policy/migration-labour/labour/cache/offonce.

While a one-year approach to migration in order to be called a migrant at all is applied by some, it is devaluing of those that only obtain temporary work permits or leave their host country earlier due to severe problems. Temporary contract work nowadays is the most widely applied model in Asia and particularly the Philippines (Piper 2009:225, Zosa/Orbeta 2009:7). Thus, return migrants in this thesis are perceived as those, returning from a migration period of any length. Indeed, it is particularly interesting to also take the duration of stay into consideration instead of using it as a criteria to exclude these migrants per se.

2.4.2. <u>**Political consciousness**</u>

Political Consciousness is important to a group's agency as it connects to the self-identification of an individual with this group paired with the urge to change something about it. Chong and Rogers (2005:350) observe that political consciousness "*combines basic in-group identification with a set of ideas about the group's status and strategies for improving it*". They explain that it is typical for group solidarity that the self-identification with one's racial or ethnic group leads to the feeling that one's own fate is linked to that of the group (ibid.:351). One's consciousness of this group belonging "*potentially heightens awareness and interest in politics, bolsters group pride and political efficacy, alters interpretations of group problems, and promotes support for collective action*" (ibid.:350). It is important though not to confuse political consciousness with political identification. Identification means a person's sense of belonging to a social group, to share ideas and feelings, but most importantly it always stays a relation between an individual and a group (Gurin P./Miller/Gurin G.1980:30). On the other hand "*consciousness refers to a set of political beliefs and action orientations arising out of this awareness of similarity*" (ibid.). Political consciousness, while it can be also used as a term focusing on individuals and their inner political constitution, will be only researched in connection to political identification of the self with a certain group, migrants in this case.

From the perspective of development psychology, focusing on the individual side, Ijzendoorn (1979:549ff) figures out that political consciousness can be classified in three different levels: pre conventional or regressive, conventional and post conventional or critical. The first group includes those that believe to be good members of society by acting in accordance with rules and laws without questioning them. The second group consists of those that see it as their duty

to keep up these rules and laws. By ascribing the third group high critical political consciousness he means:

> *ein Bewußtsein, das tatsächlich Elemente der soziologischen Phantasie und des historischen Bewußtseins umfaßt und das seine Kriterien zur Bewertung politischer Prozesse und Strukturen auf die fundamentalen Menschenrechte stützt, diese Prinzipien aber nicht segmentiert und formalisiert, sondern sie für alle gesellschaftlichen Bereiche, einschließlich der ökonomischen, als gültig erklärt. (Ijzendoorn 1979:558)[16]*

To him, political consciousness determines how people judge fundamental processes and structures of society. The critical extent of this consciousness includes the capability to relativise existing social structures and processes of conflicts of interest

> *die Art und Weise, wie die fundamentalen Prozesse und Strukturen der Gesellschaft beurteilt werden, wobei die kritische Ausprägung dieses Bewußtseins die Fähigkeit impliziert, die existierenden gesellschaftlichen Strukturen und Prozesse von Interessenskonflikten historisch zu relativieren und eine freiere und gerechtere Organisation der Gesellschaft zu antizipieren. (ibid.:547f)*

Normatively Ijzendoorn sees political consciousness as the anticipation of a more free and just organisation of society as an aim, which people can achieve through critical judgements of fundamental processes and structures of society and through the capability to question societal structures and processes of interest conflict. Patricia Gurin (1985) tries to make out women potential to notice their own economic and social subordination by applying the following concept of group consciousness. She calls the first component "*collective orientation*" towards change as they perceive subordination (ibid.:146). As a basis for consciousness she makes out the perceived deprivation compared to other groups. Women's discontent about their own social status rises as they compare their group's position to the others. Another primordial factor she states is "*how category members appraise the legitimacy of disparities*", as their perception leads to discontent or acceptance (ibid.). Those that consider the prevailing situation as fair won't feel treated wrong, but those that see the structural injustices that lead to their situation might develop a sense of personal deprivation. Last but not least she also names identification as the factor that unites people with the same sense of deprivation. She notes that "*identification has cognitive effects that are important for political consciousness*" (ibid.). Gurin describes the correlation as follows:

> *By sharpening the salience of groups and the likelihood of using an intergroup perspective for comparison, identification heightens recognition of collective deprivation and encourages withdrawal of legitimacy because deprivation, when perceived as a common*

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16 "*Ijzendoorn builds political consciousness on elements of sociological fantasy and historical consciousness, that draws its criteria of judging political processes and structures on fundamental human rights. These principles of criteria are not segmented and formalised, but include all societal spheres, including the economic.*" (Ijzendoorn 1979:558, translated by M.F.-S.).

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rather than individual condition, is more easily interpreted in structural and political terms. (ibid.:147f)

Leal (2002), quite to the contrary, tries to pin down political consciousness by measuring factual awareness of the Untied States' political system like the difference between the two main parties, identification with politicians and the broader understanding. What is most interesting about his study though is that ethnic consciousness and trust in government play a major role. He noticed that political awareness was of high importance among non-citizens, thus, mainly migrants, but not among citizens and that a greater sense of ethnic identity also made it more likely to participate in politics (368). To summarise this result, one can conclude, that the higher the trust in governments the smaller the willingness among (non-) citizens to participate themselves.

Thus a willingness to act is another important step for political consciousness. Those in direct power or in the circle of systematically advantaged citizens, usually don't demand change and thus their political consciousness and activities aim at keeping up their advantages. For those ranking low in hierarchy political consciousness means to overcome a

victim perspective, through which members accept their status, to a sense of discontent and withdrawal of legitimacy from the present order. Consciousness also generally includes an action orientation, the view that collective action is the best means to realize the stratum's interests. (Gurin et al. 1980:31)

To conclude, the definition of a critical political (group) consciousness in this study is going to build on the following pillars:

1) the politicised identification of oneself as a labour migrant,

2) that belongs to a specific societal group (in the home and the former host society)

3) which is suffering from illegitimate structural disparities,

4) finds him or her self in a subordinate position,

5) connects the belief that these disparities could be solved by drawing from historic, moral, social or economic reasoning that can build on national or international norms like the national constitution or human rights in order to gain legitimacy for change

6) and is aware, that by forming a group power can be increased and steps can be taken in order to enhance their situation – thus, a politicised understanding of their societal group.

Political consciousness in the sense of a critical, or as Ijzendoorn (1979) calls it, a post-conventional political consciousness is important for individual reasoning to explain structural inequalities and to reflect the fantasy to anticipate change, thus, it is particularly important for collective activities aiming at change and creating public opinion.

2.4.3. <u>Political participation / agency?</u>

In the context of discussing political participation and agency, the underlying understanding of the 'political' sphere in connection with 'migrants' is needed to be clarified and will be deduced in the following.

Kofman et al. (2000:163) state, that migrants usually tend to be recognised as objects, but never as subjects of politics. This, she mentions, is due to the narrow definition of politics valid today. Also Zontini (2010:107f) points out that conventional definitions, which only include the existence of elections and other formal institutions are definitely not adequate for the topic at hands. Looking at migrants' activities when it comes to elections is the wrong starting point, because they usually exclude a big degree of - especially labour - migrants. To the contrary, migrants[17] have to find many different ways to participate politically in order to regain the power over their own lives and to resolve their usually difficult situations. They have to fight for essential rights, like the right to live in a certain place, on housing, social services or civil rights up to citizenship, especially for their children. Considering these battles as political, women are turned into agents, but *"if we were to focus on formal political processes, immigrant women would indeed appear as non-active and excluded"* (ibid.:107). Especially because electoral rights usually are the last ones to be achieved by migrants (Kofman et al. 2000:163). To Però (2010:85) who did research on migrants' political activity in the United Kingdom "*migrants have 'existed' as political actors only when they are entitled to vote or when they put themselves forward as political candidates*".

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17 Zontini only treated women in her study.

While these studies focus on the situation of immigrants, they are also accurate in this context, as this thesis focuses on migrant political participation due to a heightened critical awareness in both, the situation of migration and afterwards. Here it makes sense to base my concept of politics and political activity on anthropological, feminist and sociological understanding that make a step beyond a narrow understanding by focusing on electoral participation. Zontini (2010) includes in the ways of feminists' political organisation aspects like community solidarity, associationism, trade-union involvement, motherhood and gender identity, claims on housing and welfare. The author of "*Politische Soziologie. Strukturen und Integrationsformen der Gesellschaft*", Lenk, summarises this broader definition of the political sphere:

> *Politik läßt sich unter soziologischem Aspekt als ein gesellschaftsbeeinflussendes bzw. veränderndes soziales Handeln verstehen, das in der Regel zwar auf die im Staat gegebenen Machtverhältnisse gerichtet, doch nicht auf staatsbezogenes Handeln beschränkt ist (Lenk 1982:19)[18].*

Leal (2002) refers in his study on political participation among Latin Americans in the United States to eight forms of non-electoral political participation, which are: sign a petition, wear a button, attend a public meeting, write to a politician, attend rallies, donate money, volunteer for a campaign. The easiest ones to accomplish like signing a petition also have the biggest amount of attendees in his survey, while activities like volunteering for campaigns only a small part of Latin American immigrants undertake (ibid.:361ff). Other than devaluing the involvement with their home region, Leal also states that "*local community groups and activities should be both less intimidating than political ones and more directly relevant to everyday life*" (Leal 2002:364). Hence, to him conventional political involvement on the national level is only one of many options for political participation that even may exceed the impact of formal participation for these actors.

As was already pointed out, political participation depends among others, on political consciousness. Like stated above, those that are satisfied with the status of their social group, tend to feel less inclined to participate in political activities, other than the basic form of attending elections. Subordinate groups with a high level of political consciousness though develop high solidarity for each other and here "*the greatest effects (...) may not occur at the polling place but in the street in the form or demonstrations, pickets, and protests*" (Chong/Rogers 2005:352). Often it is contextual factors that explain the gap between political consciousness

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18 To the author "*politics in a sociological sense mean social acts which are influential to society and other ways of change-inducing acts, that might be directed at the prevailing power structures in a state, but is not only limited to state-connected activities*" (Lenk 1982:19, translated by M.F.-S.).

and political participation (Ijzendoorn 1980:548, Lenk 1982:133). The riskier the form of demonstrating or political participation gets, the more group solidarity is needed (Chong/Rogers 2005:352).

> *Protest is a difficult activity that requires more sacrifice of individual interests than does voting or contacting a government official about a personal problem. Many conventional political activities are sufficiently motivated by personal or normative considerations, and thus do not require group solidarity. (ibid.)*

Also from transnationalist researchers a valid, extended definition of political participation can be found. Guranizo et al. (2003:1223) stretch that migrants tend to be politically active other than formal voting: through monetary contributions to parties, associations and hometowns, through political campaigning abroad that might nevertheless focus on the home country, regular membership in charity organisations or sponsoring projects. This is according the scholars political participation, as it influences local and regional governments at home, particularly if financial contributions only come for certain projects form the diaspora. (Guranizo et al. 2003). Most ways to act political for migrants actually come with their status as transnationals:

> *Transnational electoral participation includes membership in a political party in the country of origin, monetary contributions to these parties, and active involvement in political campaigns in the polity of origin. Transnational nonelectoral politics includes membership in a hometown association, monetary contributions to civic projects in the community of origin, and regular membership in charity organizations sponsoring projects in the home country. Nonelectoral activities of this type are political because they influence local and regional governments by determining which public projects receive migrants' financial support. (Guarnizo et al. 2003:1223)*

This definition draws together the topic of political participation and migration with development, but it also shows, that hometown associations are in themselves often a form of political involvement. However, if people start participating, or not, depends on many aspects. As I mentioned above, these are also contextual factors like the freedom to participate in a country. Duncan (1999:612f) tries to explain that it is usually personal experiences that lead to people developing group consciousness and with this group consciousness in mind they may start taking collective actions. These collective actions usually happen as a reaction to societal deficits. Similarly for Piper and Courville (2004:42f) there is a clear connection between political activism and the concept of hope, as hope often becomes incited from individuals and through influential groups, such as NGOs or hometowns. Being positioned on the bottom end of a governmental system, (labour) migrants congregate in order to find their way to make their voices being heard.

Lenk (1982:123) perceives disenchantment with politics as the incapability of a person to grasp political realities and fields of agency within. "*Political apathy*" to him is a result of a democratic system that reduces citizens to periodic voters and does not contain openly contested areas of participation. In order to act politically, people have to focus on changing structures or power relations which can be state-made but the activities must not be limited to the state (See full quote above). Harmonic subordination to this system can lead to the impression that the political and the private sphere are actually separated, and although voting is a role citizens play in democracy, decisions are made by the elites. This perspective, he explains, brings rise to apathetic opinions (ibid.:15ff). Agency on the contrary requires a broader understanding of political participation. It

> *is defined as an actor's or a group's ability to make purposeful choices – that is, the actor is able to envisage and purposively choose options. In terms of both measurement of and action to enhance empowerment, a person or group's agency can be largely predicted by their asset endowment (Alsop/Bertelsen/Holland 2006:11).*

By endowment the author means psychological and cultural aspects. "*Actors need a raised level of consciousness if they are to translate their assets into choices – that is, to become 'agents'*" (ibid.). Agency is the central term when it comes to linking political consciousness and its outcome in political participation. Agency draws on the necessity for individuals in any system to take use of the space given to them and prevalent structures in order to discern available opportunities to take active moves and possibly to induce change to one's own situation but even more so to state-connected rules and traditions or power relations.

3. Theoretic approaches

In order to set this research on a good foundation, the next pages will contain theoretical concepts, which contribute to the understanding of the complexity of the topic and possibly contain hints at the links of interest. To start with, relevant migration and return theories are going to be discussed. Next, individual factors that are common among migrants and their likeability for political activity will be presented. Some ways of understanding democratisation will be discussed in the following. As the last step, transnationalism as a basis for the following empirical part finds treatment.

3.1. Migration theories

The field of conventional migration theories is enormously vast, but the majority of these would not contribute to this research topic. Migration theories have tended to be over a long time destination-centred and building on methodological individualism (Rüland et al. 2009:170), which didn't leave space for human acts such as political organising. As a following, migration theories did not focus on migration and political consciousness or migration and democratisation. Whether there is still theories, that might contribute to the research question shall be explored in the following pages.

Among the earliest theoretic models that currently still survive, are micro-economic and macro-economic theories. Micro-economic models contain the well known 'push- and pull' factors, which distinguish reasons for individuals to leave or to stay, mainly on a base of rational choice. Macro-economic theories also stipulate economic reasons for people to migrate, but this time, structural economic reasons, such as low economic growth or high levels of unemployment, are the decisive factors. Todaro (1980:363f) explains that the initiating reasons for migration are economic growth rates, its distribution and political guidance of the local labour market. Thus, most theories of this stage focus on labour migration within economically advanced countries. This focus also stays the same with the approach of dual labour market, whose main theorist is renowned economist Piore (1979)[19]. In this model, migration is initi-

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19 Besides his work on structural reasons for migration, Piore (1979:218) already suggested - what is still searched for in most recent policies - a model of temporary work permits to control the high amount of labour influx to the United States of America while making the best out of the process for everybody involved.

ated not only by the expelling reasons from a sending country, but rather the opposite, initiated by the "*intrinsic labor demands of modern societies*" (Massey et al. 1993:440). The approach "*New Economics of Labour Migration*" (NELM) is the first model to exchange methodological individualism with the collective decision-taking of a household. The reasons for migration are seen in the perception of destitution due to an imperfect market in a economically weaker country (Massey et al. 1994:711). Stark (1991:26) depicts that NELM's approach, shifted its theoretic focus from "*individual independence (...) to mutual interdependence*". Network-focused research in the late 1980s started to call upon the inclusion of migrant personal networks in sustaining migrant routes (Boyd 1989). Maps of personal networks bind migrants together via social and financial assistance and already existing networks are proven to shape migrant paths, migration outcomes and also return perspectives.

Nevertheless all these approaches solely focus on economic reasons to migrate to a richer country or a country in which a better revenue is to be expected. Return migration here is only seen as either -in neoclassic theories- an act of failure, and in NELM, as the successful completion of an anyway only temporarily conceptualised plan. While these approaches definitely hold true in some regards, they leave out many other aspects of the migration phenomenon. Return migration and its effect on democratisation or on the political behaviour of migrants has not yet been a focus in these economic approaches.

The earliest approach, that deals with return migration, is the "*Chicago school*". In the sociological branch of this school, the main focus is the question, if a "*melting pot*" as a form of acculturation occurs through the in-migration of various people, who had been formerly expelled from the city around 1871 as the biggest part of the city had burnt down (Markom 2009:31). Robert Redfield is another anthropologist show worked on similar aspects like the Chicago school. Interesting is his notion, that "*migrants were seen as progressive types who would have a positive impact on development by bringing back to their communities innovation and knowledge that would break down traditionalism.*" (Kearney 1986:333)

Kearney (1995:549f) sees in Wallerstein the first author to understand migration in its bigger picture, risen above mere economic needs, but taking global aspects of culture and identity into consideration. Wallerstein (1998 [1980]) particularly focused on the expansion of world trade and the ongoing colonisations of more terrains, inciting migration to these areas so economies could expand. Structural approaches such as the world-system-theory were the first to look at underlying structures causes such as trade, communication, finance and politics to lead

to migration (Haug 2000:4). World-system theory, especially also the oeuvre of Eric Wolf (1982:361f), also brings in non-Western peoples as an incorporated labour force, that moved along with the new structures, created by Western forces in production, such as agricultural cash crops or in factories of the beginning industrialisation. He states that in the 19th and 20th centuries the majority of migrants became the bearers of labour power, needed for the emerging capitalism.

So far, it can be assumed that not much has been said about the research questions from sides of traditional migration theories, that sheds light on either the aspect of migrants' minds, acts and feelings or the effect on the sending country. It is structural approaches or what followed the structural approaches just mentioned, that start also taking the migrants' impact at home into consideration (Cassarino 2004:260). The main theoretic and practical stance, which also includes migrants as active agents and researched their impact on the sending country as well, were transnationalist studies, which will be described in depth in a following sub-chapter.

3.2.   *Typologies of return migration*

Turning to return migration in particular, it has to be noted, that - again among traditional scholars - not much has been said on the connection between political conciousness, political participation and democratisation or in general the impact at home. While, as we saw, the focus usually lies on economic calculations, some return theorists try to make out a typology of return migrants, also mentioning their innovative potential. Nevertheless, return migrants stay "*the big unkown*" (Asis 2006b:94), as hardly any statistics are collected on them (Oxfeld/Long 2004:2). This probably stems from the simple reason, that the former host countries have no interest in the reasons for return, as well as the big sending countries usually have more interest in finding winning jobs for their migrants abroad, but no long-term statistics are kept for returning migrants (Asis 2006, Cassarino 2004:253).

It is hard to differentiate between single reasons for return, or the types and kinds of return on a big scale. As a matter of fact the development of every migrant subject depends on their duration of migration, their possibilities to resource mobilisation, legal status, motivation and projects, thus, return migrants are a heterogeneous group, which should not be homogenised (Cassarino 2004:270). Oxfeld and Long (2004) provide the migration research community

with a typology of return that includes an aspect with high relevance for the upholding of transnational relationships: *imagined return*. While *provisional return* means recurring returning to the home country in order to keep up relations, but also make out opportunities for actual return, imagined return means the mental state of expectation of this later return. *Repatriated return* includes the act of returning in – broadly understood - forced ways which can be further distinguished along the lines of voluntariness or grades of organisation (Oxfeld/Long 2004:85). Imagined return is central to political involvement as only this state of mind enables people to keep an eye on political relations in the home country while abroad.

Francesco Cerase (1974) developed a typology of return migrants on the base of his research with Italian returnees from the United States of America, in which he distinguished four types of return. These are return of failure, return of conservatism, return of retirement and return of innovation. To his mind the root cause for the mere existence of return theories lies in the believe that return migrants could possibly change their societies at home as they become "*carriers of social change*" for they develop an understanding of a new society, whilst realising that they belong to the old one, but also noticing how much there is about the old one that could be ameliorated (ibid.:258). To Cerase, those that stay in the country of migration for less than a year without a chance to build up a life only conducting unskilled work and usually living in factory barracks, necessarily are going to move back as a *return of failure*, as their whole migration was only connected to homesickness, and an urge to save money for financial security (ibid.:249ff). After their return they usually can't find themselves in a better position than before departure and their kin and friends' expectations would stay unattended, thus their restart at home is set among difficult circumstances. *Returnees of conservatism* only move in order to acquire enough money to come back home wealthy and leave everything the same as it used to be – hence, there is hardly a chance that any of them becomes politically active upon return (ibid.:253f). All in all they might, even though they are not conscious about it, have brought new ideas, in this particular case ideas about equality among individuals home from the more equal system in the United States of America. Besides a couple of values they might have become attached to uncritically, they stay affiliated with the old home's value system. *Return of retirement* refers to older people that return home for their retirement only, preferring everything to be the way they knew it once they left, as their age rather keeps them from any innovation. Nevertheless, Cerase sees migrants that carry potential: "*With the preceding considerations in mind it may be said that return migration of the innovative type, if properly encouraged and organized, represents an innovative force.*" (Cerase 1974:258)

Jean-Pierre Cassarino (2004) brought a later contribution to the innovative character of return migrants. He splits return migrants according to their resource mobilisation and preparedness, claiming that success in all fields in the home country depends on preparedness during their stay abroad. This preparedness includes time and a free mind to prepare a return and on the other hand the opportunity to accumulate savings. Those factors contribute to a positive outcome of a migration experience, as well as in general a longer duration of migration and an autonomous choice of timing (Cassarino 2004:271ff).

Also Nicola Coniglio (2008:89) points out that the longer the migration period is, the better the chances for the migrants to gain knowledge become:

> *a longer time horizon has the advantage of providing a stronger incentive to the employer to invest in training activities directed to immigrant workers. At the same time the longer time horizon wil (!) induce migrants to enhance their own skills base by investing in their human capital through education and on-the-job training.*

Gmelch (1980), who also tries to figure out factors that contribute to migrants having an impact upon their return, has a critical stance on the transferability of knowledge. He stretches, that many migrants come from a rural background, to work in urban areas. The knowledge and capabilities they learn under these circumstances do not cohere with the capabilities needed in their original surrounding, thus after their return, they are rich of useless knowledge (Gmelch 1980:152). Gmelch also discusses the fact, that migrants actually lose touch with their home society over time, so the longer their migration experience gets, the higher the risk of having no impact at all. Along with Cerase, age also plays a major role in Gmelch's explanations. Migrants, who only return in order to enjoy their retirement pension, would neither have an interest to become a social agent in the old society, nor would they have the psychological presuppositions for a high level of political activity as they returned out of a longing.

While there are some changes possible, they again depend on the amount of returning migrants to a former sending country. Critically, Gmelch (1980:153) remarks though, that: "*migrants were better off economically in the first place, and their newly acquired wealth only served to heighten inequality and social tensions, resulting in growing resentment against the returnees*". Bearing all these eventualities in mind, one last aspect the author sheds a critical light on is the possible impact return migrants might have on their home societies: reliability. Return migrants lack reliability for countries, as they are those citizens that have left the country before and often are willing to leave the country again if necessary. As they - especially

when they enjoy a higher level of education and knowledge - enjoy greater chances in different places, easily may see the incentive to simply leave again (ibid.).

Having described some of the traditional approaches to migration and return migration, it can be summarised, that some attempts have been undertaken to see agents of change in migrants, but most of them reached with the result, that to actually have an impact, too many constraints exist. These constraints may include personal distance to the old society, practically useless knowledge in the context of the home country (Gmelch 1980), an unsuccessful migration experience in general (See: neoclassic theories of migration and NELM, above), too little preparedness to return (Cassarino 2004) or old age (Cerase 1974). Once they returned, scholars don't attach much reliability to return migrants, as to them remigration always stays an option, which makes them a risky choice for purposeful integration into democratic parties at home. But what is the migrant's identity like? Are they likely to be politically active due to their presuppositions or are they not?

3.3. *Migrants' identity?*

Reading about the development of political consciousness, which might be tightly interwoven with political socialisation, some aspects are revealed, which increase migrants' likeability of being politically active or critical members of societies. Even among the low skilled ones migrants are those that are bravest and it is only the most active ones that usually find their way abroad (Ball 2004:121).

Most authors agree, that migrants are per se included in a societal group[20] which is likely to become politically active. Migrants tend to be among the younger, better educated of a society (Zosa/Orbeta 2009:1, ILO 2005[21]), usually equipped with a high level of courage, as they would otherwise not even dare going abroad.

After decades of research on the economics of immigration it is widely acknowledged that on average, migrants are the youngest and most talented, entrepreneurial and ambitious individuals among a country's population. This 'positive self-selection' stems from the

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20 I am aware of the fact that migrants are not a homogeneous social groups, nevertheless it makes sense to homogenise migrants here so generalisations can be made at all. Moreover, many authors bring up similar arguments based on essentialisms.

21 This study conducted by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) focused on health workers in the context of the Philippines.

fact that migration is costly and often prohibitive for those who lack both human capital and financial resources." (Coniglio 2008:84ff)

A broader mindset,stemming from higher education has been shown empirically to often lead to increased political activity (Guarnizo et al. 2003:1216). Most political socialisation research points out the years of childhood or adolescence to be the most influential during one's lifetime (Ackermann 1974). Krampen (1991:22) points out the importance of those influential years in character development, as actor orientation takes part in the same. According to Hanks (1981:211) families, schools, peer groups and also mass media have an impact on political socialisation.

Political activity might also come with the situation of perceived crises in migration, as this encourages critical awareness. Additional to the childhood's and adolescent's trait of being prone to political socialisation, it is exposure to crises, which can induce change in one's political belief (Schmidt 1984)[22.] Migration, as we'll see in the empirical part of this thesis, can definitely be labelled a phase of crises or shock. Claußen (1996)[23] stipulates that politicisation does not necessarily need to be a homogeneous path in one's life, but can change with interruptive moments.

All in all, one shall also not forget traditional migration theories, which are often based on rational choice, that migrants do get active usually on the individual base, that they aim for something in their own and their families' lives in the first place. Possible fields of individual engagement may be the improvement of families' living conditions at home, confront exploitation and oppression in their very situation or have the emancipatory goal of overcoming the role as a passive victim in their job as well as change their possibly unequal status in their families at home (Zontini 2010:108ff). Thus, for labour migrants, the workplace is the number one site of political activities (Kofman et al. 2000). As Basch et al. (1997:262) remark, migrants in the first place do not critically judge the role of dominant classes or the impoverishment of their countries' populace, but rather "*channel their energies into transnational strategies for achieving individual social mobility and economic security*". They focus on en-

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22 SCHMIDT, Manfred G. (1984): Demokratie, Wohlfahrststaat und neue soziale Bewegungen. Der Beitrag des Parteienwettbewerbs und der Regierungspolitik zur Entstehung der neuen sozialen Bewegungen. In: Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte, Vol. 11. 3-14. Quoted by: Rother 2009:253.
23 CLAUßEN, Bernhard (1996): Die Politisierung des Menschen und die Instanzen der politischen Sozialisation: Problemfelder gesellschaftlicher Praxis und sozialwissenschaftlicher Theoriebildung. In: Claußen, Bernhard und Rainhard Geißler (Ed.): Die Politisierung des Menschen. Instanzen der politischen Sozialisation. Ein Handbuch. Opladen: Leske und Budrich. Quoted by: Rother 2009:253.

hancing their own status, and are most probably not critically aware of questioning their own role in the reproducing unequal class relations.

Moreover, if emigrants are among the best educated, most ambitious and youngest in a country, then as well, it is exactly these people that a heterogeneous and politically active society might lack at home. Concepts of brain drain have alluded to exactly this circumstance with the focus on development – why wouldn't these also hold true for the political sphere?

> *What overseas employment amounted to then was, politically, an absorber of energies that might otherwise have gone into radical or revolutionary solutions and, in economic terms, an external employment mechanism in the absence of development. (Bello 2009:11)*

While the argument sounds logical, that migrants' disposition is the one of high likeability for political activity, there cannot be made a clear résumé for this question, as both perspectives might hold true. Migrants have high individual potential, but nevertheless, they leave the country behind which might have an even bigger impact and as well due to these very dispositions lack reliability, like Gmelch indicated in his articles.

3.4.   Democratisation theories

In order to find out in which ways migrants contribute to processes of democratisation, I will discuss theories of democracy and approaches to democratisation in this chapter. There is no such thing as one definition of democratisation, even less so of democracy. Most approaches, however, include the following minimum criteria on democracy: equality, transparency and accountability (Schmitz 2004:404). This means, that every person of a democratic entity's populace theoretically should be provided with the same opportunity to participate in public affairs which should be organised transparently and in an accountable manner. Beyond this level, all theories put different foci, and can be categorised in various ways. After reading on democratisation theories and democracies, I find two categories of definitions dominant, roughly described as technical versus normative. The technical definitions concentrate on procedural and institutional aspects of democracy and democratisation, the normative ones highlight political participation.

In the following, I discuss different technical approaches before turning to normative theories. Modernisation theories as an one approach to democratisation focus on the gradual develop-

ment of a society along with economic growth into alphabetisation and urbanisation, which eventually lead into democracy (e.g. Lipset 1959). Lipset (1994:2ff). This approach also sticks to the idea, that democratisation requires presuppositions, such as market economy, wealthy middle classes, religion, but also political culture. Huntington (1991:65f) is a scholar with similar views on gradual transition to democracy parallel to economic development. He splits the path of transition into replacement, transformation and transplacement. In his influential book on democratisation processes, he describes his theory of Third-Wave-democratisation, in which he claims, that democratisation happened after three initiative moments of crises. The third wave was triggered by the big oil crises in the 1970s that destabilised authoritarian regimes, whose legitimacy was only based on economic stability (ibid.:51). This Third Wave started with the collapse of southern European countries and spilled over to the Philippines as the first Asian country. To Huntington external forces, such as foreign governments also have an influence on the consolidation of democracy, but migrants are left out (ibid.:274). Welzel and Inglehart (2008:127) confine to Huntington that it was only electoral democracy that spread around the world, but not, what the authors plead for, a comprehensive concept of "*liberal democracy*", which means to them "*mass voice in self-governance*" (ibid.:126). Nevertheless, Huntington remains one of the most cited authors in the field of democratisation theories. Migrants as actors and factors of demoractisation are not mentioned though.

Procedural approaches of the 1970's challenged this one-way link between economic growth and democratisation. Dahl (1989:221)[24] for example focused on key institutions such as "*elected officials, free and fair elections, inclusive suffrage, right to run for office, freedom of expression, alternative information and associational autonomy*" to explain democratisation. Dahl does not reflect on normative values of democracy but on the procedures which bring democratically elected representatives of a populace and determine the degree of democratisation. In his model, "*polyarchy*" is the furthest stage modern countries had gotten so far, about two dozen countries he subsumes to this category by 1969 (Dahl 1972 [1971]:11). With the focus on the competition between democratic actors, such as parties, Dahl recurs to the traditional definition of democracy by Schumpeter from 1943 (2010:241ff), which builds on the competition for political leadership. To Schumpeter it is as with Dahl not the idealistic aspect of democracy that counts for its validity but the reliability of its procedures. Thus, to Schumpeter, democracy is not - as it was to Rousseau more than two hundred years before - the way to the most benefits for all (Schmidt 2000:91ff), but rather a system with political leadership,

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24 Dahl, Robert A. (1989): Democracy and its Critics. Quoted by: Schmitz 2004:405ff

that people can vote for or against (Schumpeter 2010 [1943]:253). Democratisation in this approach means the development in the direction of an – inclusive – procedural regime, based on aspects such as: freedom to join organisations, freedom of expression, right to vote, right of political leaders to compete for support and votes, eligibility for public offices, alternative sources of information, free and fair elections and institutions for making government policies depend on voters and other expressions of preference (Dahl 1972 [1971]). With Dahl, discussion and competition for support are central parts, but nevertheless, there is space for bottom-up political participation, as he also points out that democratic rule should be inclusive (ibid.:7).

While Huntington and Dahl show narrow - but empirically applicable - definitions of democratisation, a more accurate definition in some authors opinions includes more than formal transition, like the becoming of a full-fledged democracy, whatever this might be. Democratisation can be analysed as the transition to, or the the consolidation of democracy. While Dahl, Huntington and other scholars of procedural approaches discuss democratisation as transition, the following authors focus on the aspect of consolidation. This dispute can be clearly spotted by looking at the respective definitions of democracy as such. Dryzek (1996) points out that "*among political theorists at least,(...) democracy is an unfinished project*". Diamond (2002:24) remarks that our contemporary era, in which democracy is presented as the only legitimate form of governing, brings along "*pseudodemocracies*" or harsher "*electoral authoritarianism*". Also Schwartzmann (1998:159) writes in 1998, that by 1996 already 66% of all world countries used some form of elections to select their top leaders. Huntington, Diamond (2002) claims, applies a minimal definition, which has not enough explanatory power. He judges the Philippines as "*electoral democracy*", which is the second highest level in his classification schemes, while he classifies Japan and Taiwan on the highest level as "*liberal democracies*" (ibid.:31). In his article on "*hybrid regimes*" democracies are judged along the lines with basic assumptions of free, fair and open elections, but put in combination with legislative seats held by the ruling party, the percentage by which the ruling party has won and the number of years, for which it has been in charge (ibid.:29). This is only one attempt to take more than elections into considerations. To discuss democratisation in the context of this paper a focus on free and fair voting systems might not be sufficient. Instead a definition of democracy and democratisation that include space for alternative political participation and agency is necessary. While procedural views were presented above, normative approaches as a second main perspective on this term are to be followed.

The second approach shows citizens or other subjects of democracy as active creators of their system and decision-making (among others: Barber 1984, Benhabib 2003). Among the more normative approaches, Habermas' stance of "*deliberative democracy*", which focuses on the rational debate in an ideal discourse, that leads to the democratically best results as they represent public opinion, is the main base (Schmidt 2000:251ff). Habermas contains among the normative approaches the best tools for empirical analyses (ibid:265). Another opponent of democracy's reduction to procedural regimes is Benjamin Barber. Barber (1998-9:585) is a proponent of "*strong democracy*", which he defines as

> *a democracy that reflects the careful and prudent judgments of citizens who participate in deliberative, self-governing communities (...) Strong democracy calls not only for votes, but for good reasons; not only for an opinion but for a rational argument on its behalf.*

Benhabib (2003:8) and Barber (1984:127), among others, idealistically focus on the maximum amount deliberate, fair, inclusive debate and ratio in the democratic state. Benhabib (2003:3f) who includes multiculturalism in her approaches to democratisation, spans her conceptualisation of minimal aspects of democracy between egalitarian reciprocity, free self-identification to any cultural, religious or lingual group and the freedom to create associations and exit them. Benhabib (2008 [2006]:33ff) integrates increasing cosmopolitan rights and normative stances on the well-being of all, including all members of the "*demos*". The demos, conceptualised as the people inside a democratic entity, should not be reduced to those that are represented in a democratic government, all systems have so far known some that are included in representative bodies and others that were excluded (ibid.:41).

Chantal Mouffe is an open critic to this consensual debate driven approach to democracy. She does not question the urge for more democracy in democratic systems (Mouffe 2000, 2007 [2005]), but she sees the conflictive nature of democratic debate as a necessary aspect, that should not be denied. Also Lenk (1982:16) sees in politics the need for open and transparent conflict in order to include citizens into democratic processes, not to reduce them to apathetic voters of representatives - leaving the political sphere to quasi-elites. Mouffe denounces attempts to grasp an impartial rational consensus within the citizenry (2000:4). Many authors are critical of participative approaches, as they usually miss a concept of how to implement such a governing system or in how far such governing actually can work in a large nation-state (Schmidt 2000:261ff), including large opposing parts of populations (Merkel/Petring 2001:3). Schmidt (2000:261) presents common critics to these concepts, such as the fact, that they have unrealistically high aims, which cannot be met in reality. "*Fuzzy norms do not yield*

useful analysis" is how Huntington (1991:9) denounces unclear concepts, which does also indeed hold true.

Agency-driven approaches to democracy of the 1980s and 1990s also turned away from the mentioned structural presuppositions of modernisation theories, which leave little space for popular agency, other than party competition in the process of elections. While there is agency-driven approaches to democratisation, which focus on elites, others focus on the role of the broad population (Welzel 2006). One of these particular examples of an actor-focused explanations stems from Welzel and Inglehart (2008), who oppose elitist approaches. They mention that particularly procedurally focused definitions of democracy do not manage to build a bridge to socio-economic development in respective countries. They stretch, that the Freedom House Index to democratisation would be a more appropriate way of judging the same, as it builds on civil liberties and political rights. To Welzel and Inglehart (2008:128) "*effective democracy*" is a governing style that empowers its citizens. To them, for being built on an empowered populace, a democracy needs to leave space for people to be motivated, able and especially entitled to govern their own lives. The authors make out different levels of this process, which are the individuals' opportunities to express their own values, leave them space for political, collective activities and provide them with the necessary political institutions. Welzel and Inglehart (2008:126) oppose agency-driven approach to elitist stances that tend to only include electoral principles and particularly the fact that they see the becoming of democracy as an act of will by elites. They put their focus on the influence of mass attitudes and mass demonstrations. Welzel (2006) particularly highlights that in order to create democracy in a broad movement of civil society, it takes besides those that actively carry out the act, also the overall favourable attitudes in a society. They conclude that mass agency plus mass attitudes bring democratisation. This aspect they consider neglected among most other approaches.

Representative democracy can work against the agency of its citizens, when unequal information hinders them from equal participation (Cheibub/Pzeworski 1991). Merkel (2003) also points out socio-economic aspects by declaring that poverty and insufficient education hinder people from participating in democratic states. Merkel (2003:155) mentions moreover, that in democratisation processes the time needed to build up political institutions is far shorter than accumulating the social capital in the populace to actually find an active corps of citizenship, civil society. Thus, the act of building up NGOs and other civil society institutions is an important, yet slow process of democratisation.

In which way though, have theorists tried to pin down the influence of external factors or migrants in their concepts of democratisation? Looking at the transmittance of democracy as a way of democratisation by external forces, Huntington can be mentioned for his attempt to include foreign countries, as we heard, but also older approaches, such as McGrath (1968), who posed the – nowadays for its normative taste - divisive question, whether democracy can be exportable, on the cover of his book. The professor of political science included various - also historic - articles in his book, among them a text on "*The Philippine Islands 1900*" from Henry Cabot Lodge, a former American senator, holding a speech on his vision of giving "*honest administration*" to the Philippine people while expanding American influence in the world. These attempts to grasp, whether democratisation can be induced from external actors is only one in the beginning of a long, yet not extensive row of researches.

Some of the most recent assumptions on the connection between migration and democratisation stem from Lauth and Pickel (2008), who tried to pin down ways of diffusing democracy. Similar to cultural diffusion theories, as will be treated in the empirical part of this thesis, Lauth and Pickel (2008:40) make out political fields which can be transmitted, such as approaches to environmental norms. These fields lack an active, distinguishable sender and an addressee, thus they use the term receiver instead[25]. They also see four ways of transmitting democracy: media, networks, socialisation in institutions such as work in companies and, most important for us, migration (Lauth/Pickel 2008:41). Media includes the wide field of mass media. Networks include civil society actors which exchange information through different levels of communication. A third way are migrants themselves as the medium, which can be the case with return migrants. Fourth they name education abroad, such as university degrees but also the experiences of correspondence with authorities, with which former migrants return. They conclude, that it is possible for migrants if they make positive experiences abroad that they are quick to adjust and try and see this as an innovation to be taken home and introduced as something 'new'. The likeability of diffusion increases if the networks are close and strong. While Lauth and Pickel leave it with that, it seems that their approach to this topic nevertheless builds on a rather unconscious way of adapting to 'new' information and distributing it without clear recipients.

Itzigsohn and Villacrés (2008) point out on the base of their research on the Dominican Republic and El Salvador, that migrants do have an influence on strengthening formal democrat-

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25 This unclear definition of actors will be seen with theories of social remittances as well. This supports Gmelch's (1980) statement on migration as change inducing actors that no single actors can be made out.

ic rules and procedures. They conclude quite the opposite though, that this impact of "*migrant transnational politics to the deepening of democracy towards more participative and deliberative forms is limited*". The authors relate the granting of external voting rights to the influence of migrants and especially to the strengthening of democracy, nevertheless the amount of actual participation is low (ibid.:668f).

Taking into consideration that migrants are in their countries of destination still partly excluded from formal political institutions such as elections or party politics, an approach that brings in the side of individual agency seems more appropriate for this thesis. Also in the Philippines (see: chapter 4.4), where the active drive to temporary emigration has existed for nearly forty years, migrants were excluded from formal political participation until 2004, when finally the Absentee Voting Bill was passed (Courville/Piper 2004:49).

Moreover, democratisation nowadays, at a time in which the majority of the countries formally are democracies, cannot be reduced to the particular moment of transition. The mere transition to an official democracy does not yet ensure free and fair elections, nor the necessary affluence, education and equality to include all in the democratic process[26]. Mosse (2004:642) observes , that nowadays good governance and a strong civil society are seen as conditions for poverty reduction, whereas the model of successful development was expected through technology-led growth in the 1980s. With him, democratisation rather sounds like part of an international agreement on what deserves to be supported for political correctness in the development discourse. This is worth criticising but has no conceptual use for this thesis.

After this search for suitable approaches to democracy and democratisation in the context of migration, a short definition of democratisation and democracy on the basis of the discussed theories shall be concluded. For my study, democracy in its procedural form is acknowledged for its analytic merits and a common minimal ground. Normative approaches, such as Habermas' "*deliberative democracy*" or Barber's *"strong democracy"*, show idealistic aspects, which have to be supported for the underlying idea of humanity. Nevertheless, these approaches left alone cannot account for broader democratisation processes in large political entities, where the amount of citizens seems far bigger, than what a rational discourse on the common public opinion could ever include.

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26 For more information on the criticisms of the explanatory power of democracy as a fundamental name of a system, see: http://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/cps/rde/xchg/bst/hs.xsl/nachrichten_111871.htm.

Migrants do not form a large topic in democratisation theories either, as they lack methods of pinning down changes induced by migration. Democratisation in this paper will be seen from a more agency-based perspective. As migrants are partly excluded from classical democratic rights, such as elections, other ways of acting in and effecting a democracy need to be the focus. On top, the extension of migrants' votes into a democracy is a procedural perspective of determining migrants' contributions to democratisation. Organising of migrants in unions, hometown associations or acts that increase personal agency inside the ruling systems and focus on some kind of social change, I will regard as another aspect of democratisation. More optimistic stances in this regard come from the field of transnationalism, as we will see below, that incorporates migrants as active parts of societies at both ends.

3.5. *Transnationalism*

Transnationalism as a theoretic approach deserves its own chapter, as it is a comprehensive approach, that transgresses both narrow-fitted migration and democratisation theories, as well as the tight definition of the political sphere. Most migration theories were made for nation-states, as Glick Schiller, Basch and Szanton Blanc (1995) describe, many generations of researchers have seen immigrants as those people who once came to a place to end up being uprooted in the same and never leave again. Slowly the authors see change happening, which brings the transnational lives of these migrants into perspective, still embarking on the national unit as point of reference, as will be shown below. Bauböck (2003:704f) regards nations as a necessary precondition for anything transnational, which he splits in four spheres. These are the international sphere, usually dominated by state relations and international organisations, the multinational, which is built on multinational states, such as the United Kingdom particularly in its historic dimension, the supranational in form of the European Union, and the transnational. The transnational has the specificity that it overlaps the nation states and leaves space to non-institutional actors.

Talking about political consciousness and political activity of migrants, transnational research cannot be left out, because it highlights migrants' agency within the only sphere that is left to them to be engaged in, as they are excluded from most other levels (Basch et al. 1997, Bauböck 2003, Glick Schiller et al. 1995, Guarnizo et al. 2003). Only on the international

level they enjoy formal rights, such as human rights or international labour conventions, which indeed depend on the benevolence of host states to be actually applied. Finally overcoming the invisibility and perceived powerlessness of migrating humans, this theoretic (and research) field opens up for the active role of migrants. More narrow approaches by contrast tend to only see the economic reasons on behalf of the migrants and the active management of their labour force by the receiving countries. Cultural hybridity as a result of migration is becoming a topic, migrants' use of international media and transport, the connections of migrants among each other and their families over various borders and with migrants from other countries are being put in the focus. The role of remittances is being detected as a financial connection of overarching importance for the families and countries of emigration as well. These aspects are closely tied to the actual increasing globalisation which enables migrants to live this life of transgressing borders frequently and in various ways. Globalisation including affordable and fast long distant transport, international communication facilities, money transfer companies to enable the material movement of goods and the ideational movement of ideas which leads for people to "*almost literally (...) have a foot in two countries*" (Basch/Glick Schiller/Szanton Blanc 1997:22).

Transnationalism as a migration theory seems to be the only approach to migration which actually embraces full migrant realities. It emerged in the early 1990s, founded by American anthropologists as an alternating model to the mere focus on nation states and the strict division of immigration and emigration (Levitt/Nyberg-Sørensen 2004:2). According to this evolving model, traditional perspectives on migration would not meet the evident demands of migration theory to also include the passages in-between immigration and emigration, out of which new life worlds and the wide field of migrant activities are evolving, socially linking countries of origins and destinations (Nyberg-Sørensen/Van Hear/Engberg-Pedersen 2002:18). Transnationalism set out to include spaces of migration left out by traditional theories. It is due to transnationalist researchers that migration is no more seen as an unidirectional movement but rather in its variety of aspects, in its circularity and never ending mobility (Cassarino 2004:264).

Indeed, transnationalism means the focus on connections which are being spun over at least one border by private people as well as corporations. The approach does not focus only on the institutional level which has been done by so many preceding migration theories. It is transnational social spaces which are connected socially and symbolically as Faist (2008:22) writes

that bring up networks, organisations and communities which cross various borders. He claims that there is still little known about "*the role that transnational groups and organisations play vis-à-vis states and other agents when it comes to the transfer of financial capital such as remittances and investments, knowledge and political ideas*" (ibid.). According to Basch et al. (1997:250) "*in the act of spanning and connecting host and home societies, these organizations become important channels for the transmission of ideologies, political and social capital, and personnel. They are important terrains for the contestation of political ideologies and constituencies*". Also Nyberg-Sørensen et al. (2002:217) see the possibility of norm diffusion, political and financial involvement. Thus, transnationalism does not consider migrants to be a hindrance to development but rather a key to it out of their likeability to political and financial involvement in the home country (ibid.:24).

A central term of the theory at hands is *diaspora.* The concept of diaspora probably originates from the dispersion of Jewish people along with various times of expulsion from their ancestral homeland. It has traditionally been used for Jews or Armenians, and has widened its scope ever since. To consider oneself as part of a diaspora means to

> *imagine oneself as being outside a territory, part of a population exiled from a homeland.*
> *Diasporas are populations that, while dispersed across boundaries and borders, salvage*
> *from their common loss and distance from home their identity and unity 'as a people'.*
> *(Basch et al. 1997:269)*

In a more recent understanding, the basic assumptions that are left over is the common notion of a joint homeland, as well as the peoples' continuous orientation towards the same, the dispersion in at least two different locations and group maintenance (Gamlen 2011:267). Insofar this concept surpassed the actual meaning of transnational, which according to Kearney (1995:559) could also only include a minimum of two communities in two national states. Transnationalism and diaspora research though often go beyond that and aim at connections on a private, economic, cultural and societal level – between members of different entities in different countries.

This connection, as was shown, has manifold levels and was also detected by researchers on the political level like indicated by Faist (2008) and Basch et al. (1997). While the international political level usually only includes organisations and governments, the transnational political level includes the "*indirect participation in sending states from outside the borders, but also (...) the impact of migrants' external political ties on the political institutions of the host country*" (Bauböck 2003:702). In order to be called political transnationalism Bauböck states,

that it needs to ultimately affect the very definition of the entity whose borders are crossed. He concludes that it transgresses the traditional scopes of domestic politics which were only seen to be made inside a state's border for a state's local citizenry. Faist (2008:34) claims that migrants' political transnationalism may have a severe impact on country politics. In some cases, countries started to view their transnational citizens as strategic assets (ibid.:35). He points out the example of the Palestinian diaspora in both Europe and the US and the Chinese government's perspective on highly skilled overseas Chinese workers. Also Bauböck (2003:709) claims that transnational migrants set a chance for the political government of the home country: The instrumental reasons for the sending government are "*human capital up-grading, remittances, and the political lobbying of receiving-country governments*" (ibid.).

To the contrary Faist (2008:35) also sees in them the most visible threat to the interest of states, as they may stand up for things they saw elsewhere, like gender equality, human rights or democratic self-determination. Any kind of social remittance theoretically can enter a country from refugees, exiles or stateless diaspora. Those diasporas, named "*ethno-national communities*" by Faist (2008:34), living outside their traditional homeland, carry their own political ideas of their country of origin with them as well as upon return their own political ideas, affected by what they have experienced in the receiving countries. These ideas might become threatening to the existing systems in the homelands as they need not concede with the prevailing norms and ideas in the home country (ibid:35).

Alejandro Portes (1999:466f), another thinker of the transnationalist branch of migration theories states, that usually these grass-roots transnational connections are not invoked by the governments from the sending countries. He concludes, that "*governments only enter the picture as the importance of the phenomenon becomes evident*" (ibid.) According to his perspective though, migrants engaged in transnational activities remain a relatively small proportion of all migrants, but as their absolute number increases, they become more organised and active in transnational politics. It is part of the process of increasing number of migrants that they start reclaiming recognition for their contributions to the homeland, such as financial investments, expertise and political support by demanding more institutional recognition in this home country (Gamlen 2011:284). Gamlen opposes the view that transnational migrant organisations must not only be induced from the grass-roots level, also government expatriates can be triggers (ibid.:285).

Bauböck (2003:701) who tried to build a political theory on transnationalist stances states that transnational politics always are a result of national politics. Thus, also political activities of migrants are always oriented towards either the sending or the receiving state. He theorises external citizenship and the legitimacy of democratic inclusion. External citizenship rights to him, even though he has some rejections to the right to vote, stay central, as they include the right of diplomatic support as well as the right to return, which is central to most migrants (Bauböck 2003:711). He builds his argument around normative aspects of democratisation theory, saying that those that are actively involved with hometown associations or remittances should have a legal right in their country of origin (ibid.:714). He questions whether all emigrants should have the right to decide in votes, as this directly affects the local population of their home country, whom they may no longer be part of. In this regard, he concludes, that the right to vote should be implemented along the lines with residency (ibid.:715). The claim of new forms of nation-building is not shared by him, as nevertheless, also migrant transnationalism is always aimed at one nation, and not a way of actually overcoming national borders (ibid.:721).

Guarnizo, Portes and Haller (2003) introduce a critical stance on the concept of transnationalism, in which they assert, that the concept is a vague one, that leaves much space for interpretation which kind of transnational activity deserves being called "*transmigrant*". By leaving transnationalism with the definition below, one may criticise that a clear conceptual background is missing.

> *transnational migration is a pattern of migration in which persons, although they move across international borders, settle, and establish relations in a new state, maintain ongoing social connections with the polity from which they originated. In transnational migration people literally live their lives across international borders. Such persons are best identified as 'transmigrants'. (Glick Schiller and Fouron 1999:344)*

The clear cut traits or characteristics and which activities these transmigrants have to attend so they merit this expression, is often missing. Guarnizo et al. (2003) ask whether it is the act of sending remittances, spending your holidays at home or political engagement, that deserves the term transmigration.

> *While the occasional trip home or a sporadic financial contribution to a home country political party certainly helps to strengthen the transnational field, these intermittent activities do not justify by themselves the coining of a new term. It is the rise of a new class of immigrants, economic entrepreneurs or political activists who conduct cross-border activities on a regular basis, that lies at the core of the phenomenon that this field seeks to highlight and investigate (Guarnizo et al. 2003:1213).*

In another article of the same issue of the journal, "*Ethnic and Racial Studies*", Portes, Guarnizo and Landolt (1999:219) remark that transnationalism becomes meaningless if it used as a 'catch it all' approach to migration. No gains are made if immigrants are called transmigrants and the analytical scope is lost if the single levels cannot be made out any more. Thus, transnationalism also requires definitional and empirical foci that are tied to people which due to their professional position, familial or political activity literally live between at least two nations. Only if the scope of the term is limited, effects can be tackled. The main research unit in this field they recommend, should be the individual in its social network, that can either be predominantly local or transnational. To put it blatant: sending one or two packages per year over an ocean does not mean that somebody lives a transnational live. Thus, in the field of migrant political activism, with the understanding of these scholars, transnationalism would only deserve this name if it was lived in and focused on both states involved. Migrant political transnationalism they claim is a result of Third World workers who find themselves in any country in subordinate positions (Portes/Guarnizo/Landolt 1999:220). Also this political activism is in the first place a reaction to government politics in one state, carried out in networks and only later – not in all cases – soaked up by governments or other local and national political movements.

All in all, migrant transnationalism presents many possibilities and vague ideas of how migrants can theoretically get involved: through hometown associations, as well as support of a government or opposition abroad, institutions as well as individual reasoning. As it contributes much to political activity of migrants involved it merits being mentioned in this thesis. A doubt remains: in how far does this political transnationalism really stem from an increased political consciousness or is it a mere need of those trying to gain their rights in the respective host country, thus as Portes et al. (1999) would probably remark, a case of immigration hardships, not transnationalism.

Nevertheless, this approach might give us an answer to how and why migrants indirectly increase democracy in their homelands. It may not tell us anything about the role migrants' consciousness play in this process. In order to find out about these approaches' stances on actual migrant transnationalist activism and democratisation in the empirical part various insights from this corner will be described. To summarise, as was shown above transnational theorists such as Faist (2008), might understand transmigrants as collective actors of change, as they remit political ideas, which can include ideas of governments, democracy, rights and respons-

ibilities. Portes, Guarnizo and Landolt (1999) importantly remark that migrant transnationalism should not be used as a 'catch it all' term to integrate a wide scope of phenomenons that could be otherwise also labelled as international. Also Bauböck (2003) insists on the importance of distinguishing the different levels, such as international, transnational, supranational and the multinational level. Migrant transnationalism should not be seen as the only possible approach to understanding migrant realities nowadays, as then it becomes a false interpretation of other forms of migration and loses explanatory strength. Thus, the tendency in this theoretic field hints at turning back at nation states as points of reference for transnational activities.

3.6. *Conclusio from theoretical approaches*

This chapter started with the search of a connection between migration and political consciousness and political agency as well as democratisation in common migration theories. Hardly any material could be detected in which migrants are especially highlighted in democratisation theories or their political consciousness and influence on democratisation in migration theories vice versa. In democratisation theories migrants are not a big factor, other than in theories of external influence on democracy, such as by Lauth and Pickel (2008). Nevertheless, looking at democracy as such, more than one understanding might be relevant when judging migrant's impact on democratic systems. The fact that not much has been said on migrants' and their political activities does not represent migrant political activity. Although migrants are often in their countries of residence excluded from elections due to their status of non-citizens, they can find other niches and ways of being politically active. This has been shown in the chapter on transnationalism but also by Leal (2002) in the chapter on political participation above. The definition and thus the scope of the political sphere and democratisation might need to be extended to represent migrants. However, it could be shown, that migrants do carry a high potential to become actors of social change due to their individual presuppositions like age, broader mind set, over-average educational and financial assets. Looking at migrants when they first leave, they usually fall into the perfect profile for politically active persons.

Under consideration of the work of the authors Cassarino (2004), Cerase (1974) and Gmelch (1980), it could be shown, that there are some traits that make successful return more likely as well as an elevated level of (politically) innovative mindset after return, but can also hinder it. Theoretical stances also showed though, that return migrants can be highly doubted to really become politically active or engaged in similar ways because of their older age at the time of return for example, but also the fact, that returning home might mean to them to come back home to what they know, what they might have idealised from abroad and are not willing to see changed.

Transnationalist studies as the only ones to take into consideration migrants as individuals and collective actors from an altered ontological background, showed, that migrants do indeed develop strategies on how to cope with each system and adopt to it in a way, appropriate to their needs. Transnationalist studies also depict that migrants abroad usually intermingle with migrants from other countries, which imposes another influence on them and further diversifies opinions and activities. Thus, the biggest amount of material dealing with the impact, migrants have in both destination and sending country, comes from this background. Nevertheless, some of the stances introduced seem to be implicitly optimistic. With Bauböck (2003), Castles and Miller (2009), Faist (2008) or Lauth and Pickel (2008) saying, that migrants can become the ones to experience new systems and aspire different rules than at home after having seen diverging ones, a normative step is taken in the direction of democracy diffusion, which I find problematic and so far could not be shown in my research (chapter 5).

Subsequently, in the next chapter the aspects of what can actually be transmitted and in which ways will be approached. To start with, to stay in the same tradition, transnational empirical material will be presented.

4. Review of empirical studies

No studies have been conducted to the research question of political consciousness and return migration in particular so far. Nevertheless many researches have been conducted that gained insights which contribute to the research questions of this thesis by focusing on migration and democratisation for example. Especially studies from a transnational perspective deserve to be granted merit, as they broadened the field of what is studied in migration studies enormously and opened up for visibility of migrant activism. It is - up until most recent days - logical that the biggest interest to Western (conventional) scholars lies in the impact migrants do have on the receiving states and possibly the impact of remittances sent from these receiving states into sending countries around the world. This seems to be a logical following of the international wealth and power distribution. Nevertheless transnationalism brought a change of perspective with more post-colonial view points, to bring in the opposite perspective, the notion of exploitation, brain drain, and the structural reasons for labour migration but also its impact. This chapter will start with a short review of the most openly transnational studies, to continue with the aspect of cultural diffusion, in particular political remittances, to be followed by the few researches conducted so far that are closest to the topic of this thesis and last but not least some empirical examples of how Filipin@ activism has influenced state policies or how it has been a way of imposing their will.

4.1. Empirical transnationalism

Empirical Studies from a transnationalist perspective are interesting for this thesis because they shed light on various connections between people and channels of communication and transmission between nation-states, individual migrants and different kinds of organising. To transgress our simplified perspective on divided groups and autonomous units is a hard task as it includes to overcoming our tool kit of analytic units like nation-states (Basch et al. 1997). As was shown by Bauböck (2003), it is as a matter of fact not only transnationalism, but rather a conglomerate of the international, transnational, multi-national and supranational level, that constitutes the real research reality. Hence most studies indeed include different levels of transnationalism. Once these levels are made out, it does not quite seem to be as hard

to include it into a new tool kit, but connections found may seem – due to the large amount of influential aspects - tentative.

To return to the topic of this thesis, Basch, Glick Schiller and Szanton Blanc (1997:259f) contribute by stating that transnational migrants may induce new state policies and practices via bringing themselves into the political field. They go further than most other researchers in what concerns the becoming of a transnational field by claiming, that this leads to new forms of nation building with the effect of extra-territorialised nation states becoming the norm. Transnational migrants as well may get involved with politics and local development at home, either while at home or still abroad. Basch et al. (1997:274) say that authorities are somewhat scared of migrants to return because it means to lose their stabilising impact on political regimes by sending remittances as a financial security. Once they return, this financial advantage dies down and instead they might return with radical critiques of the home country and raise fundamental questions about the structure of class, gender and power distribution (ibid.:275). While questioning class and politics at home this not automatically mean, that migrants also question international power relations but rather tend to reproduce those structures.

> *Transmigrants accommodate to global capital restructuring and even reinforce hegemonic constructions of nation-states and race that legitimate their subordination in the world system, while at the same time they engage in practices that undermine loyalties basic to preserving this global structure of dominance. (ibid.:291)*

To prove that point the authors state some empirical examples. Observing Caribbean and Filipino transmigrants in the United States, they saw various organisations being created: "*Associations organized to obtain more rights and benefits for immigrants in the United States, organizations of self-defined exiles, staunchly apolitical Christians, health professionals, voodoo priests, ex-police, ex-teachers, and hometowns*" (Basch et al. 1997:250). These diaspora groups are not necessarily politically active, the researchers claim though that once crises back home strikes they gather around the "*common national symbols*", or recur to their "*symbolic ethnicity*" (Bauböck 2003:711), and latest then become politicised. In the cases Basch et al. examined they saw remarkable results:

One of the most blatant cases they mention is the role Filipino migrants played in throwing over the authoritarian Marcos regime in the Philippines. Ninoy Aquino, as was described in the introduction, returned home from a years long exile only to be assassinated at the airport upon landing. In the aftermath, former migrants strongly supported his wife, Corazon 'Cory'

Aquino, to take over power. The authors describe that "*the Aquino government came to power with the assistance of transnational oppositional organizations in the United States that were able both to sustain organizing at home and rally public opinion in the United States*" (Basch et al. 1997:251). They clarify, that it was transmigrant individuals and organisations, which mobilised people in discussion groups, intense lobbying and speeches in the US as opposition to the Marcos regime in the Philippines (Glick Schiller et al. 1995:57). Among others, these forces in the US convinced of the fraudulent elections in the Philippines pressured the Reagan government to help overthrow the regime. They finalise this thought by stretching the claim that there was political Philippine networks in the US that lobbied for US congress support (ibid.). Solomon (2009:277) explains that Philippine migrants have developed into a transnational force of politically active diaspora which ensures democratic legitimacy of a state that he labels – in the tradition of Basch et al (1997) - global. From this perspective it is logical, that these authors ascribe political firmness and collective power to returning migrants in the Philippines.

Elisabetta Zontini also conducting empirical research in a transnational field involving Filipinas explores transnational channels through which women's feminist knowledge broadened: "*It is these channels that women learn about laws and entitlements in other destinations and thus can assess their situation in southern Europe and act to improve it*" (Zontini 2010:109). Zontini, as described in the chapter on political participation of this thesis, claims, that especially migrant women are not noticed as political actors in the new society because they are excluded from formal political institutions and decision making. To end an analysis on migrant agency with formal political participation would mean to leave migrant agency obscured. Enlarging the definition of the political and including acts such as the fight for citizenship, as will be shown below, migrant women can also be perceived as active political forces (ibid.:107). The author shows how female migrants from various countries sometimes jointly end up becoming politically active or engaged in organisations such as associations, community solidarity groups or as she points out, especially Filipinas, in trade-unions (ibid.:121). In her study Filipina women did not as of being rooted in their countries of immigration or as of always being between the two homes give up on their involvement in any of them. For many, it turned out to be a main aim to keep access to the European labour market and to gain settlement rights for themselves and their closest relatives, especially their children (ibid.:115). Thus, their very personal aim was for questioning common non-citizen exclusion, political and transnational in nature. Kofman et al. (2000) has similar outcomes when discuss-

ing migrant women as actors of change. To them, women actively engage in their settlements abroad in order to integrate, gain their basic rights and especially the workplace turns out as a space of bargaining their deprived rights.

Indeed, migrants often are active, and among this well-constituted for political activity, but the overall amount is smaller than indicated by some and by far not socially unbound. It highly depends on the existing social networks of an individual migrant (Guarnizo et al. 2003) and is usually aimed at one of the nation states that migrants are affected by (Bauböck 2003).

A particular way of stretching migrant influence in the home country were the attempts to find migrants as actors of diffusion. The researches on this topic will be presented next.

4.2.   *Social and cultural diffusion – political remittances*

> *Much attention has been paid to the world-level diffusion of institutions, culture, and styles that arise from economic and political globalization. But this only partially explains Carmen's familiarity with a world she does not actually know. (Levitt 1998)*

In 2011 Peggy Levitt claims in a joint article with Deepak Lamba-Nieves, that while most researches try to focus on the ideas migrants transmit, they try to bridge the gap to social remittances' effect on how "*socio-cultural exchanges affect organisational life and community development more broadly*". Levitt (1998, and Lamba-Nieves 2011) has conducted throughout the years extensive studies to find channels of transmission of "*social remittances, a local-level, migration-driven form of cultural diffusion*". Social remittances are norms, practices, identities and social capital which are transmitted from receiving to sending-states (2011:3). The sociologists claims, that these merit higher attention, as they have an impact on members of a sending community reaching far beyond the actual migrants' lives.

She figures out that social remittances are being passed on from migrants to their kin and non-migrants alike. Thus, they potentially happen everywhere with attachment to a transnational community, having a social impact and potentially an impact on this community's development (Levitt 1998:929). Levitt and Lamba-Nieves (2011:2) mention that remittances nowadays are nearly twice as high than the official development assistance worldwide, which is, why they can imagine that countries and organisations focus on channelling these resources and use them for development projects and the like. They mention that

> *... economics is not the whole story. Culture permeates all aspects of the development enterprise – as a challenge and an opportunity. Migrants carry ideas, practices and narratives which enable mobility and different forms of membership and belonging. Culture also strongly influences how development goals are established, the policies put in place to achieve them, and how successfully they are achieved. (ibid.:2)*

Levitt builds her claims on the study of the Caribbean village Miraflores, where she found out that a transnational collective building on local level diffusion indeed arises as soon as a large portion of inhabitants lives abroad, as in this case, in the United States of America. The strength of the influence is directly dependent on the closeness of the connection of the migrants to their hometown: the stronger the connection the stronger the impact (Levitt 1998:930).

Social remittances occur on the base of letters or any other form of communication between migrants and their former surroundings and also with the actual act of return (Levitt 1998). She figures out different ways of transmission of social remittances. These social remittances can be clearly distinguished from other kinds of global culture. For example she sees advantages in strength of face-to-face social remittances in opposition to media. Face-to-face transmitting is more successful than media because there is no understanding or communication difficulties, no medium between to hinder communication (ibid.:937). Social remittances also gain importance as it is not them alone being passed on in an isolated manner, it is a slow process of interwoven processes of cultural diffusion. She sees gradual transmissions that make sense only because of former remittances. Former social remittances path the way for the ones to follow (Levitt 1998:938).

A couple of factors can decrease these remittances' impact: the nature of the transnational system, as an only loosely nit ones gathers less people, the nature of the remitted piece, as a high complexity may make it harder to be easily integrated, the characteristics and status of the sender, the target audience, if they are financially in a comfortable position, it makes it easier to independently introduce changes, the newer and more unknown a social remittance gets, the unlikelier it gets to be actually accepted. The success of social remittances also depends on the socio-economic status of the migrant in the country of migration (ibid.:931). Levitt describes that migrants in her study despite suffering from discrimination and marginalisation, adapted to the American system out of pragmatic reasons and thus got dragged into new ideas and practices. Some of the migrants she met actively soaked in all they could learn to adapt and thus actively broaden their mind. Another determining factor she supposes is the proxim-

ity of the sending to the receiving country, which is close in the case of the Dominican Republic, as this determines the amount of medial and other forms of communication.

Most commonly migrants themselves engage in hybrid forms of social interactions, as shown on their skills, but also clothing e.g.. Clothing Levitt (1998) finds a strong indicator for the effect of the remitted ideas as well on non-migrants. While migrants tend to integrate their traditional clothing style with the one prevalent in the United States, also those, who stay behind change their dressing patterns. This creates hybrid social forms, but cannot actively be created. The author sees influence on the perception of how states, courts, politicians, community participation and social mobility are to be aspired. To her mind, host societies offer good and bad role models, which are also both adopted by migrants (ibid.:934): "*In Miraflores, these types of social remittances had far-reaching effects that ranged from altering the organization of social interaction to changing patterns of political participation*". The author claims that migrants learn normative practices, like political and civil-societal participation or participation in the household different to what it would have been at home, which they try to introduce at home (ibid.:934). On top migrants in the Caribbean have an impact on the social status of the family at home as the mere fact of having a relative abroad changes how they are being perceived (ibid.:936). She concludes, that return migrants as well as non-migrants begin demanding better social programs, because they got to know them in the United States and also because they see in on the Cable News Network (CNN) (Levitt 1998:941). The author summarises that return migrants and their non-migrating affiliates ask for a better political and justice system, but at the same time find it only fair to bypass laws for their own benefits. They develop a "*dual legal consciousness*" (ibid.:943).

As a sub-issue of 'social remittances' as she terms it, Nicola Piper (2009:217) has spent much attention on political remittances. These, as Levitt and Lamba-Nieves (2011:2) and Piper (2009:234) claim, evolve as an alternative from the vast stock of literature on economic remittances, which have been for the last decade taken as the predominant symbol of the development and migration nexus. Goldring (2004) divides remittances beside economic, into technical or technological, social and political groups. He defines political remittances as "*the political identities, demand and practices associated with migration*" (ibid.).

Piper (2009:238) defines political remittances in a more narrow term, as she says - different to what I understand remittances to be as a concept - in an inherently normative way. She focuses on democratisation in the whole migration process by saying that political remittances

can be conceptualised as "*activities, actions, and ideas aimed at the democratisation of the migration process (ranging from pre- to post-migration) via political mobilisation in the form of collective organisations operating in the transnational sphere*". In the specific context of her article, which focuses on the most recently dominant form of migration patterns, temporary contract migration, she conceptualises 'political remittances' as activity in the political process of the determination of rights through social struggles that tries to gain a "*more rights-based approach to migration*" (ibid.:218; 237). Similar to Kofman (2000) and Zontini (2010), Piper (2009:237) asks for the political to be perceived in a less elitist, narrow term but in one that leaves space mainly to "*foreground the politicisation of hardships that relate to the migrant experience*". She focuses on the attempt to influence policies in order to improve migrants' situations as labourers (ibid.:218). Migrants are at the moment rather in a position of being controlled and guided in their movement than in a rights-based situation. The author links migration and democratisation by saying that collective organisations may alter the ways and directions of political activism in a way so it helps the situation of migrants or foreign workers (ibid.:218).

The fact that they face problems both in the sending as well as in the receiving state due to their temporary stage they tend to aim at changes in both. Piper (2009:229) uses the term remittances to shift "*the lens from their victimisation by structural factors to give weight to the aspect of their (actual and potential) agency via political activism within the transnational sphere*". The predominant understanding of remittances as a flow from the North to the South is a derivation of an orthodox understanding of development. So far, there is a split in between the individual fights, which focus on their own profit like fights for social support, citizenship and similar activities and the few attempts to address structural problems (Piper 2009:241f). A broader based social movement, which includes trade unions across boarders would be needed to fully tackle structural problems of temporary migrant workers.

Authors from this field also find a connection to international capital and structures and the becoming of collective activism:

> *Activists have noted that struggle against undemocratic, exploitative, and discriminatory conditions will become increasingly ineffective if marginalized groups and civil society remain isolated and disconnected, while global capital and exploitative forces become integrated and interconnected.*" (Courville/Piper 2004: 43)

International standards can also find ways of being transmitted - in Piper's definition – in the field of migrant activism. Focusing on hope, Courville and Piper (2004:41) see a reaction to

current global governance among migrants trying to regain agency, which is why new social movements or NGOs arise, that draw on international human rights or other international instruments and frameworks. Also Gurowitz (2000:864) points out on the base of her study among migrant rights activism in Malaysia, that they heavily draw upon human rights and other international norms to regain their rights, always finding themselves on the verge in between stretching the good in these norms or being perceived as agents of the Western ideas. Even though groups using these international norms risk being denounced as agents of the West, they especially help those without citizenship status (ibid.:880f). The topic of citizenship status will be discussed in the next chapter, as it is one where the actual acts of collective actions on individual migrant needs in an unwelcoming environment can be best shown.

All studies presented above indeed detect a similar connection as was assumed with the research questions of this thesis, namely that migrants have to fight for their rights in their countries of migration. Social and political remittances are a concept that tries to show migrants' impact in both host and sending countries. Social remittances focus on the aspects of what can be transmitted in which ways. Political remittances rather focus on the transnationalisation of rights and the usage of human rights and other rights granted to individuals per se without the integration into a nation-state by rights advocacy groups. To their minds a combination of unionism and NGOs is the most winning option as this gains a certain level of flexibility for the diffusion of democracy (Zontini 2010, Piper 2009). The authors see collective actions, labour unionism and other institutions of democratic diffusion. Piper (2009) and Bauböck (2003) both make out different levels of migrant activism. While the internationally prevailing structures of economic integration depoliticises social change, they claim that through activities on non-state levels, migrants regain visibility (Courville/Piper 2004:43).

The separations in this whole part of this thesis are hard to undertake because basically all these studies research from a transnational perspective. Nevertheless the next chapter is separated as it will only discuss single researches on different aspects of migrants as actors of change, leaving the debate around political remittances aside.

4.3.   Migrants as actors of change? Empirical examples

In the last decades some studies have been conducted in order to observe migrants as active actors in their host societies, but also of their role as actors of change in their homelands and its connection to democratisation.

Most research that has been done so far nevertheless focused on the migration and development nexus. Schaland (2008) is only one example of knowledge spillover with an interesting outcome, which is why particularly this study is included here. Ann-Julia Schaland published a paper based on her thesis, which analyses Vietnamese migrants' impact at home after return. The people she interviewed for her study were all male, had finished a degree in technology during migration, and all but one were also working in the field of information technology (IT) while abroad. While most of them had returned out of opportunity, as they longed for their own companies and the government was at this stage supporting the IT-sector, they found making business at home really hard. The twist in her study lies in the circumstance that these migrants found themselves in the position of lacking options to use their newly acquired skills. So, out of the necessity to build a field, in which they would be able to have an income, they started to engage in institutions of knowledge transfer, such as universities. She writes that in order to sell products the returnees usually first had to teach their customers the usage of the products at hand. Nevertheless, she resumes that it was not the IT-related knowledge that was central for them to unconsciously becoming actors of societal change, but rather soft skills and job experiences they had acquired throughout their experiences. (Schaland 2008:9)

Many authors have expanded the knowledge of migrants as actors of change in a developmental sense. According to Vertovec (2004:989), migrant hometown associations often lack democratic legitimacy however, and have unclear connections to the sending states' government. Nevertheless their development impact might be worth mentioning, as they tend to focus on relevant aspects of development work (ibid.). To picture migrants as actors of ideational change is a more recent focus. On the side of political change, one of the most comprehensive readers on migration, "*age of migration*" by Castles and Miller (2009:281), uses examples of migrants in French and German car factories who imposed themselves politically in their host countries by being active parts in strikes to depict migrant agency. They also refer to the phenomenon of social remittances, claiming that "*those who have experiences of exploitative*

work, poor housing and discrimination are not likely to transmit positive values back home" (ibid.:62f). They connect the likeability of positive remittances to a *"development-friendly economic and social"* climate at home that needs to provide a *"framework of comprehensive policy approaches designed to maximize the benefits of migration for development"* (ibid.). On the same page they present the critique that also comes to the reader's critical mind immediately: the assumption of the implicit connection of positive values to the West sounds like a relict of colonialist ideas of civilisation and nowadays is revolved in a modernisation theorist model of development. This understanding of migrants as actors of change is not the one underlying this research. Rather, the research of Schaland (2008) is telling because it showed in how far state policies might have supported the migrants' return but the impact of migrant businesses at home resembled an act of need on the one hand and an act of coincidence on the other, but certainly not only the transmittance of Western knowledge and ideas.

Studies of ideational transmission, such as political remittances were already presented above. The most useful ones are yet to come. Silverman (2006:48) claims that by using quantitative data to stretch the broader context of a qualitative research the quality of empirical results increases. As I would not have had the resources to include a comprehensive quantitative study myself, the results of Kessler (see: citizenship in chapter 4.1.3) and particularly Rother (all published in the European Journal of East Asian Studies in 2009) are of high importance, as they try to pin down political agency and influence on democracy, Rother by building on a comprehensive quantitative study. Many of the arguments mentioned in these articles also hold true for this thesis and contribute to the topic. In the following I am going to present Rother's (2009) article on the question *"Changed in Migration?"*.

Stefan Rother (2009) conducted a broad empirical research in the Philippines. He carried out questionnaires with 1000 return migrants. These return migrants had to fulfil certain requirements concerning the length of stay, time of return, legality of their travel documents, etcetera. He added thirty-seven qualitative interviews in Tagalog with university students as translators also on the research question in how far return migrants can contribute to democratisation. The author understands democratisation in the sense of consolidation of democracy in the Philippines. Also Rother (2009:246ff) remarks in the first pages of his contribution to the issue, that most research in this field has implicitly aimed at grasping migrants as collective actors of change on the course to democratisation through the transmittance of the Western system. In order to tackle the aspect of development of opinions and mindsets on democracy over time, the author included statistical twins in the form of 1000 questionnaires with OFWs

who had already signed their contracts but not yet gone abroad, so called "*first-timers*". In this research project the aims somewhat paralleled the aspects of democratisation chosen for this thesis, as they were other than on the institutional and formal level (Rother 2009:250). Democratisation should not be approached top-down, but in a more inclusive way, focusing on ordinary people such as labour migrants and their attitudes and impact. Rother divides his interviewees by their countries of destination along with their respective political systems: Japan, Taiwan, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Hong Kong, whereas the main focus in his analysis lies on Hong Kong, Japan and Saudi Arabia. His main results are that among migrants who leave for the first time, most tend to have higher opinions of democracy than after return, the political system of the destination country has only a minor impact on democratisation, nevertheless all migrants rate the host country higher than the Philippines and migrants all in all after return share a more critical view of the home government. The following paragraphs all describe the results Rother detected with his study.

Saudi Arabia: In his quantitative results it shows that only 49% of the migrants - versus 65% of the overall sample - who had returned from Saudi Arabia regarded democracy as the most favourable political system (Rother 2009:264). Interestingly, by looking at the statistical twins a rather undemocratic attitude turn out to be a general aspect of migration to Saudi Arabia, with 68% - versus 73% in the general sample - stating before they left, that democracy is the best system. While in total 63% of his interview partners reported good work conditions, in the case of Saudi Arabia only 49% did so. Also the amount of those ranking democracy as less desirable than authoritarian rule, was comparably high. Quite to the contrary the amount of those that support demonstrations and other forms of individual political activity in general had increased. The author resumes that this is an effect of the fact that in Saudi Arabia, people are in general deprived of these rights. The number of return migrants attesting high value to freedom of media and freedom of association exceeded the results from the overall sample. This contradicts the outcome that the amount of those demanding democracy decreased. Some of his interview partners in the in-depth interviews were impressed by the fact that Saudi Arabia has a better social system than the Philippines, it helps its poorer citizens and makes sure life is bearable for all. They learned how to live with the strict rules valid in the country and also learned how to perceive them as beneficial in some regards.

Japan: Most of the migrants Rother questioned on their migration experiences worked as overseas performing artists (OPA) which are Filipinas entering the country as entertainers to

work in clubs within the male entertainment sector. While prostitution is not an official aspect of this job, Rother (2009:268) writes that many faced sexual violence and prostitution. From this background, women still see positives in the country. Among the most positive impressions Filipinas had from Japan was "*cleanliness*" and "*no corruption*" (ibid). With a total of 75% the number of first-timers that attested importance to democracy the number was slightly elevated. But the amount that judged democracy as the best system after return decreased to 59%. With the amount of 29% the number of women who felt discriminated in the country is elevated over the general sample in his study. This is a significant fall in pro-democratic mindsets. The main result here is that the women he interviewed did not get in touch with the favourable side of Japanese democracy. Instead they tended to work in the surrounding of twilight nightclubs, where democracy does not touch. While in Japan the Supreme Court in 2000 had reflected on the opportunity of providing migrants with voting rights, this has not been introduced (ibid.:266). The job field of OPAs was officially abandoned in 2005 which dramatically decreased the number of women entering the country for this job.

The example of Hong Kong was the only case were return migrants with 80% as well as future migrants with 81% were strongly in favour of democracy (Rother 2009:269). The author states that Hong Kong is a special case, as here the "*cradle of Filipina activism*" took place and a strong Filipina civil society evolved throughout the years of Filipina immigration. Filipinas migrating to Hong Kong had an immensely high education standard with 95% having finished at least a high-school degree, although 87% working as domestic workers. This high amount of de-skilling is a "*particularly blatant case*" (ibid.:270f). He concludes that there might have been a connection between the well known phenomenon of migrant activism in Hong Kong and the high amount of democracy supporters among first-timers in Hong Kong. Filipinas in his scope even tended to be proud of migrant activism in Hong Kong as they claimed to have shown to their host country how to protest. Nevertheless, while Hong Kong does not provide migrants with any electoral rights, the city state leaves much space to political participation in the sense of political activism, including strikes and protests. In this regard, I conclude from Rother's data, that Hong Kong is a particular example of migrants using the democratic freedoms which exist in order to stand up for their rights. Like Rother also points out, this case clearly indicates that formal democratic criteria such as voting rights do not touch migrants thus what matters for migrant perception of the political system is the space provided for them to participate. For more information on the special case of Hong Kong and migrant activism refer to chapter 4.6.

While the migrants in his research did not necessarily perceive the merits of democracy, a high percentage valued personal freedom. Despite figuring out that a high amount of migrants were active citizens, he finds it hard to make out migration as a single cause (ibid.:273). His main indicators for being active citizens, were to contact institutions when needed, engage voluntarily or participate politically. Particularly in the case of Saudi Arabia the amount of migrants who had approached government organisations (46%) and NGOs after return increased over those before migration (33%). As was shown in the example of Japan, even those that went into a stable democracy did not necessarily see the value of the system. Another main results of the interpretation of the study at hand was, that Piper's (2009) contribution to political remittances should "*be deprived of its normative and teleological dimension*" (Rüland et al. 2009:174). Researchers as well as policy-makers should realise, that democracy per se is not as good to migrants, so they would automatically become actors of change in favour of this system. Rother's data rather showed that particularly in Japan migrants did not get in touch with democracy and as they only saw its bad sides might as well become more critical of it.

Rother's study is of high use for this thesis as he sets the phenomenon in a wider picture. By comparing return migrants with future migrants he tries to bridge the gap of change over time which was not possible for my study. His data clearly showed that democracy as a one-way transmittances does not work. Hong Kong, as will be elaborated below, did not provide migrants with the perfect democracy, ranking similarly to the Philippines in international ratings, but with supportive circumstances to build up migrant activism. Migrants from Japan and Saudi Arabia returned with higher levels of political activity as they had contacted more organisations or authorities after return, but with a lower opinion of democracy as the most favourable system.

4.4.   *Filipin@ migrant – collective – actions: examples & issues*

As could be seen in the recent chapters, there is neither one-way approaches to political remittances, nor single ways of being politically active. Different asepcts of possible political activity exist. Although it is the individual that is politically active (or not), it is the collective action that might gain weight when it comes to societal structures or political processes. While

individual acts to enhance one's own life situation are of high importance for the respective individual and they may also be a consequence of an arisen political consciousness questioning illegitimate structures or focus on political change, it is nevertheless collective or with Welzel and Inglehart's (2008) term, "*mass attitudes*" which are even more important. It is acts and attitudes of the masses which might find an impact on laws, rights and possibly on structures. Nevertheless, migrant activism depends much on the space for change they are provided within a country of emigration but also in the home country. This space logically is larger in democracies than in authoritarian regimes.

According to Faist it is only recently that some emigration states have reshaped their relationship to hometown associations, often in a reactive way and started to take use of the same (Faist 2008:28ff). Thus, this is a clear way of being politically active and having an impact on home democracies.

> *What the emerging empirical evidence points to is the significance of collective organisationas (!) in their various forms in addressing socio-political marginalisation of foreign workers in Asia and that there is a tendency to conceptualize collective experience of hardship as a violation of rights." (Piper 2009:225)*

Filipino and Filipina activism has had its impact on some countries' facets of migration. This is usually happening after migrant organising in the form of hometown associations, unions, NGOs or other forms of political participation.

> *...migrants in general and transnational collective actors in particular have been constituted by states and international organisations as a significant agent. In the institutional dimension, agents such as hometown associations, networks of businesspersons, epistemic networks and political diasporas have emerged as collective actors (Faist 2008:20).*

The activity of NGOs in Asia was increased in the two last decades of the 1900s. Gurowitz (2000:869) connects this circumstance to the tumbling of authoritarian regimes, like the one in the Philippines. She claims that this activism has hardly spread to migrant workers, as for them it is hardest to find potential allies among local activist groups. Unions tend to be opposed to migrants as they are seen to destabilise workers' positions in a country. Only recently, there were some changes made to include foreign workers in unions and to open centres for migrants (Gurowitz 2000:870).

Philippine NGOs and civil society in large have been growing since the late years of Marcos regime. Also abroad, Philippine activism has ever risen since, with its biggest impacts in Hong Kong, as we will see in the next chapter. Nevertheless, Filipin@s overseas have the general problem that most indeed went overseas for the familial benefits, which is why the

main aim is to earn money. To get politically involved instead and risk by doing so to not be able to remit money is not necessarily highly acknowledged of the family members at home (Barber 2010:154).

Protests in favour of migrant rights but also against the government became a common picture in Manila after the People Power demonstrations, that led to Marcos' decline. The story of Flor Contemplacion in 1995, a Filipina that had been sentenced to death after supposedly having killed a fellow domestic worker and her employer's child in Singapore went through the media and led to huge demonstrations, because the Philippine government was held for being too weak to help her (Shenon 1995, Solomon 2009). Indeed, the government tried to intervene, but Singapore's claim to "*sovereignty over its territory trumped the Philippines' claim to sovereignty over its nationals*" (Solomon 2009:284). Not only did this one case induce anger among the population in which a vast majority has close family members working as Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs), but it directly led to the Republic Act 8042, Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act (Kessler 2009:207; Solomon 2009:287). This was the first time, Philippine migrants and migrant-affiliated activists pressured the government into regulations. Kessler calls this Act a migrants' "*Magna Carta*", as this jurisdiction significantly increased migrants' protection while overseas and in its following, migrant supporting offices were included in government agencies abroad (Kessler 2009:207).

Solomon (2009:287) also indicates that since the biggest demonstrations against Marcos, the ones for migrants' rights prompted by the capital penalty of Flor Contemplacion and People Power Two against president Joseph Estrada who was driven out of office, no president would dare ignoring migrant workers as a highly important force among labourers in the Philippines. Also in the field of recruitment agencies much criticisms have come from all different kind of NGOs, as they are held responsible for migrants to have to highly get indebted before being able to leave at all. "*The Philippines state now attempts to more stringent regulation of the recruitment sector, mainly in response to political mobilizations from disgruntled migrants and their families*" (Barber 2010:144). Rules and laws are persistently changed and introduced ever since trying to provide migrants with more rights towards these agencies. Throughout the interviews I conducted migrants were critical of this development though, as they know about the progress of these rights. These are often toothless: in reality migrants are asked to pay twice as much at least by agencies, but only receive the official bill for a part (Interview Randy, Zyra, Mabel).

Another reaction invoked by migrants' activism was according to Gurowitz (2000:870f) in 1987-88, as the Philippines government responded to the advocacy of a number of women's organisations by imposing a ban on the export of domestic labour while they negotiated with receiving states on the terms of employment. Minimum wage, maximum working hours, free return air fares and free medical services were agreed upon between the Philippine and the Malaysian government (ibid).

This example shows, that the Philippine government has in many cases tried to actually get involved with their migrants' well-being, sometimes only maybe half-heartedly, sometimes too reluctant. Nevertheless, migrants could be depicted as a collective force in the country's political decision-making, which showed effects in certain fields.

Citizenship Rights

> *The systematic reproduction of migrant domestics as non-citizens within the territories where they work and reside renders them in any meaningful sense stateless as far as access to state protection of their right is concerned. This is despite the formal retention of legal citizenship status accorded by their home country. This process of construction as non-citizens is also central to maintaining their vulnerability to abuse, violence and human rights violations. (Stasiulis/Bakan 1997:121)*

Ius soli means to acquire citizenship by the country of birth (Kofman et al. 2000:96). As many countries, particularly host countries don't apply it, some have put ius domicili in fact for those children, growing up in another country than their parents' national country, to decide for this citizenship in a later stage of their lives. Nevertheless citizenship is for a migrant her or himself among the last right to be gained in a country of residence (ibid:163). Citizenship rights are as a following among the highest negotiated rights of Filipin@ activists around the globe, in a field of purposeful exclusion of rights in accordance with globalised labour force, on the cost of the poor (Stasiulis/Bakan 1997:132). In many countries of emigration, Filipin@s and of course other nationalities have insisted on this basic right (Pratt 1999, Stasiulis/Bakan 1997). Nevertheless, the promise of later obtaining of citizenship is a mean of making people accept labour conditions which would not be applied to Canadians for example, as of the perspective to be one of the privileged one day (Pratt 1999:220). To obtain citizenship rights, includes obtaining full access to the rest of national rights in a political system, hence, fighting for it, is to be considered a highly political act.

Filipin@ migrants fight for their own and their kids' citizenship status in countries of residence. This is sometimes carried out in groups, organisations (See: DAWN) or other associations, but basically stays the act of will of the individual, who tries to enhance his or her life opportunities. As it questions predominant power structures, as a non-citizen is per se excluded from many rights, it is a major democratic act, which demands much political agency in some cases. Citizenship "*as a politically and socially constructed expression of the development of the advanced capitalist nation-state*" is an ideal of a relationship between a country and its people (Stasiulis/Bakan 1997:115), which is not always put into reality for all of a state's people. Especially left out are the ones which are separated by borders or nations denouncing immigrants as non-citizens. Stasiulis and Bakan conclude that it is hardest for non-citizen migrants to reach even low levels of citizenship as host countries tend to be reluctant to provide them with full equality and simply tend to accept this downside of globalisation. Nevertheless these women to them show active behaviour (ibid.:133).

While citizenship is a result of agency in this case, it is also tightly interwoven with democracy. The inclusiveness of citizenship shows the level of "*protected consultations by definition*" (Tilly 2000:5). While Filpin@ migrants fight for citizenship rights overseas, also the Philippine government has acknowledged the often 'bi'-national lives of its citizens and nowadays allows dual citizenship (Solomon 2009:297f).

External Voting Rights 1995

To Bauböck (2003:711ff) emigrants as extraterritorial residents should from a democratic point of view not necessarily be included in elections. To him, voting rights are not the whole picture (also Tilly 2000:5), but rather part and parcel of the protection of a country's citizens while abroad. Whether they actually should be entitled to vote, according to Bauböck should depend on their future plans of settling. If they do not intend on returning, external voting rights would mean to let people decide on the destiny of the nation's state and local populations from far. Also Itzigsohn and Villacrés (2008:683) are sceptical of the extension of such rights, people, who are not subject of the nation state's jurisdiction can determine the outcome of national votes. Vertovec (2004:938) is also critical but for the policies guided by the sending countries not actually aiming at the well-being of migrants, but of the benefits possible for the sending country through the investments of the migrant abroad. External voting rights

from this perspective look like one of the rights granted to migrants in order to keep them silent against the home government. While in the Philippines those that do not intend to return and reside permanently abroad or apply for citizenship are excluded from elections, also Guarnizo et al. 2003 state that "*incentives provided by sending countries are designed to maintain the loyalty of their expatriates and keep their remittances, investments, and political contributions flowing*" (1214). From all these perspectives external voting rights must not either represent democratic values nor ensure citizenship.

Nevertheless, in the Philippines, to gain overseas voting rights was considered a sensation by some of my interview partners as well as some of the authors cited. Particularly Kessler (2009:208) sees in this act the latest of the successful migrant advocated developments in the Philippine state. Also Piper (2009:49) brings up external voting rights as the biggest victory of migrant mass activism that resulted in a new act of state laws. Piper writes that in the same year a national law against human trafficking was passed which finally led to better diplomatic services for labour migrants abroad. Solomon (2009:297f) concludes that it was a long fight on the grass-roots level and among various migrant groups that led to the actual pass of the Absentee Voting Bill. He explicates that this law was followed by another similarly important one, the Dual Citizenship Bill. Migrants abroad are allowed to register while abroad and go to the ballots since then even when overseas. Nevertheless, only 234.000 were said to actually have voted in the first elections since this law was ratified (ibid.:298), while 358.660 had been registered (Comelec 2004). While the law was formally passed, critics say that in reality it still suppressed absentee voting, as often long travels to register and to vote in a following are necessary (Solomon 2009). Moreover, Filipin@s overseas often have very limited free time, so to attend the elections in the way it is currently organised is hard for many. Nevertheless, since these elections, media, politicians and other advocating group could not let migrants aside in their reporting and campaigning. Whether migrants actually vote for a policy inside the country or to make a statement against migrant exploitation for example, cannot be judged. As well, it cannot be judged yet, in how far OFWs currently are only due to the complexity of the voting process still rather lazy with attending votes. According to my interview partners discussions on the reformation of the Absentee Voting Bill are currently undertaken again.

4.5.   *Hong Kong as a special site of Filipina activism*

Hong Kong nowadays is a wealthy city(state) which provides people with economic chances and world trade, it is not a liberal democracy though (Kessler 2009:199). The freedom house index classifies the Special Administrative Region of Hong Kong as partly free with the third worst grading out of seven levels on political rights but the second best grading on civil liberties (Freedom House Hong Kong 2011). Among others they state that there is still no universal suffrage but "*some 200 000 'functional constituency' voters-representatives of various elite business and social sectors, many with close ties to Beijing-elect 600 of the committee's members*" (ibid.). The other 200 members of the unicameral Legislative Council are said to be allocated to religious representatives, delegates to the Chinese National People's Congress. This prevailing structure is called semi-democratic by Freedom House, taking into account that the institutions show no real democratic structures and especially the even stronger Chinese influence undermines the intended democratic reforms defined in 1984's Basic Law, but also the positive judgement of freedom of speech, press and publication. These are codified in Hong Kong's Basic Law, Hong Kong's initial constitution, as well as the aim of universal suffrage. (Freedom House Hong Kong 2011).

All in all one could expect though that there is no high chance of democratic proliferation or political remittances as the country at hands ranks similar in concerning this rating to the Philippines themselves but as we will see Hong Kong became a focal point of Filipino activism. One reason is that besides those formal aspects of democracy, which do not touch migrants too much anyway, it does nevertheless leave space for migrants to become politically active. Being one major receiving country in the region (besides Singapore and Malaysia) Hong Kong is the only place where such activities are indeed possible (Piper 2009:240). United Nation's CEDAW report points out the high amount of female civil society activities to protect human rights. Nevertheless CEDAW also includes a critique on the insufficient combat against domestic violence in Hong Kong (CEDAW 2006:2).

The Special Administrative Region (SAR) still lacks a democratic foundation but nevertheless provides opportunities for participation and a comparatively well-developed "*OFW civil society*" (Rother 2009:271). Even local Philippine unions, the Philippine Alliance for Progressive Labour (APL) sent organisers to Hong Kong to support the building up phase of migrant unionism on the ground (Rüland et al. 2009:176).

The amount of Filipinas in the country especially working as domestic helpers rose from a couple of hundred in the 1970s to more than 130 000 at the time of the article (Constable 2004:104). Filipina contract workers, particularly the bulk of workers, domestic workers, are excluded from obtaining permanent residency (Kessler 2009:185). Kessler describes that these workers were even left out in official population statistics as they were until 2007 not rated as 'workers', rather as trainees or the like (ibid.:186). Even though Filipin@ guest workers are not officially listed as labour migrants, they enjoy some labour rights that their home country would not provide them with like "*legally mandated days off*" (Margold 2004:51). To keep them in other types of visa has the disadvantage of enabling the country's employers of circumventing international labour rights like minimum wages or in the long run as we stated permanent residency or citizenship. Nevertheless Filipinas in Hong Kong abstrusely have a voting right on the local level[27] (Kessler 2009:185). On top Hong Kong did in the mid 1990s pay a minimum wage of 480US§, which was nevertheless higher than in any other Asian receiving country (Constable 2004:105). Filipino activists in Hong Kong have continuously and successfully fought for the maintenance of minimum wage and raised awareness for domestic worker issues abroad. Nevertheless in 2003 due to economic recession that riddled the middle class incomes, the battle for maintenance of minimum incomes was lost (Piper 2009:239).

In the 1980s the probably first Filipino migrant activism arose, targeted at the home government. "*Hong Kong has a long history of migrant NGOs and can perhaps be seen as the 'cradle of OFW' activism*" (Rother 2009:269f): United Filipinos in Hong Kong formed in 1985 as a political campaign against Marcos forcing remittances from his people. 1982 the Marcos government had tried to demand fifty per cent of the foreign workers' wages as remittances canalised through Philippine banks (Kessler 2009:205). According to Piper the first of a nowadays long list of transnational and transethnic NGOs, was set up by political refugees. The Migrant Forum in Asia, which has its headquarters in Manila became the most extensive network in the the whole of Asia (ibid.). Grassroots organisations like UNIFIL (United Filipinos), unions like the Filipino Migrant Worker's Union and advocacy leading NGOs such as the AMC, Asian Migrant Centre came up and joined in a common demand for better work conditions (Solomon 2009:293). Hong Kong is "*a notable exception (...) where a Philippine trade union has been involved in local organising of domestic workers into a union with support by the Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions (HKCTU)*" (Piper 2009:240). The joint fights of advocacy NGOs and unions is central in workers' rights demands in Hong Kong

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27 Further information see: http://www.immigrantvoting.org/World/HongKong.html.

(Kessler 2009:206). To some, women activists' protest is based on awareness heightened through the help of NGOs of global political inequalities and the transnational impact of other workers from affluent Asian states (Margold 2004:55). According to some, Filipina activism in Hong Kong is also a prime example for transnational support. Filipinas in Hong Kong co-operate with unions and NGOs in the Philippines as well as support protests like the Nepalese domestic workers' one against an immigration ban (Kessler 2009:205). Generally this has become a transnational fight, as Filipino domestic worker initiated Sri Lankan and Indonesians to do the same and the unite against the Hong Kong government but advocate their position towards their home governments individually (Piper 2009: 239). Due to the transnationalisation of workers' rights battles in Hong Kong, some see the city state as a "'*training ground for migrant worker activism.*"(Piper 2009:239)

The activities of Filipinas in Hong Kong led to Philippines' president candidates to realise its importance and after the external voting rights act was passed, they made campaign stops here (Barber 2004:149). It became part of the political agenda to support these migrants in their struggles for proper work contracts (ibid.).

Hong Kong is, as we saw, not a full-fledged democracy, still migrants made out ways to organise themselves and create grassroot organisations, NGOs, corporations and unions. Thus this country case contradicts the theory that democratisation happens if there is a well functioning democracy in the country of migration, rather it is the fact that migrant workers there noticed fields, gaps in the system and options to become pressure groups that led to democratisation. In this case, labour migration has big effects on democratisation, less as Rüland (et al. 2009:175) elaborate as critical awareness arises, but as its drive to political organising. Kessler (2009:206) concludes:

> *This example supports the thesis that it is not only the degree of democratic citizenship rights in the labour receiving country which determines the potential of success in the struggle for migrants' rights, but also the degree of democratic citizenship rights in the labour-sending countries. Furthermore, by organising other migrants and 'educating' them in exercising their civil rights, migrants may even affect the democratisation processes in third countries.*

Basically this chapter had one main purpose: To show that migrants in general and according to some authors, Filipin@ migrants in particular, do indeed have options of becoming politically active in host countries. Filipinas in Hong Kong have had a long tradition in the country and amounted large numbers, hence, became actively institutionalised with political networks. While they were excluded from permanent residency, Filipinas nevertheless spend many years

70

in SAR and develop profound knowledge of the circumstances on the ground. Given those favourable circumstances, Filipinas in Hong Kong managed to build up a transnational network, helping themselves and other nationalities to enforce their rights. Even if there is no specified data on the political consciousness of single Filipinas, the collective outcome shows their political strength.

4.6.   *Gender differences in politicisation*

This chapter by no means claims completeness in this issue, but rather includes some illustrative examples of gender differences in politicisation in combination with migration, as it is another widely underestimated aspect in migration theories. These examples include some studies on various countries, not only the Philippines. In most oft these studies the authors depicted that there are big differences in how men and women perceive their migration experience and what they – politically – make out of it.

Women tend to make more of a positive development throughout the migration process, while men tend to dislike the feeling of powerlessness in migration which they in many cases don't know from home (Jones-Correa 1998). Women, who are likelier than men to feel mistreated, abused or exploited in their families at home, actually may gain positive results from going abroad, as it gives them more freedoms in certain contexts (Oxfeld/Long 2004:8). It was also shown that women tend to remit money through different channels than those used by men and face troubles as well, but nevertheless through the fact of earning money for example increase their power through the migration experience. Dannecker (2005:665f) even found out that Bangladeshi women tend to say after their migration to Malaysia, that they felt more respected in migration, while they had lacked appropriated opportunities at home, which is why they would love to remigrate, whereas their male counterparts all favou being home and building up their businesses over going into migration again. Lachenmann (2009:93) points out about transnational women's movements that many circular, temporary and return migrant women are very active in this field, but often lack support at home.

Also with political or other forms of social engagement abroad, there are differences in the developments. Jones-Correa (1998) conducted a study on Latin American migrants in New York. He describes how the experience of migration means a loss of power and economic

strength for most male migrants while it has the opposite effect to female migrants. He explains that most female migrants from Latin America had not pursued money earning occupations in their homelands. As a following going abroad in order to make their living on their own, results in an increase to their financial independence and thus their power. While men face downward mobilisation in the job market and a loss of political and social power they might have had in their home country, women gain ground for action out of their increased ability for actions. Jones-Correa (1998:330ff) notices that by average migrant men have declining incomes after their arrival in the Unites States which may lead to their engagement in associations being oriented towards home. These home oriented organisations allow them to keep up their old status without being degraded by the new job in the new country or other unfavourable factors. Most men of his scope share this experience and the focus on a later return (ibid.:335). Here lies the big difference to the political engagement of women, according to the author, women tend to become organised in order to ameliorate the living conditions of themselves and their children in the new home. This leads to a new double-burden, which is why they are - other than men - driven to look for social welfare programs, get into contact with child supporting institutions and networks, as common child care is really expensive, and even turn to local or federal governments (Jones Correa 1998:336ff). Women subsequently tend to become active citizens. This does not automatically lead to them being politically active in a conventional sense that is focusing on the power structures in the country by entering parties, but by sharing their knowledge with their successors. After their entry point that pushes them into confrontation with American political institutions by getting into contact with the social service bureaucracies the next step to share this knowledge or to contact such institutions again seems smaller. Still the author acknowledges the fact that most women that become politically active abroad also had an elevated level of political activity before migration (ibid.:342). Kofman et al (2000:186f) depict the same difference in migrant politicisation. They conclude that women tend to push for integration and are less prone to return, while men rather long for their already acquired status at home, which they wish to return to.

Women may be able to renegotiate the decision making structures within their households due to their increased income but their family duties often remain (Constable 2004; Jones Correa 1998). Zontini (2010) argues that migrating can be a way for women to escape a bad marriage or unfortunate conditions at home by even doing something good for their families and finding a way out without being stigmatised for this decision.

From the Philippines since 1992 more females than males are officially hired abroad and they face different troubles to their male counterparts as they generally work in more vulnerable positions (Asis 2006) The job fields women choose – or are allocated to – often are domestic work, care-taking and nursing. Wide-scale female migration also paved the way for mother-hood discussions in the Philippines. According to Parreñas (2002:40) the Philippine president Ramos called on the migrating mothers to stay at home with her children. From an idealistic point of view it might hold true to be better for kids to have their mothers at home but in most cases it is exactly those women that make the living for the whole family under tense personal constraints that came under criticism. In the Philippines, more studies have been conducted on how migration effects children than how it may impact of marital relationships (Asis 2006b:88). Zontini (2010:110f) describes women's ambiguous position:

> Women give up their qualified jobs at home in order to take manual jobs in Europe for the well-being and futures of their children. Gender roles clearly play part here since it is the mother who is the one who has to 'sacrifice herself' for the family; her job is invari-ably considered more disposable than that of her husband (even if she is professional).

Dannecker (2005:658) argues, that among temporary labour migrants a transnational under-standing of the researcher is even more important, as these usually always plan to return home and thus their whole stay abroad is characterised by the circumstance, that they keep up their transnational relations. Most men in her study were occupied with transnational activities such as recruiting new labour migrants. "*Networks as well as transnational social practices and activities are not gender-neutral.*" (ibid.:659) In her study, women turned out to be de-nounced after their return for possible sexual promiscuity and not being trustworthy for mar-riage partners, which is, why most of the women considered going back abroad (ibid.:660). Despite their financial contribution to their families, also in this case family members at home saw potential shame for the family in the returning female migrant. While family members at home proudly show the investments and they could afford due to the male migrant, family members of a female migrant rather claimed to be worried about her being gone and that she might not find a husband afterwards, due to having lost her good reputation (ibid.:660). In-deed migrating females encounter another sex-related problem: pregnancy. In Stasiulis and Bakan (1997) article, it is mentioned, that migrants to Malaysia in case of pregnancy used to be deported.

Nevertheless, third-world women are a major contemporary global work force, but remain in-visible as they often are engaged in jobs which are usually hidden in the private sphere (Stasi-ulis/Bakan 1997:132). The authors conclude that the fact that women were often working in

the hidden, private sphere, rendered them more likely for wide-scale exploitation, as they were constructed as non-citizens. As was shown with other examples women also engaged in activities to ensure their own and their children's well-being, but the perspective needs to be broadened in order to make out these acts. While this chapter has the main focus of bringing in neglected aspects of theoretic approaches, it also proves again, that the definition of the political sphere in order to grasp migrant acts, has to be enlarged.

4.7.   *Conclusio from empirical studies*

Concluding with the empirical part one can state that the findings of the review of empirical researches was more telling than theories. Concerning the research questions no clear answer on political consciousness can be drawn from other studies than from the one of Rother (2009). Rother who did not find a clear favouritism of democracy over other system nevertheless had the result of many migrants valuing aspects of political freedom more after return than before going abroad, hence, soft indicators of democratisation. This might be partly resulting from the negative work and life conditions abroad and being somewhat locked up without many rights. He finds out that the number of those that were politically active slightly increased while the number of those that openly had democratic opinions slightly decreased.

In all examples in which agency among migrants could be detected, that is, only if the researchers focus on the visibility of migrants. Without this scope migrants tend to stay under represented and invisible out of the underlying structures. The main result of this chapter can be summarised that there is many ways of political activity when migrants, especially also from the Philippines, congregate. They might fight for their work rights (Kofman et al. 2000, Zontini 2010), as has also happened in Hong Kong on a broad base (Constable 2004, Kessler 2009), they might fight for their citizenship rights, as occurred for example in Canada (Stasiulis/Bakan 1997, Pratt 1999), or fight for their right to vote while abroad, as happened with Filipin@s broadly in the 1990s all over the world (Barber 2010, Piper 2009).

Concerning the connection between migration, local and transnational political activity and – democratic – outcomes, migrants' influence on their home country's politics were shown (Levit 1998, Levitt/Lamba-Nieves 2011, Basch et al. 1997, Piper/Courville 2004). Levitt (1998) and Levitt/Lamba-Nieves (2011) depict various kinds of social impacts of migrants in

the home countries. Piper (2009) approaches the topic of political remittances with a normative stance of increased democratisation in the whole migration process. While she also tries to find agency within pre-existent structures the normative stance of remittance this could not be shown by Rother (2009). Rother and also Levitt (1998) and Levitt and Lamba-Nieves (2011) rather depict that the norms transmitted cannot be classified as good or bad, as they don't obey the presumption that democracy is the best system. In Levitt's study, migrants contribute to political developments at home, but nevertheless also learned how to circumvent unfavourable laws. Gurowitz (2000) nevertheless shows that (migrant) civil society organisations heavily draw upon human rights in order to find legitimacy for their claims as the local right system does not provide them with a legal foundation for their goals. This always remains a fine line, in how far migrants can draw on international norms without losing national support for being denounced as 'Western'.

All in all, empirical studies show that migrant activism occurs in many different ways, such as approaching politicians and authorities for help, passing on knowledge of a system which otherwise is hard to adjust to for new migrants, challenging gender-related power structures within families and the most obvious stance, campaigning for external voting rights, sending money and other forms of support through hometown associations, mass protests such as in favour of migrant rights in the case of the Philippines after the death sentence of Flor Contemplacion. In the particular case some authors even claim that return migrants played the decisive role in the overthrow of an authoritarian system.

5. Field Study among Philippine Returnees

As stated above, in order to find clarifying material on the research questions I include a small scale of qualitative interviews, which mainly aim at collecting more personal data that focus on the research questions.

In the first part short information on the resident countries are provided as well as short content analyses of the interviews. These are mainly summarised to give a glimpse of my interview partners' experiences of migration and basic data, such as durance of stay and engagement in NGOs. The names of six out of eight interview partners are obscured by substitution as this was agreed on during the interview due to privacy of the interview partners.

In the last part, the interviews are analysed and interpreted. Here the answers of the interview partners were dissected along with theoretically deductive and inductive categories.

5.1. *Filipino returnees from various countries of migration*

5.1.1. Filipin@ returnees from Saudi Arabia

In total numbers Saudi Arabia is currently the first ranked country for Philippine temporary labour migration, as in 2010 there were 119,275 new hires, which is more than a third of all new job hires of Filipin@s overseas (POEA 2010:73). Beside Hong Kong, Saudi Arabia is moreover the second hot spot for Philippine nurses (Martin/Abella/Midgley 2004:1553). While the largest amount of workers go to Saudi Arabia to be employed with construction companies, it was around 9,000 people, mainly women, that went in order to work as midwives or nurses and more than 11,000 that went to work as domestic workers (POEA 2010:77f). Saudi Arabia is known for the fact that employers only pay as much as is necessary to win over overseas work force, as shown on the example of nurses by Ball (2004:129). By many Filipin@s a temporary phase of work in Saudi Arabia is considered transitional and to be used as a stepping stone into Europe (ibid.). Thus, most migrants she notes, try to persist in order to be able to apply for a better job in a different country afterwards.

Ball (2004:130) explains, that chances to defend themselves are very limited in Saudi Arabia. Even though the Philippines sustain in every country some migrant support organisation, the

Philippines's welfare centre in Saudi Arabia was according to Parreñas (2001:1138) being closed down because "*the Saudi government thought that providing shelter for runaway maids constituted foreign intervention in their internal affairs*" (Alcid 1994:176)[28]. In general the Philippine authorities lose their power as soon as migrants actually are in a different national system where these rules and laws simply out-rule Philippines' rights (Parreñas 2001:1138). Beside their subordinated job positions, many Filipin@s in Saudi Arabia might also find discrimination due to their religion (ibid.).

- **Mike**

Mike spent 25 years from 1980 until 2005 in Saudi Arabia. In these 25 years he found himself in a safe financial position with a job as a financial accountant. He was active in campaigns for external voting rights and in this context got in contact with a woman in Manila who he happened to found a migrant advocating NGO with, the Centre for Migrant Advocacy (CMA).

The first time Mike went to Saudi Arabia he had just finished his university degree and had happened to meet a Saudi guy in Manila who promised him a job. This entrepreneur handled all legal processes for him and within one month he arrived at his new work place. His individual reason for migration was his high ambitions, as the Philippines would not have offered enough opportunities. After his return he built up his own businesses.

– **Zyra**

Zyra, 25, returned from Saudi Arabia in 2008 after an ten month period of working as a caregiver. She went to Saudi Arabia in order to work as a cleaning woman with the prospect of free accommodation, food and water, but ended up with a violated contract and a salary of only 300$ a month as she explains. None of these expectations, written down and signed in her first contract had been fulfilled. The money for fer food, clothes, accommodation and water was deducted from fer salary and she was asked to do a different job.

In order to enhance her situation she took actions together with her co-workers. They were aiming at a better salary and work conditions. When they realised that this fight is highly possible to be lost, they asked MIGRANTE international to help them returning home, where Zyra continues the fight through MIGRANTE for the justice of her deceased friend and other migrants in trouble. Zyra finds explanations for their bad situation and resumes, it is stem-

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28 Alcid, Mary Lou (1994): Legal and Organizational Support Mechanisms for Foreign Workers. In: Noeleen Heyzer (et al.):The Trade in Domestic Workers: Causes, Mechanisms, and Consequences of International Migration. London: Zed Books. 161-177. Quoted by: Parreñas 2001.

ming from the migrants being powerless against those unfortunate structures, that again the government, in its turn, does not realise. Out of the missing job opportunities Zyra can also imagine going back abroad, and she feels empowered now after working at MIGRANTE. Nowadays, she thinks, she would be able to deal with such cases easier than the first time.

5.1.2. <u>Filipina returnees from Japan</u>

The interview partners returning from Japan were all approached through the NGO *Development Action for Women Network, DAWN*, situated in Manila. These are three women, who worked in Japan as so called entertainers, by the government referred to as "*overseas performing artists*" (OPAs) or as they further classify them, dancers, singers, musicians and other performing artists (Nuqui/Montanez 2004: vii). Rother (2009:268) describes the term "*OPA*" as euphemistic as the actual activities under this work title are highly tabooed in the Philippines. Those OPAs were only given three month tourist visa which were extended in the country after arrival. Thus they would neither meet the actual requirements of the ILO's definition of labour migrants nor did they automatically fall under national labour laws as they are listed as tourists. This fact leads to women not having any social, political or societal rights in their host country. What counts for them is only the rights and rules stated in the contracts. On top comes the problem all three women shared, that they were deprived of their salary at least partially until their return. Hence, if they would end their contracts early the agencies could claim that they did not fulfil their job so no money would have to be paid. One of my interview partners clearly states: "*This is why you always have to abide by their rules*" and indeed makes it even harder to just leave. Rüland et al. (2009:173) state that Philippine labour migration to Japan is partly controlled by the "*Yakuza, a mafia-type organisation*". This entails migrants finding themselves in a part of Japanese society where democracy and the rule of law are basically absent. Freedom House even states that Japan is a major site for "*forced labor and sexual exploitation*" (Freedom House Japan 2011).

Japan ranks second-highest among the host countries in this study on the democratic scale by Freedom House. Freedom of association and freedom of press – with the flaw of so called press clubs – are also highlighted (Freedom House Japan 2011). Minorities and migrants face discrimination although discrimination is prohibited by law. Also human rights abuses do still occur from side of the police. Merkel (2003:87) interestingly ranks Japan as "*polyarchy*",

which in his understanding (along with Dahl 1972 [1972], M.F.-S.) represent the best possible democracy so far by contrary to defective democracies, such as the Philippines.

– Mabel

Mabel, 37, went to Japan for six months to work as an entertainer. She came to DAWN as she was looking for support to obtain money from her son's Japanese father. She kept working there as the team was a great help to her and her son and now she wants to give something back to women who are in similar situations.

Mabel said that while the government had given her a visa as a singer, her actual job had nothing much to do with this title. Mabel said that due to the fact that they were deprived of parts of their salaries they had to be even sexier so Japanese men would spend a lot of money, which increases their tip.

– Claire

Claire, 37, went to Japan at the age of 21. She got in contact with DAWN years after returning from Japan, as she started to reflect herself, her actions and her problems at home connected to her labour migration experience. Right upon arrival her then Japanese boyfriend had helped her financially to build up her own business, a little Sari-Sari store but the wounds to overcome were bigger than what she could take without therapeutic help. She felt stigmatised in her home and there was no way in those days to go back to her initial plan of studying. On the one hand, she had debts as she had to pay much money for courses and the processing of her documents and on the other hand, her mind simply would not let her focus on her initial plan of becoming a teacher. This is one of the things, DAWN helped her with, as she managed to be happy with herself again and finally graduate in 2006. Nevertheless, she opted for staying with DAWN.

– Scarlett

Scarlett, 38, went to Japan ten times all together, having her first trip there at the age of 17, turning 18. She started working with DAWN a couple of years ago, because she was looking for support in order to get aliments for her Filipino-Japanese son. Before she went to Japan, she got preparation time in Manila so she knew the basic rights and risks before departure. Scarlett went on direct hire, which means without an intermediary agency, the first time but was lucky with the result as she did not face any troubles. She thinks this was mainly due to the fact that they went in a large group of acquaintances together with two accompanying

males. After that she only went with legal agencies, which usually worked out well, but there were always some, as she puts it *"insignificant violations"* to the contract. The biggest troubles she faced in Japan were when she got into rivalries with other Filipinas while working in Tokyo where the density of clubs in the male entertainment sector is big. Nevertheless, Scarlett can imagine going back to Japan one more time.

5.1.3. <u>Filipin@ returnees from Taiwan</u>

Merkel (2003:87) subsumes Taiwan to the highest category of his judgements of democracy in the region *"polyarchy"*. Merkel (2003:115ff) calls Taiwan the only country of the sample that after transition in the Third Wave of democratisations in the region actually turned into a full democracy with equal voting rights, minority rights, stable state institutions, a civil controlled military and a commitment to international norms such as human rights. Also Freedom House (Freedom House Taiwan 2011) calls the country free with only minor critiques on civil rights and including a free press. Opposite to the two countries shortly described above, there is not much literature on general working conditions for migrants in Taiwan. 27.845 labour migrants went to Taiwan in 2010 (POEA 2010:46). More than two third of them worked in the production field.

Taiwan adopted an active migrant income policy in 1992 which quickly led to the number increasing up to 344.000 in August 2009 (CEDAW 2009:1). This number is smaller than it was before the financial crises hitting in 2008. Fuchs, authoring the CEDAW report on Taiwan, points out some of the critical aspects of labour migration to Taiwan. Taiwan only wants temporary migrants and no immigration. Thus, migrants can only stay until a maximum of nine years,usually earning national minimum wage (ibid.:3). It is due to Taiwanese laws that migrant workers usually are obliged to stay in accommodations provided by their companies. In general, migrants are only allowed into the country if they go through the recruitment process of agencies and only obtain work permits for particular companies. Only in the case of physical or sexual abuse and illegal work conditions, migrants can circumvent this process and change to other companies. One result of this report is, that the number of migrants is increasingly being feminised and privatised with more migrants working as domestic workers. This increases the likeability of the problems mentioned above (ibid.:3). While migrants in the country are not allowed to form unions themselves, there is a high amount of NGOs providing support and information for migrant workers. This is an important activity due to the fact that most migrants lack information about their rights, which do indeed exist (ibid.:7).

– **Randy**[29]

Randy, 35, had spent all in all five years in Taiwan, working in the same textile factory. After his first contract had ended and he had returned to the Philippines, the company had directly requested him for two additional years. His agency strictly stuck to the contract, which meant much work under difficult conditions but overtime payments and the freedom to gain extra income in other jobs in different companies or farms. Randy realised during this first stay that Filipino workers spend much money on telephone cards from Taiwanese companies in order to stay in contact with their families, so together with a friend the second time in Taiwan he built up his own business selling such cards. This gave him an extra-income and was one way of enhancing his life circumstances in Taiwan. Upon return he had applied for funds from the NGO *Unlad Kabayan*, who helped him build a business, in which he uses old materials from tricycles to make slippers and bag-packs.

– **Tia**

Tia spent two periods of about three years in Taiwan. She was working in a textile factory, as a sewing machine operator. Within the first period, everything worked out well with a reasonable payment, but the second time the company violated the contract in many aspects. This started with the confiscation of her passport upon arrival and ended with an illegal termination of her job as she had complained about the unpaid salary. Out of this reason she tried to get help from the bureau of labour, a Filipino government organisation, Taiwanese government organisations and last but not least from NGOs. She ended up being supported by MIGRANTE international and Taiwanese local NGOs with filing a human-trafficking case and authorities that granted her a general work permit. From this background of becoming a member of MIGRANTE in Taiwan, she continued her work for the organisation in the Philippines.

5.1.4. <u>Filipino returnee from the Netherlands</u>

In 2010 only 14 migrants went to the Netherlands (POEA 2010:52). Thus, this country cannot be exemplary in any way. Levitt (1998) concluded with her example of the small village Miraflores, where basically all migrants had gone to the USA that this fact is indeed why social remittances could be tackled and why they may become important. With fourteen migrants - out of a total of about 9 million constantly abroad - going to one country, no distinctive influ-

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29 Randy's story is also published online on the homepage of his supporting NGO, Unlad Kabayan. See: http://www.unladkabayan.org/annual-report-2010.pdf.

ence on the country of origin will be possible to discern. Nevertheless, what is of interest is not this big influence, but rather the influence of the country on the migrant's attitudes and agency.

The Netherlands score highest when looking at all indicators provided in the table in the introductory chapter. They are described by Freedom House as free with an overall rating concerning political rights, civil liberties and also a free press (Freedom House Netherlands 2011). While the Netherlands formally have been a monarchy since the 1900s, they've also had a representative parliament for equally long (ibid.). People have all rights necessary for assembly, demonstrations and other expressions of opinions, which Welzel (2006) discusses as a necessary precondition for democracy and democratisation processes.

– **Sam**

The story of Sam, 35, was different to the other migrants' stories above. Sam had worked internationally on ships until he passed by Amsterdam, where he happened to meet people that invited him to work in their bed and breakfast in the city. He was not officially hired and did not have to go through any legal process in the Philippines. His whole migration experience in the Netherlands was unplanned and he did not even have a work permit. He simply happened to have an offer, which he liked, so he accepted it. Nevertheless he got into contact with IOM in order to help him with his repatriation and later with an NGO after return to support him building up his own business in the Philippines.

In order to increase the validity of qualitative data, it makes sense to take contrary cases into consideration and take alternative interpretations into consideration (Silverman 2006:271f). This holds especially true for the case of Sam, who went to the Netherlands, one of the oldest democracies in the world and did not take in any big interpretations of the system, other than the good life, as he says.

5.1.5. <u>Left out cases</u>.

Leaving aside the contrary cases by only focusing on telling ones, can be called "*anecdeotalism*" (Silverman 2006:44ff) and runs the risk of decreasing the validity of qualitative research. Nevertheless I left one case - beside the pilot ones - out in this summary which is the case of Rey, who was an immensely interesting interview partner, but did not meet the formal criteria, as turned out during the interview. Rey was left out because he did not migrate as a contract

labour worker, but fled the Philippines during the Marcos regime as a political refugee for being at risk for unionism. Thus, the very start of his migration biography was political activism. He has vast knowledge of labour rights and norms around the world and, for example, mentioned that it was far easier to organise workers unions in Europe, the Netherlands, than it was in the US. He was a port-worker in harbours in both the Netherlands and the US for some years, but always started gathering exploited workers again around him. His biography of being a union leader at home did not end with migrating. If this would not have been enough to exclude him from the analyses, the other aspect was that he had not even returned yet. At the stage when I met him, he was only living part time in the Philippines and part time still abroad to work. Rey is still politically active in a distinct way: he is part of catholic groups that go to locations where large demonstrations are held. He attends protests as soon as government repression is to be expected in various countries. Thus, his level of political activity, his long-lasting biography of political consciousness and the fact, that he had not yet returned fully to the Philippines, led to me leaving him out from the formal analysis.

5.2. Analysing and interpreting the data

5.2.1. Theoretic & inductive categories on work and life conditions abroad

– **Occupation, durance of stay, shelter**

While all three women from Japan had worked as dancers and entertainers always on short term contracts of six months and tourist visas, both migrants to Taiwan were working in the production of textiles on each a two year contract to be extended for another year during their stay. Mabel and Claire both only spent half a year abroad. Scarlett returned nine more times after her initial work trip to Japan. Tia and Randy both spent five years in Taiwan. All these migrants stayed in company houses or were sheltered somewhere close to the work place. Randy said that these places are not great, providing bunk beds and similar facilities, but it was better to him than having to spend much money on living. He complained that basically all workers there were Filipinos but still were required to pay for Chinese food, which Randy despised.

The migrants to Saudi Arabia were quite opposite to each other in their occupations, which can be derived from their gender but mainly their education level. Mike worked as an ac-

countant from the first day on which is by comparison to others a really lucky position as he points out. Zyra would have been supposed to work as a cleaner but ended up working as a care taker on a completely different contract than the one agreed on, for ten months. She lived together with her co-workers in a dormitory in the work place's cellar. Because their payments were so much less than expected they had troubles affording food, thus, often boiled tab water to drink it, which Zyra considers the reason for why a fellow worker of hers died of a disease, probably transmitted in Saudi tab water. Mike to the contrary stayed for 25 years altogether renting his own flat and living rather freely in the country.

Last but not least, Sam worked for three years in the Netherlands as a helper in a bed and breakfast.

– *"my agency was legal" (Mabel)*

Concerning agencies and legality of the migration process, out of the total of eight migrant stories, seven had entered their countries of migration with legal papers, through agencies listed at the POEA and only one stayed without official allowance documents and without an agency. But even those agencies listed as legal contributed to the migrants' contracts being breached. They did not intervene or support their clients when they had their passports and travel documents taken. Tia, Mabel, Claire and Scarlett stated that their passports were confiscated straight after arrival: "*2006 from there in airport, my brokers, they confiscate passports, right there*" (Tia). Mike, who had gone to Saudi Arabia twice with two different companies, said that he got what had been agreed on both times. He does not have any experiences with agencies though, as he only went by direct-hire. The only one who entirely lacked formal legalisation of his stay from the Philippines and the host country, was the migrant who had worked in the Netherlands for three years, "*I was there as a tourist. So to say*". Also the women who migrated for contracts of short term labour to Japan were listed as tourists. This means that they could spend three months in the country at first plus another six months by prolonging their contract.

- *"nonono I don't have a contract" (Sam)*

But a legal agency – or an agency listed with the POEA – does not ensure the compliance with contracts. In all of the cases that went abroad with the help of legally listed agencies,

there were at least some violations to the contracts. Scarlett remarks that there were only "*minor violations*". Claire, Randy and Mabel said that their contracts were broken in many regards such as working hours or payments. Zyra and Tia both said that their companies tried to force them to sign different contracts. Zyra and her co-workers in Saudi Arabia were given substitute contracts right upon arrival which did not include benefits which would have been included in the first contract like free accommodation, food and water supply but to the contrary only left them with about 300US$ a month. This is similar to what had happened to Tia in Taiwan during her second labour migration. About a year after arrival during her second visit, the company asked her to accept a contract which would have reduced her rights and financial gains. She strongly opposed these changes, but the majority of her co-workers just left.

In Randy's case who went to Taiwan the problems arose with the financial crises as he analyses. While the contract was first complied with, once the crises hit Taiwan, their companies tried to get more efficient and faster results out of each worker. Randy declined signing a new, but worse contract. Instead he returned home after that incident as he - particularly thinking of this family and health - did not want to accept these bad work conditions any longer. The number of workers was diminished to a minimum which increased the expected speed rate of every worker in the production chain of the textile factory

Mike, who went to Saudi Arabia on direct hire said, that his contracts were not great both times but reflected what had been agreed on. Again, the only one who did not have any written agreement on what his rights are and nevertheless enjoyed good work conditions, as he says, is Sam. Sam, who went to the Netherlands on a tourist visa had no residence or work permit.

– ***"The social life in Japan was, there is no social life" (Mabel)***

Talking about integration, basically all migrants said, that there was none. The only one who mentioned something that sounded like – mutual - cognition or at least some level of interaction with the local population that was not only in the context of employer and employee, was Randy. He stated that there was competitiveness between Taiwanese and Filipinos that their way of imposing themselves in the country was by being stronger and faster with work: "*We compete with the others there, we wanna show the Taiwanese, we can do that, we can do that (...) When we compete with the Taiwanese the respect will increase*". He said that he did not

happen to built up real friendships, but had a couple of nice contacts through work. The women who worked in Japan all said, that there was no kind of integration and friendships with Japanese other than their tacitly required Japanese boyfriends, "*dohan*". For Claire and Mabel it was literally impossible to leave their club houses without officially meeting these Japanese men. Scarlett knows that she would have been allowed to move freely, but working times were too extensive to find time for other things. Claire and Mabel both said, that they were not even able to move freely on their own. Excluded from free movement it was impossible for the migrants in Japan to find any kind of integration within the six short months of stay.

Also Mike stated, that there was no integration, even after 25 years in Saudi Arabia, as a Filipino he was not even close to being a member of society. He addressed difficulties in getting accustomed to the traditions and ways of life in Saudi Arabia in the beginning: "*the first two years were the hardest of my life*". It was easy to rent a flat and do similar things, but other than that there are not many ways of interacting with the local society. To meet Saudis privately he found particularly hard, partly due to the fact that the societal customs are so much stricter than in the Philippines, also in what concerns female family members.

To be brief, all interview partners found themselves rather marginalised abroad. Formal integration with learning the language, intermingling with locals was not possible for all of them and being accepted at eye-level was impossible to them. The differences between the interview partners are limited to the level of discrimination and the level of effective exclusion. While the women who only had short term contracts and bad work experiences in Japan and Saudi Arabia said that they did not speak the local language well, the ones who had been on labour migration for a longer period, could obtain some insights to the host society and learn the language.

Sam who worked in the Netherlands sounds different talking about his life abroad. He had met his employer by coincidence and they got along well. This was how he started working with them and had an acceptably good relationship.

- *"You don't have any political rights in Saudi Arabia. As a foreigner, you are no citizen" (Mike)*

All interview partners basically uttered the same opinion in this regard: There might be good labour rights in the country of migration, but they are not for migrants. Tia added about Taiwan that at least migrants don't get to enjoy all labour rights unless they fight for them.

The women in Japan had – due to the fact that they were judged as guests – no remarkable rights. Scarlett explains, that there is some social insurance, but in the total of five years in Japan, she never got a day of payment when she couldn't work due to being sick.

Even Mike said that as a Filipino in Saudi Arabia, there is no labour law that protects you and if anything ever happened, you would have to leave. He claimed that only one big controversy with his employer would have been sufficient for him to be deported. His integration in the system would not have been enough to gain a general residence permit or any other civil rights. "*You don't have any political rights in Saudi Arabia. As a foreigner, you are no citizen, and then you have virtually no political rights in Saudi Arabia (…) in Europe I would have already had my citizenship after 25 years!*" (Mike). Randy in Taiwan, who replied to my questions on integration with the statement that to be better with working than the Taiwanese, enlarges respect, also said that the labour rights in the company he worked at, were the same for everybody. He tells me that they even tried to include more Taiwanese workers but soon it was clear that the work was too hard for them.

– **Support from bureaucracies and agencies**

Zyra in Saudi Arabia who was also not free enough to move, nevertheless tried to approach her agency for help with the contract violations she had experienced. She said that she and her co-workers gave a formal complaint to their agency twice and both times "*they threw it in the trash-bin*". Also the Philippine embassy did not interfere. Theoretically the Philippine government also offers supportive offices in most countries of emigration. In practice migrants face various problems in approaching such authorities.

Some interview partners were not able to move free enough to contact offices or the Philippines' embassy in order to complain[30]. Mabel and Claire, who were not able to move freely also faced the problem that all their co-workers were first-timers, so there was nobody around to ask for advise or help.

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30 A particularly sad case I heard in one pilot-interview of a Filipina domestic worker as she was telling me that her Taiwanese employer had been locking her up, making her work seven days a week and using violence if she did not obey. The passport had been taken off her and she was not allowed to have her own keys. Luckily she told me that once in the building where they lived, as she went downstairs with the elevator in order to do the washing she encountered another Filipina who passed her situation on to the Philippine embassy. In this case, the embassy luckily took the case serious and two embassy workers rang her doorbell two days after the meeting in the elevator. Thy supported her repatriation without a passport, but she never could get all the outstanding payments from her employer, who insisted on her not having fulfilled the one year contract.

Most of the short term female labour migrants interviewed told me about the pre-departure seminars, with which the government tries to empower migrants to take action in case things go wrong. All but one also had the chance to take part in them. This, in theory strengthens migrant positions as all interviewees agree on. It is another aspect by which the role, the Philippines government plays in the process, can be made out, but as a matter of fact they would not even have had the option to go to these advised places or to claim these advised rights.

Last but not least there is one more interesting case of work and life experiences abroad which is the single migrant who went to Europe. This migrant was not enjoying any labour rights as he did not hold an official residence title or work permit in the country at the time he worked. Instead he happened to meet the owner of a guest house when he passed by the city in his original job, being "*a sailor*". The owner of the guest house offered him a job as general support on an unofficial base and Sam, who felt comfortable in Amsterdam, stayed. In the following, he spent three years working in this guest house, being paid enough money to save some.

- *"Discrimination is everywhere, you face it every day and they do it right in front of you, no matter what you see or think, they don't care whether you are hurt, or what" (Mike)*

Mike, who had spent 25 years in Saudi Arabia and speaks the local language said that besides the fact that there was no integration and no rights available for migrants like him, he had to face discrimination on a frequent rate. He claims that the position of Filipin@s in the country is better than the one of most other guest workers. By comparison to other non-Saudi Arabs and Western work force, Filipin@s are judged lower though he concludes.

Also the women in Japan felt discrimination. Their position in the country as entertainers Scarlett said, was widely known in the country, so also young boys in the streets would make silly comments right away and this activity was all they gained merit for in Japan. This even includes that "*runaways*", Filipinas who tried to escape their employer, were often found by the police and were actively returned. Thus, other Filipinas tried to keep distance, as this might shed a bad light on them as well. The two migrants from Taiwan and Sam from the Netherlands spoke of less apparent situations of discrimination.

– **Collectively stronger**

Scarlett, the Filipina who said that she has hardly ever faced any troubles in Japan, was lucky to go to Japan the first time in a circle of friends because like that she felt no fear. They were a group of 25 women accompanied by two men, who helped them to cope with club owners and uncomfortable guests. To the contrary, Scarlett tells me that the only time she actually faced troubles was when she went to Tokyo in her sixth time in Japan. This time the amount of Filipinas in the clubs was high and instead of having a friendly network, the women started carrying out rivalries. Mabel who labels her time in Japan "*really bad*" said that there was nobody she could ask for help or information, all co-workers were in the same position, overseas the first time, no passport on them and no allowance to leave the residence on their own. On top she complains about a lack of time, as they always had to work. The experience of having no free time was shared by most of the migrants. This also keeps migrants from integrating and building alliances. Tia, Zyra and Randy all told me that they tried to organise resistance to the worsening of work conditions. In case of Tia and Zyra it was actually a group of people trying to fight their employer's unrighteous acts, Randy said, that his co-workers opted for staying and accepting the hardships, as they did not want to disappoint their families.

Mike had a few international acquaintances who he met occasionally, but as a matter of fact, they did not seem to matter quite as much. He went home every once in a while to visit his family and had time to go on private journeys. He was building alliances when necessary but this aspect did not seem dominant for his comfort in the country. He only mentions some "*acquaintances*".

The opinions of Tia, Zyra, Claire, Mabel, Scarlett and Randy all coincided that the only place where they always could meet up with other migrants without being controlled or as Randy said, also without spending too much money for going out, was the local catholic church. Thus, even in cases where there was no actual network of friends, co-workers or colleagues close by, the church was there to give Filipin@s some kind of a home. This was on the one hand a spiritual home but on the other hand a place where they could exchange their experiences and maybe even find hints on how to deal with difficult situations.

5.2.2. <u>Theoretic & inductive categories on political participation during labour migration and after return</u>

− **Ways of enhancing work and life conditions abroad and at home**

The migrants interviewed applied many different ways of dealing with their problems. Temporary apathy could be detected as well as active attempts to tackle each problem on the spot. Particularly Mabel and Claire had returned from Japan feeling deterred in some ways. Claire had returned with financial debts as she couldn't make enough "*tips*" and Mabel was pregnant with her son. In the beginning they both returned feeling powerless and broken. Soon though they heard through other return migrants of the organisation DAWN, which is where they went in order to tackle their problems. Claire thought that her debts and bad experiences had been her own fault. Hence, at first she did not dare talking about her experiences and found no way of coping with them actively. She felt ashamed for having worked as an OPA, which was the feeling she only lost after intense work with DAWN. For Mabel it was more of the need to get money for her son from his Japanese father. Her child's father had during the first years also sent money and helped her to make her living but after a while he disappeared and only started to communicate with her and the child through DAWN.

Tia who experienced grief violations to her work contract in Taiwan tried to approach various organisations and authorities. Starting with the Philippines' overseas labour office in Taiwan, she was very disappointed, because they were "*inutile and useless*" and played down her complaint. After that, she sought support with the Taiwanese authorities. Besides these governmental organisations, she contacted a local NGO and " *the Taiwan chapter of MIGRANTE international*". Those organisations made it possible that she got a lawyer which stood up for her and her co-workers' rights. With this support they tried to fight their unjust termination as she tells me. Through the help of the NGOs the Taiwanese government ended up providing them with a general work permission and residence permit. Nevertheless, they found it hard to find a new job in the same field afterwards, as their story had been gossiped about, so employers were reluctant to accept them.

In general, most migrant biographies approached through the interviews (also in the left out cases and the pilot interviews), depicted some tactics in order to fight their own exploitation. On the individual level, Randy[31] for example managed to build up a second business selling

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31 Unlad Kabayan has annual reports online. The 2010 report contains a text box (p.8) on Randy's story:See: http://www.unladkabayan.org/annual-report-2010.pdf.

telephone cards, so his co-workers could choose between the Taiwanese and the Filipino provider, the former meant leaving more money to Taiwan. On top, Randy at the end of his second stay started a debate with his company about the expensive flight tickets to Manila, which the company usually provides their workers with by withdrawing the equivalent amount of money from their wage. Randy went as far to contact the embassy, which was reluctant to help. They warned him that by complaining, the likeability would be high to never be able to return to the same or a different company in the area. He nevertheless didn't give up and ended up having to take the more expensive flight, being given back the difference of prices in between the two flights after return. Randy did a third thing, which can be labelled active life enhancement. He made contact with members of the organisation Unlad Kabayan[32], which is a local Filipino NGO, that supports return migrants with small credits or other assets, so they can build up a business at home. Thus, Randy managed to return home, building up his own little business with producing shoes and bags out of the material of old bikes and tricycles.

Sam similarly to Randy had approached Unlad Kabayan after his return in order to build up a business at home. Mike, who had saved a lot of money managed to build up more than one own businesses after return and proudly states that he employs approximately 50 Filipin@s now.

- **Political activity abroad**

Mike, who also built up his own businesses after return, became politically active while in Saudi Arabia, but not towards his host country and not primarily for himself. "*In Saudi Arabia!? No, you get killed for that*" he rejects this idea when asked on political activism in SA. He states, that being in Saudi Arabia and seeing all the people, especially women suffer, made him become active. Thus, he started supporting Filipin@s throughout their deportations and also helped with the campaigns for overseas voting rights. He said being far away from home he started reading more information on his home country and politics at home. Everything he could get, he soaked in, soon feeling the urge to change things. Campaigning together with groups in the Philippines as the local player.

Also Tia mobilised all strengths and approached different authorities in the moment when there was a dispute between her and her co-workers with her company arising. After their

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32 Unlad Kabayan was founded by a woman called Maria Angela Villalba, who was already among the ones to buld up the Asian Migrant Center in 1989. See: http://www.unladkabayan.org/executive-director.html

wages had been cut, some had left already, some kept working without complaint and eleven did not want to leave their rights being violated like that. Having renounced signing a second, exploitive contract, the company had dismissed them. Noticing, that they wouldn't win this fight on their own, the group started taking steps of political participation. They called upon the Philippines's overseas government agency, the bureau of labour affairs and "*Danape*"[33], which ignored their complaint. Thus, Tia and her colleagues got in contact with local NGOs and MIGRANTE chapter, who informed them about their rights and engaged a lawyer for them. Tia says, it was through the help of these NGOs, that they could file a human trafficking case. After the group of migrants around Tia started this fight, the former employer contacted the bureau of labour affairs in Taiwan, whom Tia and her co-workers would have only been a number of many, if there hadn't been those local NGOs and MIGRANTE international who were reinforcing them to keep demanding their outstanding wage and helped them with the formal negotiations. The negotiations were not successful, so Tia and the other remaining ones, ten people, filed a "*blacklist case*" for this company. Throughout all these processes, the Philippine government agencies were observing, but not interfering, which is still one of the reasons why Tia harshly condemns their activities.

Zyra, who had a similar story with being forced into a different contract, also in a group of co-workers tried to enforce their rights. Her fight did not sound quite as successful though, as she said, their complaint went "*right in the trash bin*". Zyra nevertheless after return, asked for help at MIGRANTE international, where she is still fighting for her co-worker's rights.

The rest of the interviewed migrants did not tell any big stories of fighting for their own rights and none, like the Japan cases, joined the NGO after return when the desperation about not having succeeded with their migration period or with not receiving money from the Japanese fathers of their children was at its biggest. Sam did not mention to ever have fought for anything like worker's rights. The only time when he actually needed to find help to leave the country, he approached the necessary organisations nevertheless. Thus, he was aided by the International Organisation for Migration with his repatriation. Back home, he took asimilar step again, by asking Unlad Kabayan for financial support to build his own business. This was at the time of the interview still under process, as he had just returned.

Randy perfectly summarises the difficulties of political activity and in general raising one's voice for your own right in temporary contract migrant's situations with the following state-ment, which can be seen as substitute to what arose in most interviews:

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33 Comment of the author: The name of this office or organisation could not be discerned or found anywhere, thus, I cannot state, what this actually is.

Yes, yes, but it is very hard to change that status of the Filipinos there. Because we sign the contract before we even leave, and we can only stick to this contract. so we cannot say no, we pay a lot of money so we can go to Taiwan, So we are not gonna say, no, because before you can even leave, another contract another amendment, more money lost.

- ### *"I want to be an inspiration to others"*

The initiative for political activity or activity in NGOs came for different reasons with the interview partners. With many of the interview partners it was the longing to help others who are trapped in similar situations.

While Mike said it had to do with him seeing the sad sides of life, Zyra, Claire, Scarlett and Mabel all seem to rather have floated into this activity. They all went for help to transnationally acting migrant advocacy agencies and felt comfortable in this very place, in this community. Thus, they stayed. Claire nowadays is the head of the kid's theatre team, with which she even has gone back to her country of bad memories. She says, that this trip showed her, that half Japanese-half Filipino children are still considered to be people of a lower class, which is one of the things that make her saddest and keep her wanting to fight. She herself does not have a child, other than Mabel or Scarlett, but her own experience in general paired with the everyday injustices she sees that arose out of some women's short term labour migrations to Japan, make her long for justice. After having returned for three years and still feeling stigmatised Claire entered DAWN on recommendation of a friend, who has a half-Japanese child. There she received therapy and support. In the following, the young woman, who had been broken from her experiences, managed to obtain a degree and could theoretically work in a different job now, but she does not want to leave the office of DAWN, where she can help other migrants that had similar stories happen to them like those of herself: "*Here because I want to help more women and children, in my opinion if I stay here I will still continue to help and I want to be an inspiration to others*" (Claire).

Randy and Sam though, which may have to do with a less political NGO, are not such politicised people. Randy particularly thinks, that the importance lies in knowing where to go in order to get help. He claims that political activity, demonstrating and other forms of stating your disobedience in public, are only exclamations of helplessness which do not to address the problem in the right spot. He said, when fighting for his right when it came down to payment for his flight, or when their joint business was about to collapse also due to the financial crises and the smaller amount of Filipinos in Taiwan, he was the only one left, he was on his own.

Sam and Randy both are only actively involved in NGOs as they were asked to share their experiences.

Mike, who had seen all the grievances of other people while abroad, said that he had to go back home in order to help his country men. He had seen all that, knowing that he is one of the very few that is well off, so he started saving his money and when he returned in 2005, he started building up businesses. He proudly states that these businesses help those particularly women who would not have seen a chance in the Philippines of earning money and would have slid into the migration trap. Now he proudly stretches, they can stay closer to their families and friends and make the same amount of money, maybe even more than they would have in Saudi Arabia, for example. With this position, Mike does not automatically fall into a definition of political activity after return, as he was actually building his own business, making his own money, whilst taken into account, that he only left after so many years, because he wanted to help giving the same kind of people a chance, who he saw suffering, this actually is an immensely political act. He, himself is not going into politics or changing the society by taking structural decisions, but he tries to change the Philippines' society with his own hands, with his money, his own investments and his wit. Thus, his socio-political engagement lied in the one hand in getting engaged with the overseas voting campaigns, deportations of migrants, building up an NGO and on the other hand in returning in order to give his co-nationals a chance at home.

As a matter of fact, political activity, as we have seen in the two precedent chapters, has to be taken in a far broader context than formal political participation, such as votes, as migrants are per se derived from such rights. Mike started campaigning as he saw campaigns coming up world wide on Filipino's overseas voting rights, but also supported migrants directly when being deported and building up an advocacy centre. This might be a special form, as most other interview partners, wouldn't have had the strength to use their time on other people's rights, they were rather trapped in bad situations, trying to save themselves. Thus, when looking at Tia, Zyra, Claire, Mabel and Scarlett and their activities in NGOs, it was NGOs which first helped them and ended up turning them into active citizens.

5.2.3. Theoretic & inductive categories on political consciousness

– **Identity as a labour migrant / part of a societal group / politicised understanding of the own role in the same**

"*I cannot compare to other women, it is my story, my story only*", this is, what Mabel replies to being asked, whether she thinks if there is more people than her having similar problems. Randy claims it is those people who protest, that just don't know, where to go with their grievances, so if they knew how to address a problem, they wouldn't demonstrate. Or Mike saying, that he was one of the lucky ones, and the others, everybody wants to give it a try, everybody wants to test his or her luck, go abroad hoping it will be working out well. At first glance, these are very individualistic replies. This individualistic approach to their fate quickly faints though as soon as we talk about "migrants" as a group. Not with all of their utterances it is clear that they connect themselves to this group, but they do show a politicised understanding of the group of migrants. Thus, Zyra and Claire both brought up clear statements of collectivity realisation. Right after their migration experiences they thought, that their problems were unique, that their problems were seldom or like Claire, who even has to feel ashamed for them. Claire points out that it took until her entry with DAWN that she realised she is not a special case, but one of many, who were suffering from similar problems. "*When I came back here in the Philippines, I realise, that the problem is the same for many Filipinos, not only me, who did not get a good job or enough money.*" (Zyra)

Talking about why Filipin@s have to go abroad, or who they fought for when complaining about their wage, their answers changed into more collective statements. Talking about her own experiences with temporary labour migration, Mabel assesses, that "*the sad thing is the government keeps calling these migrants heroes and encourage people working abroad*". Or Mike calling on the other migrants to also become active for the sake of the country:

> *if everybody had the same luck I had, like you know, I worked in Saudi Arabia, took everything I had when I worked in Saudi Arabia back to the Philippines, and started my businesses and it worked. Where is the other migrants? I know, there are so many people who are abroad can't even save anything, they only need all their money to pay off their daily needs, their daily living, not having anything (...) But I am only one, and now there is some fifty people depending on me for their jobs and stuff. So this was me alone with my savings from working abroad. (Mike)*

While Mike also says, that his reason to leave for Saudi Arabia was to be too ambitious, not wanting to afford being stuck and Sam, who had taken his initial job as a seafarer for his family, but only ended up in the Netherlands, all the others, all the women and Randy said, that

they did it for their families. They agree that millions of Filipin@s accept the hardships of going abroad for their families, sometimes for their own career, because they see no chances at home. Thus, they express understanding for the fact, that they are all one but all suffering from the same problem, the same reasons and structures. While the common problems abroad have been approached in depth in the upper chapters, common explanations are going to be discussed below.

– **Knowledge and judgement of the system abroad and at home after return:**

The knowledge and judgement of the system abroad logically differed with the length of stay but as it occurs, with the amount of interest, a person showed during travelling and last but not least with the freedom to move. The scale reaches on the highly informed side, from Mike to Sam, who being asked, what the political system in the Netherlands is, replies, "*I think they have a queen*" and leaves it with that. Mike on the other side, tells about the political system, the labour law in general, the reasons for why he thinks a revolution in Saudi Arabia is not going to take place like it did in some countries of the region during the "Arab spring". Then there is Randy, who as well shows a considerable level of information on the social system and national development of Taiwan. He shares his knowledge about economic reforms as well as societal problems, such as the high stress children to his mind suffer from, as they have to bring their best in schools and all parents and kids work hard for their nations' wealth or the Taiwanese government role in enforcing investments. While he finds the government and economy far more efficient in Taiwan he claims, that people in the Philippines are probably still happier, because they are together and they know how to enjoy their lives.

While the male interview partners of the scope all had spent longer times abroad and hence, knew more about the countries, Zyra, Claire, Mabel and Scarlett all were rather excluded from seeing much of the country. They were bound to strict, exploitive contracts, that neither left time nor money to them for travelling or meeting locals, other than their customers. Their political consciousness might draw to a higher degree from the activity in NGOs – a consequence of exploitation as well – than from the migration experience. Nevertheless basically all the interview partners – excluded Sam – showed similar ideas on the Philippines after return. All returnees seemed to find the respective receiving country "*better*" by comparison to the Philippines.

They said that corruption in the Philippines is big and the governments even though they might try to make good laws are helpless against this large amount of corruption. This corruption to their minds is based on some people in the government and other parts of the state apparatus being corrupt. While Mabel says that from the perspective of laws and rules they do all they can and actually react to migrants' experiences, slowly but still. Tia calls the government "*useless and inutile*" which is based on her being completely ignored by the Philippine government in her attempts to find justice in the process of losing her employment. She sees it as part of corruptive ways that migrants have to pay money to the government before they leave without ever getting it back. Nobody knows where the money goes to, she complains. There would be big amounts of it, but she doubts that this money actually would still be there for migrants. It is part of this whole system she thinks that they don't provide everybody with the information needed to get financial benefits after return.

All migrants talk about the high amount of corruption in the country. Mike who returned with good ambitions and a reasonable stock of money, shows the government's tendency to reinforce corruption even in the little people. After he opened up his businesses, the authorities approached him over and over again to demand different things. Asking for things, that his company would need to have, such as a manager, a safety advisor and so on, knowing that he won't be able to comply with, they asked for money instead. Mike says, that he would have wanted to do normal business, provide people with jobs, and pay taxes in the amount that's necessary, but he says, "*if I would have known this before, if I would have had any chance to expect this, I would not have come back*". At the same time he observes law cases with big companies, that did not protect labour rights or the like, who simply get away because they can afford "*an army of lawyers*" or "*friends in the government*", which little ones like him can't.

– **Perception of structural internal and international inequalities**

Nearly all of the migrants stipulate that it is the Philippines' fault to leave such a big mass poor and uneducated and very few rich, so that people have to leave. Even Mabel, who showed such individualistic approaches to the complex migration phenomenon sees in the fact, that it is so often Filipin@s working abroad, injustices, which she cannot grasp: "*Why is it always Filipinas that have to go abroad and suffer from all this?! This is very unfair*". Also Mike, who claims that Filipin@s have always been an active, mobile people, admits, that the system is not fair, because it traps Filipinas abroad in such countries like Saudi Arabia by only

giving them the absolute minimum wage, but always a little bit more than what they would get at home for the job.

"*Filipinos know about being exploited (...) yes, we know!*", Randy uncompromisingly judges the situation. But what is the alternative, he asks? To stay behind at home and not be able to acquire any wealth, to not be able to buy off a house or to be work-less? The Philippines are a poor country with far too many children, as Randy analyses, along with his experience in one-child-policy Taiwan, that could not possibly pay the same benefits to families like Taiwan does. Mike goes so far to state, that to him it appears like part of Filipino lifestyle, to go abroad and save money to escape poverty. Filipin@s accept the hardships, hoping for the better. Nevertheless, Mike says, "*yeah, it is a cycle, they have no chance because there is no proper system that gives them chances to good education to afford. So they have no useful education to find work with and no work leads to them looking for alternatives*".

In the Philippines there is hardly any option for the common people. You stem from a wealthy family, or you are poor and stay poor, or you try and get somebody of your family to migrate. This is the common tone. "*The rich get richer and the poor get poorer, it is so unfair!*" is how Mike judges the common development during the last years. He additionally claims, that democracy did not work well for them, as it only gave rise to such rich families and the poor ones are not even able to take part in the process and make their gains, but the opposite may be the case:

> *just because the rich ones can commit crimes and buy themselves out of it with lawyers? (...) redistribution? (...) then they have company lawyers that fight for them and they usually win. So no, the poor don't get much of their money (...) Yes, well, it would be okay, if those companies would be having their businesses, give people jobs and redistribute parts of their profits but the opposite is the case, they try to not have too elevated wages and make much profit, in order to get this profit out of the country.*

It can be judged as a sign of especially high level of political consciousness, if people also anticipate solutions: "*It would be better if this money, the profit goes back into the economy. If you make very small people owners of companies, giving opportunities to others. And they distribute the profit locally then it is good for the economy and you can get money out of it*" (Mike). Claire thinks, what poor people are missing are the options to take free decisions on whether they want to go abroad or take different paths. "*Filipino people have no choice, they either go abroad or they don't earn enough*" (Claire). Currently though, as all of the interviewed migrants agree, the system pushes people out without showing them any alternative. Thus, Claire summarises, in how far DAWN tries to change this perspective, along with what was described on Mike's socio-political engagement mentioned above:

> *So I think DAWN is now in 15 years, so our main work is to help them who ask and to open opportunities, to help thinking of the way out, one of our saying is migration is an option. But because of the reality here in the Philippines, it is the people are still going out, they do the work for their families, (Claire)*

Last but not least, Claire points out, that the dependence of the Philippine state from remittances also leads to dependence of the Philippine state from other countries. Depending on the money and the work sites abroad, the Philippines as a country are even more reluctant to support their workers abroad, so they don't appear as a threat to the companies that actually give those people jobs.

– **Opinions on the political system and the Philippine government after return**

Of the interview partners all but two were extremely critical of the role the Filipino government plays in the migration process and in developing the country in general. While Mabel is the only one to say, "*yes, they do everything*" and Scarlett and Sam admit that they don't know, all others said, that the government does not contribute enough to the migrants' well being, neither protecting them while abroad nor helping them impose their rights after return.

The government tries to get money out of migrants, they make you pay for your documents, your visa, the processing and some taxes is a common perception I get to know during the interviews. Scarlett, who does not want to judge the government, still states, that "*when she compares her experiences every time she goes to Japan, there was always changes in the requirements. So if you will be going to get a new passport every three years*". There were different cards for each episode, once the title was labelled dancer, the next time singer and the third time overseas performing artist. All these titles meant to apply for certain visas, pay certain fees, do certain pre-departure seminars. All this costs money, and money is the one thing they actually would want to earn, but not spend on government made structures. Tia is even more harsh when disqualifying the Filipino government: "*It is absolutely inutile, useless and disgusting. They do nothing, they only want our money*". Migrants, she says, have to pay a fee to be part of the protected OFW community, which

> *is legal. You have to pay it before you leave and after you have a two-years contract finished, when it is over and you have to extent because you want to stay another year, you have to pay it again. And those OFWs that did not know this and did not pay then you are not a member of the Philippine government any more, so when OFWs go into troubles, they cannot get any help, because they are not seen as members any more (...) No, as I said, it doesn't help anyway. Nothing, it's useless. All they ask us for, is money, they take money, wherever possible. (...) (Tia)*

Also Randy points out, that the government does not create the right structures for migrants to actually complain or file a case. As the complaint court is only in Manila, it is again a question of money, whether it makes sense to get on this trip. Living on an island, Randy, decided against filing a case against his agency, which did not help him while being exploited during his last years in Taiwan.

Migrants seem to develop a high level of disagreement with their government, as it left them disappointed after return. Tia and Zyra were not even helped when asking for support, Mike felt exploited as an entrepreneur of middle sized businesses and Randy states, that the government only thinks of the structures of how to get people out, but not on how to support them once they returned, especially not, if they are in distress or are missing their money- The price to get to and from the place of actual trials would be such a financial loss, that it keeps people from filing cases. Claire was disappointed, that she had to experience such bad things, knowing that there is millions of other Filipinas out there making similar experiences, but the government keeps calling these people heroes and simply keeps depending on these migrants' remittances.

As was mentioned above, they reproach to the government to not intervene enough with migrants' problems and being scared of international diplomatic conflicts. Zyra tells me that currently the topic of the "Arab spring" is of interest, as the government does not repatriate its citizens but instead refrains from condemning Arab leaders, which the whole world had already done. Claire, Mike and Randy particularly claim, that it would not be that easy to withdraw from this system. They see the international power structures, the Philippine dependence but also the internal structures in the receiving states which keep demanding more migrant influx. As long as the Philippines don't provide people at home with the socio-economic structures to attract its citizens, people are going to keep going abroad.

Asked about their political views particularly on the systems abroad and at home, they hardly ever said, that they know how to judge it. Democracy as an ideal was there but they said that the Philippine country missed out on so many things they would need to provide in order to have people as active parts of democracy. To gain more insights on their judgements of the system, it was more telling, speaking about the government as a personification of the state. There they elaborated in how far the Philippines lack securities, accessible funds and rights in order to provide equal access for all. Particularly Tia complains that there are financial funds for returnees in difficulties, but the government does not advertise them, so people would not know unless they are coached by NGOs or other informants.

All in all, most of the women in NGOs tended to say that they would not know a better system yet and that they don't want to go back to the authoritarian regime they'd either seen themselves or hear about from their parents. Nevertheless, the ways that democracy in the Philippines show, also don't quite appeal to them. Currently, especially the women from DAWN had high hopes in the new government. All the governments before had treated migrants in similarly bad ways, so they were disappointed with the system that determined their lives, but maybe the new government will be better, they said.

While Randy, Sam, Tia, Zyra, Claire, Mabel and Scarlett all stated that democracy is the system they want and that they can imagine to be good for them, Mike rather to the opposite sounds dismissive. He gets critical when talking about political activity in general or the demonstrations against Marcos in the 1980s, when asked about his political views he states, that a good leader could do good to the Philippines, at the moment, the country rather suffers from too much democracy than advantages for the people. It does not matter which political system it is, as long as it changes the inequalities and ends the massive corruption in the country, is what some of them specify.

– **Knowledge of rights, laws and their own opportunities [human rights and (legal) empowerment]**

Talking about their rights abroad, all migrants only referred to their contracts. In the Philippine labour export system, people get a contract before they leave and if this contract is also complied with during their stay abroad, they seemed to be satisfied. Asking, what their rights exactly were, they never answered with human rights or international labour standards. Rather the answer seems that it

> *is easy to know, if you sign a contract when you come to the country first, then if they pay you less and make you sign that it is a violation to our rights, our rights is the contract and to make a contract substitution in a situation, when we cannot defend ourselves, because we are there and have to comply with, this is a violation of our rights (Tia)*

In most of the cases, other than the returnees from Taiwan, the interview partners said about labour rights, that they seem to be good in the host country, but that they exclusively are for citizens. The women in Japan, Zyra in Saudi Arabia and Sam in the Netherlands could only take a glimpse of legal workers' rights while abroad. Even Mike stated about Saudi Arabia, that the workers' rights would have been good, but not for him as a migrant. His destiny in the profession simply depended on his boss. If he would have ever been unsatisfied with him, he

would have been deported, this is how he perceives migrants' rights abroad. Thus, migrants had an idea of rights, but did not have access while abroad.

– **Perceptions of connection between migration history and political attitude**

I thought not everything is good, but then, after I left and I felt it on my body, I realise, I become aware, I did not know it that well before. And then through the help of MI-GRANTE international I start realising the role of the Philippine government, of the rights and laws that do exist but are not used in favour of the people, that the Philippine government could act more. And I know now, how to interact with this useless government. (Tia)

As we have seen in the biographies above, most women, namely Mabel, Claire, Tia and Zyra underwent hard times abroad, but after their respective returns, out of slightly differing reasons and in as well differing ways, they entered Filipino migrant advocacy NGOs. There, they were supported to gain self confidence in different ways. Claire said, that she only understood, that she is not the only one who returned from migrating without big savings and with an ambivalent reputation, after she entered the NGO, DAWN. Her, as well as Mabel state, that now, after having been there for a couple of years, they want to be an inspiration to others, they want to see all other women, who might possibly migrate or come back, empowered, so they can enforce their rights like in this specific case, financial support for their Japanese children. Tia and Zyra use similar wording when talking about their aims in their NGO activity. They want decent work circumstances for all and are willing to stand up for this right. Tia points out, that the laws and rights would exist, but the poor and the disadvantaged among the returnees don't even know, that there would be actual funds waiting for them, or human rights, which are applied to all. Mabel concludes this point:

No, (...) but now i know more about humans rights, women's rights, violations, human trafficking (...) we at DAWN keep on encouraging them to participation (...) DAWN tries to empower women, we try to make them know.

Tia explains that no state authority, approaches them to give them the information they lack. It is only through the help of organisations like MIGRANTE international, Tia explicates, that those people realise their rights. It is also often only with the help of MIGRANTE that these people actually manage to successfully interact with authorities, who often tend to be ignorant as Tia knows from her own example. Also Zyra points out that having experienced the things she did, she had the urge to share them and support others:

all of us did have problems when we were abroad, we are all Filipinas that come home and want to share what has happened and help those that suffer more than us.(...) We dont stay here for money (...) because of ... lots of problems, lots of rights of migrants or human rights that have not been protected, so this is why MIGRANTE is here. (Zyra)

102

A particularly telling case in this regard is Mike, who ended up being supportive for Filipin@s being deported, building up the NGO Centre for Migrant Advocacy together with a friend in Manila and leading the campaign for overseas voting rights for OFWs. He claims that from far, he got a better view on the problems at home, he surveyed the news and got informed and involved, which he had not done before his migration.

> *Filipinos abroad are even more aware of what is happening in the Philippines than the Filipinos in the Philippines, when I was abroad I read many articles, many newspapers about here published in the Philippines through the Internet, it is sometimes clearer to see things from the distance. Through the internet, or newspapers, when I am in Manila (...) I don't listen tot he radio, I don't know what is going on, what is happening. (Mike)*

Also Mike, who did not face troubles himself said, that being abroad showed him aspects of migration which he wanted to change. He did not talk of being an inspiration to others but rather said that he, in his privileged position, wanted to start supporting Filipin@s at home himself:

> *But the money I earned could not be enough, I began to question myself, so I had to quit, then I wanted to come home, no I had to go back, to help the country, develop the country, help the Filipinos especially, the women, because, you know, in Saudi Arabia especially, I saw how bad their position is, which is why I got active. When I go home, I could be doing something, not much, but something.*

These statements show, how clearly their political consciousness is connected to their migration experience. The longing to share and to be an inspiration to others was uttered by all of the migrants. They shared the perception that people go abroad for their families without anticipating the severity of grievances that await them. They are startled and sometimes helpless at first, but make their ways out of these situations. While this, as will be discussed below, can be understood as aspects of increased agency, it does nevertheless not reflect an increase in democratic attitudes throughout migration. To the contrary, the return migrants in this study were rather critical of the Philippines' governments.

6. Discussing the findings

6.1. *Political consciousness among return migrants in the Philippines*

Political consciousness among returnees in this study could be seen as being high or critical, as various factors coincide. Recalling chapter 2.5 *Definitions in use,* political consciousness in this research consists of the following factors: a (politicised) identification of oneself as a labour migrant, that belongs to a specific societal group, which is suffering from illegitimate structural disparities and finds himself or herself in a subordinate position, which to the person's opinion could and should be resisted to. In order to judge a person's political consciousness critical reasoning such as reflected ideals of society should be anticipated that may draw from structural, national or international norms in order to find ground for possible (political) ways of enhancing one's own life situation and challenging persisting power structures influencing the collectives relevant to the person. Regarding this last point, Ijzendoorn (1979) had figured out sociological fantasy and historical consciousness as central aspects of how to find ways of judging recent developments and – normatively – includes human rights as a possible base for arguing against (anticipated) illegitimate situations. Particularly if judged by Ijzendorn's (1979) stages of political consciousness, most of the interview partners could be considered as critical or post-conventional. In Ijzendoorn's terms at least half of the migrants had developed post-conventional consciousness which means that they anticipated different rules and structures to what the state provides its citizens with.

Different aspects of political consciousness could be detected among the interview partners. Discussing the aspect of a common perception of a joint societal group, the migrants' identification with this group and a perception of subordination, all migrants showed clear hints of this aspect of political consciousness. The variety ranged from seeing Filipina women as always being the ones who have to experience such things to the rhetoric question of where all the other migrants are, meaning that far more returning migrants would have the capacities to use their knowledge and money to impact on the home system. All agreed, that migrants in the Philippines share many facets, such as accepting humiliating work conditions because of doing it for their families. They remark common constraints from the side of the state that lead to them having to even dare emigrating. All had developed some kind of sense for the collectivity of their problems and its possible cures, as they said, that they either want to act-

ively help people finding other options in what concerns work and education in the Philippines or be an inspiration to others, who experience similar problems.

Most of the interview partners showed critical opinions on the structures abroad and especially at home, which were responsible for their critical situations as labour migrants. They particularly highlighted illegitimate structures in their home country, the Philippines. This may not seem extraordinary in my data, when brought into relation to Rother's (2009) research who found out that all of his 1000 interviewed migrants were more critical of their home country than of their host country after return. All migrants in his study tended to accentuate the positives of their respective host countries. Also in my data, migrants highlighted the positive aspects of their country of emigration. When it comes to corruption, all agreed that corruption in the Philippines was far too high, while in the receiving country it was perceived lower. Levitt and Nyberg-Sørensen (2004:9) observe that most migrants have "*corruption*" first on their lips when talking about home politics. Believing in what the non-governmental anti-corruption organisation Transparency International concludes in its studies, all the receiving countries in this study were less corrupt than the Philippines.

In most cases the interview partners perceived the rights that citizens enjoy in the countries of migration as high. They stretched the rights countries provide their citizens with, the vast range of social rights particularly. They relativised this judgement with their own experiences exclusion, but this seemed to be of less importance. Nevertheless, while those that judged their stay abroad positively – irrespective of its (il)legality – also had better notions of this receiving country and the structures within. Those who suffered severe (human) rights violations, were very critical about the role of the political system in the host country. They stated that while the host countries' offer good living conditions for their citizens, migrants are excluded. Nevertheless, in this regard most migrants seem to draw more on their experiences with their agencies and employers than on the actual political system of the country. Nevertheless, basically all of the migrants drew an exact line in between their own experiences in a receiving country and the country itself; a line between citizens and non-citizens. Thus, the main influence on migrants' lives was not the political system abroad, but the employing company and the organising agency.

Judgements of the host country also depends highly on the length of the stay. Similar to what Cerase (1974) found out, those that returned after less than a year reflected returns of failure. Only those that can afford being innovative return - after a usually longer period – to become active at home in some regard. Of the four migrants in my scope stayed longer than 3 years,

all but one returned in order to build up businesses at home, one of them with the declared aim of opposing unfair structures at home. Thus, these three migrants could be termed returns of innovation. Also, the more freedom the people gained the more they could get to know and get to like their countries of migration.

Coming to illegitimate home structures migrants figured out, also many different views were expressed. Critical consciousness about general practices in the Philippines, such as discrimination because of age were stated. Concerning the economic sphere, the interview partners remarked that unequal power structures were responsible for the enlarging gap between rich and poor in the Philippines. Most migrants interviewed used their experiences and knowledge – also based on work in NGOs - in order to present their ideas of alternatives to the ruling economic system, including industrialisation, the creation of jobs, the renationalisation of the Philippine economy and a decrease in corruption. On the side of the government, they showed awareness about financial benefits the state draws from migrants and about the fact, that the government intends to keep the system stable instead of investing in the local economy to end large-scale emigration. There are rules in the country such as the biannual reissuing of passports or the obligatory payments into the "*OFW-fund*" as my interview partner called it, that were presented as examples. This was only one of the examples brought up on how the successive governments were letting migrants down and took use of them.

This goes along with the perception that the government does not actually do much in order to protect their citizens. The interview partners criticised that the government always stays in its subordinated position to host countries, not trying to defend their citizens. The fact that they criticise this aspect as well as the fact that the government on purpose does not interfere with migrants' problems due to this aspect proves returnees' awareness of their rights as citizens, labour migrants and - in some cases - also as subjects to human rights. Instead, they name different ways, in which the government of the sending and host countries did not provide them with sufficient rights in these regards.

Most interviewed return migrants in this study criticised, that the government reinforces the above mentioned structures by withdrawing from diplomatic conflicts. Especially in the case of the so called Arab spring, the Philippine government did not decide on repatriating their citizens or condemning the Libyan regime at a stage, when many other nations already had saved their citizens. The migrants showed awareness for the fact, that in the Philippines NGOs equal out these government flaws. The role of NGOs is judged in different ways, as will be discussed below.

Additionally, the interviewees remarked, that the Philippines are a democracy, but that the system does not properly work because some - often the poor ones and returned migrants with troubles - are excluded from central institutions. One interview partner explained that there was a court where migrants could file cases of exploitation during labour migration, but as this court is situated in Manila, most migrants could not afford travelling back and forth. As well those returnees working in NGOs knew that many rights or favourable institutions for return migrants indeed exist, but the migrants are not provided with this information. While pre-departure seminars are offered to all, post-arrival information is scarce. There would be ways of finding financial support or law assistance in case of exploitation for (return) migrants, but as we saw in many cases, the state institutions are reluctant to actually interfere. This, the migrants explicated, results from the government's fear of losing employment opportunities abroad, which would increase unemployment and reduce incoming remittances. Those interview partners working in *DAWN* or *MIGRANTE* support other returnees nowadays with finding their way through the bureaucratic agencies of support.

The notable rise in political consciousness occurred due to the experience of exploitation in migration. My interview partners stretched that they needed to experience these hardships on their own in order to feel the need to oppose them. While all of my interview partners regularly had attended votes before going abroad, they had not taken part in any demonstrations or protest forms before going abroad. Except for one claiming, that he knew he would be exploited before leaving, all said, that the severity of human rights violations and the lack of income, justice and support rather startled them. Especially among the women I interviewed, most said, that they thought of returning sooner due to the hardships, but were kept from doing so by financial constraints. The migrants figured out, that financial constraints such as the retention of wages were a way of tying them to these illegitimate structures.

Some interviewees tried to find ways to stand up for their rights while abroad, others returned depressed and powerless, but found information and the initiative to defend themselves with the help of NGOs back home. In this study five women had returned seeking help with NGOs in the course of returning or after return, two men had applied for return migrant financial support to build up a business and one man actually founded a migrant-advocating organisation himself. It can be assumed that all of them were at least partly influenced by this activity in their opinions and recommendations on what the Philippines as a state should change in order to enhance migrants' positions. The one man who founded an NGO himself said, that he did not feel any of these problems in his own migration biography but had seen shocking situations of his fellow workers in the host country and thus began to question the system and es-

pecially himself. It is remarkable that also the migrant who did not experience violations to his rights while abroad got politically involved only because of being observant.

However, one of my interview partners who did not feel constraints on himself and did not hear of any comparable troubles while abroad, did not see the necessity of fighting for the rights of migrant workers. He also did not show any hints of an elevated political consciousness or will to get active other than for his own and his family's benefit. The most remarkable factor is that this migrant had spent his labour migration in a traditional democratic country, the Netherlands. This shows, as also detected for example by Levitt (1998) and Rother (2009), that political remittances as a one-way transmission of normatively loaded value systems do not work. Particularly when it comes to political consciousness what counts for its increase is not the experience of a different political system solely. It rather stems from the exact experiences migrants make abroad, their exploitation or well-being and last but not least the role the Philippines' government played in this whole process for them.

Looking at political activity or participation as an expression of political consciousness, like elaborated in chapter 2.5.3, could be detected. This holds true for my own field research, as well as empirical studies reviewed above, that discovered ways of migrant activism. Many examples could be found in which migrants turned out as active non-citizens while abroad in order to enhance their situation regarding citizenship status, workers' rights or the citizenship rights of their kids due to for example a Japanese father (Constable 2004, Gurowitz 2008, Kessler 2009, Rother 2009, Stasiulis/Bakan 1997). Especially the case of Hong Kong provides interesting insights, as a transnationalisation of the battle for workers' rights happened, because Filipina activism affected other nationalities, Philippine unions interfered, as well as the Filipino government tried to impose workers' rights and used Hong Kong as a site for political campaigning (Castles and Miller 2009, Piper 2009, Rüland 2009, Solomon 2009). The definition of political participation, however, as we saw with Kofman (2000) and Zontini (2010), needs to be enlarged, as formal political institutions usually exclude migrants per se. Like stretched in chapter 3.3. and discussed below, the process of democratisation needs to include different levels than only the formal way to democracy or the path of transition, which in its basic foundations is only built on a procedural definition. In the case of migrant workers while abroad, political activism contains acts such as enhancing work conditions for oneself and fellow-workers, the claim of compliance with workers' rights or the battle for citizenship. Due to their positions of exploitation and other hardships various steps were taken in order to reclaim their rights, which can broadly be termed agency. Migrants took use of the few instruments that were provided for them, such as joining NGOs, cam-

paigning for external voting rights, contacting government agencies or contacting IOM for voluntary return. To realise one's opportunities in any existing political system even though it may a restrictive one, can be labelled *agency* - within this system. The next step of this discussion will treat this aspect by drawing on empowerment concepts, which can be seen as an effect similar to political agency because it was recurrently mentioned by my interview partners.

6.2. *(Self-) Empowerment*

In the state of being a temporary migrant abroad, conventional citizenship and affiliated rights play no major role with discussing migrants' democratic agency. While some examples could be given in which migrants used democratic opportunities to opt for their own betterment, the main term that became – inductively - pivotal, was empowerment. Especially those active in NGOs referred to this term when describing their approach to changing the situations of Filipin@ migrants.

Empowerment is a common term in recent development aid practices as well as in the usage of NGOs and the World Bank (See: Palacio 2006). Empowerment as an enabling approach roots in the oeuvre of Paulo Freire who focused on the role of education in empowerment processes. From the particular background of apathy in Brazilian slums due to dependence and oppressive military regimes, he tried to find ways of how to support people via alphabetisation and education to become critical and active social actors (Freire 2000 [1970] and 2009 [1970]. Critical awareness is central for well-being in the sense of freed existence of members of a society "*liberation*". His central term is "*conscientization*" which in its foundations reminds me of the term political consciousness I presented earlier in this paper. To him, the powerless need to build up critical awareness in order to realise societal structures such as cultural domination and regain their own capabilities within in order to change their own world, challenge the elites and impose their own decisions. "*Naive transivitiy*"with Paulo Freire is the path from apathy of the marginalised to popular awareness, which shall be attained (Freire 2000 [1970]:52).

More recently, I found the following definition of empowerment by Anette Sprung (2006:33), which appealed to me most because it also draws on Freire's stances from the 1970s, brought to a more recent setting. Sprung writes, that empowerment in general goes along with a capability-approach of enabling strengths to an autonomous appropriation of powers needed for

life. She states that the political content of the term refers to access to resources and rights in a society, which mean by participation and self- as well as co-determination, to take part in social change processes, but not only limited to assigned spaces.[34]

This definition also coheres with some partial aspects of empowerment, which found its influence in development strategies. While Banik (2008:13) holds empowerment for a multi-dimensional approach, he picked out legal empowerment as a focus. His approach to legal empowerment (LEP) focuses on a bottom-up development strategy by the usage of peoples' legal rights, which often are denied to the poorer members of a society. LEP tries to turn formerly powerless or poor into active citizens who are aware of their rights and find ways on how to impose them. Palacio (2006[35]) resumes, that "*LEP is a dynamic process that involves the transformation of the poor into citizens who are aware of their rights, are able to assert them and also hold the state accountable for their adequate enforcement*".

Wojkowska and Cunningham (2010) point out that poverty is one of many limitations to the use of legal rights for the poor. Poverty as a hindering factor which coheres with more procedural and structural interpretations of democratisation, which mention that no full democratic participation can be enacted, if structures such as inequality or poverty keep people from taking part (Merkel 2003). Some authors mentioned in this paper (Piper/Courville 2004:50) see a connection between "*hope*" and activities in NGOs as an enabling form of regaining power. Also in the interviews conducted, empowerment was either shown or openly expressed in various ways, as demonstrated in chapter 5.2. on the analysis and interpretation of data. Particularly, returnees who were active in NGOs at the time of the interviews, spoke about the need to empower people before going abroad (interview partners from DAWN), in order to help them defend themselves against injustice and supporting returnees with their way into authorities to regain their rights on social benefits for example (interview partners from MIGRANTE).

The migrants interviewed were critical of the legal system, claiming, that it lacks open information, shows unequal access to power and financial constraints in its accessibility persist. On the other hand, the migrants organised in NGOs said that it is central to them to give back to the Philippines' population choice. They all criticised that in the Philippines the state act-

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34 Original Quote in German: "*Empowerment (Selbstermächtigung) umfasst die eigenständige Bewältigung eines komplexen Alltags, im reflexiven Sinn Lernprozesse und die Selbst-Aneignung von Leneskräften. Der politische Gehalt verweist auf den Zugang zu Ressourcen und Rechten in einer Gesellschaft, die ja gerade MigrantInnen vielfach verwehrt werden. Partizipation meint Selbst- und Mitbestimmung, ist aktive Teilhabe an sozialen Veränderungsprozessen und nicht einfach ein "Mitmachen" in zugewiesenen Räumen.*" (Sprung 2006:33)

35 PALACIO, Ana (2006): Legal Empowerment for the Poor: An Action Agenda for the World Bank. Draft Paper. Washington DC: World Bank. Quoted by: Banik 2008.

ively enforces the system of emigration, which they find insufficient for a democratic, responsible state. Mike in particular returned to the Philippines in order to build up businesses to give people a chance himself. Thus, different forms of empowerment could be detected, as the women working in NGOs rather focused on legal empowerment of former migrants and returnees, one migrant tried to work on the empowerment of his fellow-citizens, and other migrants found their own ways of empowering themselves by fighting for rights in their countries of emigration but particularly in their work places, running for financial support in order to build up their own business and not have to go back abroad. They all focused clearly on adding opportunities to their own or their societies' possible choices of life, which could be indeed subsumed under concepts of empowerment. A final quote I want to introduce here that seems to reflect what has been said on this topic so far and stretches the importance of individual acts of (self-) empowerment. Moreover it coheres with the quote by my interview partner Mabel which was presented on the opening page of this thesis.

> *If people want fundamental rights to be recognized and enforced, they cannot escape from the responsibility to actively contribute to the defence of these rights. People cannot expect other (the state or the media) always to defend their rights and liberties. The less alert people react to the violation of human rights, the more their own dignity comes under threat. If people do not actively engage in the battle for their empowerment, they should not be surprised to find themselves one day totally disempowered. (Hamlink 1995:10)*

6.3.   A connection to democratisation?

It seems flawed to search for democratisation by transmittance from a less democratic country like Saudi Arabia or a more or less equally democratic country like Hong Kong to the Philippines (See illustration in the introduction). Indeed if focusing on traditional values of democracy no democratisation might be found, as migrants hardly ever get in touch with the democratic advantages of countries.

The connection to democratisation, as suggested in the research questions and throughout the whole paper is multi-faceted. This can be researched on an individual and collective level of agency and a more traditional, but empirically easier judgemental level procedures. Definitions of democracy as well as democratisation are extensive, including the focus on free and fair elections, the minimal consensus, more particular understandings of required institutions included[36], or the approach of – normatively loaded – participative democracy. Welzel and

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36 This aspect was left out in this thesis, as an analyses of single democratic institutions in a country and its accessibility for return migrants would have gone too far into detail of Philippine inner politics and the Philippine political system. It could be an idea for an additional text, however.

Inglehart (2008) similar to modernisation theory, see a connection between economic growth and democratisation, but not in a direct gradual way. Instead insofar as they argue that economic growth can lead to more equality and as a consequence more self-expression opportunities. Nevertheless, no school of democratisation theory can solve the research questions on its own as we can see in chapter 3.3. This is partly grounded in the narrowness of democratisation theories to focus on internal actors. The focus on fair and free elections (Dahl 1972 [1971], Schumpeter 2010 [1943]) does not seem to answer all aspects, as well as participative forms of democracy (Benhabib 2003, Barber 1984 and 1998-9), which include constant opinion searching in a community on public topics seems to bring up more questions than answers.

Like Itzigsohn and Villacrés (2008:682f) have pointed out about the Dominican Republic and El Salvador, migrants played some part with the consolidation of democracy on the local and national level but their input was limited, partly due to the fact that the migrants in this study did not aim at returning. Also in the case of the Philippines, migrants played a role with transition to and consolidation of democracy. The impact of migrants on democratisation can be perceived on three main levels. The first level draws from procedural understandings of democracy, by enlarging the scope of democracy or the amount of migrant initiatives, that actually turned into laws. The second level is the fact that migrants were actively taking part in the overthrow of Marcos' regime and were actors in other mass activism and attitudes. The third aspect is the increase in political consciousness within migrants that stimulates agency within the provided structures.

From all initiatives being co-triggered from mass migrant associations engaging in the political sphere through pro-migrant activism, this amount actually decreased after 2000, after having found a larger impact in the 1980s and 1990s. The most important partially migrant induced changes were the passing of the Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act of 1995, the ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of all Migrants and Their Families (ICMR) in 1995. The last one since then was the Absentee Voting Bill in 2004 (Piper 2004:49). The ratification of the Philippines' external voting rights act must be labelled the biggest change to increase the inclusiveness of the state's democracy. This had been supported by migrant groups all over the Philippines and abroad. As the connection in theoretic approaches also seems less than clear, as in societies, where many people migrate, changes induced through migration or other factors are hard to discern (Gmelch 1980). Also for the introduction of external voting rights in 2004, it is hard to distinguish to which degree this could be seen on either the transnationalisation of this right, as most labour sending countries intro-

duced or extended such laws in this era, to which degree it was simply a fact of still consolidating a "*defective democracy*" in general (Croissant 2004) and to which degree, it was actually the influence of overseas migrants' campaigns. Nevertheless, when these rights were introduced, which were nevertheless to the benefits of migrants, it can at least be judged as the extension of formal democratic rule, that used to exclude migrants in both the sending and the receiving countries. Also the example of demonstrations around the death of Flor Contemplacion were held to be responsible for the passing of directly leading to the Republic Act 8042, Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act (Barber 2000, Shenon 1995, Solomon 2009). Barber (2010) brings in one more aspect of migrant protests that slowly also triggers outcomes: the demonstrations for more responsible recruitment practices.

Returning one more time to the aspect of external voting rights, Bauböck (2003) holds two objections from the perspective of theories of democracy, as he says, specifying deliberative approaches as his point of reference. One is, that migrants as being out of the territory usually cannot take part in the processes of decision making in their home country, as they lack information and communication structures. On the other hand to Bauböck, migrants shall only have an impact on later country developments if they see a future in this country for themselves. To simplify his argument a little bit, only those aiming of returning one day should from a normative perspective be entitled to vote, as especially in cases, where migrants actually constitute a large proportion of the population, they might overrule vote results from citizens within the country. Nevertheless, as most Philippine migrants are temporary workers and as we hear, being abroad implies the option of actually politicising people even though they are derived of formal citizenship rights in the host country, it is unclear whether from this normative perspective migrants should really be derived from their voting rights. Whether voting rights should rather be tied to residence instead of nationality in general is an entirely different question and shall not be discussed here. Citizenship rights mean to be protected (Bauböck 2003, Stasiulis/Bakan 1997), so all migrants who are often excluded from protection in their host countries should have as much access to their home country also in the political sphere as possible as this is the only point of reference they have, the security to be able to return. Nevertheless, the example of the Philippines showed, that whether migrant voting rights are provided or not, the Philippine state often does not interfere enough. While the formal increase of inclusiveness may under some objections mean a process of democratisation, the actual ignorance of the protection of these citizens lets the opposite be assumed. As a following the expansion of citizenship rights, as procedural indicators of democratisation

(Tilly 2000) perceived, have not been yet finalised with an increase in protection of its citizens.

Another level of the influence migrants have in the Philippines, was the actual transition to democracy migrants played a major role in: overthrowing the autocratic regime of Marcos in 1986 (Glick Schiller et al. 1995, Basch et al. 1997). This was initiated by the return of the former expelled opposition leader Ninoy Aquino in 1983, who had been shot dead at the airport upon arrival. While the strength of Marcos' regime already began to tumble in 1983, a broad people movement actually led to the end of his regency (Thompson 1996). Again, recurring to Gmelch (1980), migrants cannot be made out as the single factor of change, but some authors attest high involvement to migrant activism in this regard. Migrants are a political factor, as also the reaction of president Macapagal-Arroyo 2004 to accept terrorists' demands on the freeing of an OFW for the prospected withdrawal of Philippine troops from Iraq, as migrant uprisings would have sent her out of office within no time (Solomon 2009:276). It looks like Philippine migrants have become a stakeholder of Philippine politics which should not be underestimated and their influence reaches into the national government level, partly probably to the fact that they were rather powerful with the protests named before. Solomon (2009) in general says that no government would dare deciding against the migrants' benefits, as particularly People Power Two showed how quickly one – as a president – is driven out of office.

The third level is derived from my empirical data, in which a connection of individual's migrant consciousness and agency as was searched for. In how far can their increased political consciousness or (legal) empowerment as was shown in the precedent chapter be labelled democratisation? To Merkel (2003:155), like mentioned in chapter 3.3, the slow creation of a civil society, among which the upraise of NGOs is part, represents a central aspect of democratisation. To Welzel and Inglehart (2008) the empowerment of citizens in their country upon economic growth is another way of tackling democratisation. Looking at democracy with the perspective of active citizenship or the amount of agency learnt through exploitation abroad and a raised political consciousness as a following, there was a clear connection between their migration experiences, the increased amount of collective actions and the strengthening of democratic principles such as freedom of expression or freedom of association.

The interview partners all claimed to have not been politically active other than voting before their migration, but showed different ways of being politically involved throughout their migration experience and particularly afterwards. Also the term "*democracy*" did not seem to

bring strong results in the research. Similar to Rother (2009) who found out, that migrants did not necessarily consider democracy to be a value in itself, also my interview partner only reluctantly said that democracy is the best system – that is, if they had an opinion on the topic at all -. Taken into consideration that migrants might not even question the political system they are in, it is impossible to find a connection between migrants' political views and migration. The connection which can be found though is the one between political consciousness founded through exploitation and hardships in labour migration and personal democratisation. This does not mean that people accentuated democracy, but rather that they lived it. They turned through their migration experience into active citizens who take use of ways of political participation far beyond traditional understandings of voting rights. As Leal (2002) pointed out, in order to become politically active in riskier ways such as campaigning, protesting etcetera, there must be a higher common feeling. Coming from more normative and agency-driven approach to democracy, migrants can be perceived as trying to regain their share of the inner-societal debate on migration-related topics by founding migrant-advocacy groups and protesting about topics which touch them as a group. This happens in a rather conflictive way, as migrants face conflicts in many places. With Gurowitz (2000) it was shown, that migrants are not automatically subsumed under general unions in host countries, as these mainly protect their own workers. Thus, migrants in their activism face difficulties and conflict on different levels. In the study of Rother (2009) even those migrants that did not aim at staying politically involved, nevertheless opted for expressing freedom to state one's opinion, the freedom of associations and individual freedom rights, which can again be understood in the light of deliberative democracy.

While, as Hollifield (2004:901ff) states, that liberal countries which have the main influx of migrant workers, would have to pay special attention to protect migrants' civil and human rights for if it is not it actually undermines its own 'raison d'être', also democratised countries are known for undermining migrants' labour rights. As we have seen in the preceding pages, most migrants did not, regardless, whether they went to Japan, the Netherlands, Taiwan or Saudi Arabia, enjoy many rights in their country of emigration. Thus, they did not experience benefits of democracy while abroad. Thus, even if there were a way of transmitting value systems, such as democracy, it would hardly work, if the migrants did not get to see these. Also in my study, the only migrant interviewed from an old, established, Western democracy, did not show a strong level of political consciousness and did not show any knowledge of, or interest in participating in either of the political systems he was confronted with. On the other hand, a man, that had spent many years in a restrictive system, Saudi Arabia, attaches to the

idea, that the system there is far better, as it has a better output when it comes to financial support for people and other forms of security and democracy does not work for the Philippines, nevertheless became active in many respects and showed a high level of critical political consciousness. With contributing to the Philippine society by campaigning for overseas voting rights, helping his fellow nationals with deportations and last but not least building up businesses in order to increase the amount of choices inside the Philippine economic system for possible migrants, thus, contributing to enhance their socio-economic position, he also contributes to democratisation in some way. By trying to decrease the socio-economic inequalities in the country, which are a major barrier for inclusive democracy (Merkel 2003) he personally contributes to democratisation.

What seems to be the crucial point is the fact that the migrants interviewed had to cope with situations of constraint and exploitation themselves. By finding ways out of these, they became active (non-) citizens that tried to take use of democratic rights and access legal institutions to enhance their situation. They increased their political participation or agency by entering NGOs. All migrants, triggered in slightly differing ways, found their way to cope with a government system, they tend to despise and devalue by claiming it is corrupt. All but one of the migrants made statements on the irresponsibility and moral ambiguities of the Philippine government. Thus, it seems, that an elevated political consciousness comes with a critical stance on the structures, the Philippine government created for migrants. This political consciousness led to associations all around the world, as can be seen in the various accounts of Filipin@ activism. Filipin@ activism shows a good example of bottom-up democratisation, which is the slow part in democratisation processes (Merkel 2003). As the first democratic government after Marcos' dictatorship was already voted for during the EDSA demonstrations (Thompson 1996:186), the transition into an actually democratic system was not yet accomplished, but the initial step was taken in a mass movement.

Welzel and Inglehart (2008) see a central role in this kind of increased agency *"Human empowerment is becoming an increasingly important driving force behind democratization"*. If one subsumes human empowerment to agency, then due to the enlarged political consciousness, agency could be raised in most cases of the sample and migrants in the Philippines can be perceived as those empowered to become agents. To put it brief, this contributes to democratisation. From the material of the interview data it was interesting that the levels of pro-democracy attitudes were not convincingly high. Also Rother (2009) found out that a fair amount of migrants returns with less democratic attitudes. Migrants become actors of change

as they enlarge their own agency within the system and are highly critical of the weakness of the Philippine state and the corruption of the Philippine government.

> *Entry into the state can come through organization as an interest group and associated lobbying activities; participation in policy development and implementation through on-going negotiation between group leaders and public officials; participation in conventional party and electoral politics, either by organizing as a party or in formal affiliation with an established party; acceptance of governmental appointments by group leaders; or enhancing the group's ability to participate in policymaking through changes in public policy. (Dryzek 1996:475)*

The migrants interviewed know that in the Philippines for more than 25 years, democracy has been the official rule with doubtful outcomes. The Philippines nevertheless in the precedent 15 years, particularly after the Asian financial crises, actually also saw an increase in inequality and poverty (Bello 2009:113). As we heard from Merkel (2003) and Welzel and Inglehart (2008) socio-economic disparities are a main hindrance to efficient democracy. Especially the first democratic government after People Power One, under Corazon Aquino set out in order to combat inequality and poverty, but ended up with only minor contributions to necessary land reform or other structures that led to inequality which in the end could persist (Bello 2009, Loewen 2004). As well democratic government have not managed to bring up new perspectives and securities for migrants although they gradually include more official rights and more institutions. From this perspective it is understandable that return migrants tend to question democracy, as the only model of democracy they really know is that of the Philippines. In most cases of the interviews, migrants were also excluded from the political system abroad or only got to know its downsides.

Particularly in the Philippines, where the authoritarian regime was overthrown with the help of migrants, Welzel's (2006) perspective is comprehensive. As was mentioned in the introduction, Marcos himself paved the way for upcoming mass attitudes and their expression as he renounced taking repressive steps against the first large demonstrations after Ninoy Aquino was assassinated at the airport. Due to some structural circumstances, as were shown in the introduction, the country is still fighting with old, undemocratic structures, that lead to the benefits of some but the disadvantages of many. This is where migrant activism comes in. Although migrant activism is still a minority (about ten percent of the sum of the population is always abroad and only a minor part of these actually get involved), migrant activism increases political activism on a grass roots level. Whether this can actually be counted as democratisation through NGO activism will be discussed below.

6.4. *Activities in NGOs as reflection of democratisation pro‐cesses?*

While some of the migrants interviewed, seemed to have risen to high levels of political consciousness through the way of solving situations themselves, most of them were at the stage in which I met them after the experience of exploitation and through the help of NGOs. The Filipina scholar Marujah Asis (2006:94), mentioned various times before in this thesis, sees in the rise of migrant associations in the country a contribution to the empowerment of migrants. These associations' use of capacity-building programs is a way of helping Filipin@s "*realize their potentials to be agents of change for Filipino communities overseas*" (ibid.). Asis stretches the fact, that NGOs contribute to empowerment among Filipin@ migrants and thus contribute to democratisation of the country, as those, organised in NGOs (and other political groups, which were not treated in this paper) learn how to deal with the prevailing structures to enact their own lives. While this is something, all citizens of a society necessarily carry out, doing it in a politically conscious way, such as "*empowered*" migrants, means to actually question the system and see one's own role in it to change things by activity. NGOs can also play an important role in politicising people in such a way. Inaba et al. (2001) argue, so far, nothing new at this stage of the paper, that via empowerment migrants overcome their exploitative situations of being deprived of their rights and excluded from information. They use Kukita's[37] four stage approach to empowerment in connection to NGOs. The first step here is taken as soon as migrants try to learn about their labour rights, counsel bureaucratic agencies as well as learn the language, which can be summarised as gaining access to resources. The second step comes with consciousness raising over structural problems. This includes, building up networks, attending NGO or union meetings. The third step means actual political participation by voicing one's concerns and organise collective actions in a group, such as an NGO. Finally, they see the distribution factor in influencing others (Inaba et al. 2001:22).

The group of scholars writes about migrant activism in Japan, saying that migrants can be split in two groups, one of them are those, who can manage their problems and achieve their goals on their own, while the other one are those, who need to contact NGOs or other organisations to gain help (Inaba et al. 2001). To the latter, the act of engaging groups of support is an important step of empowerment of migrants. The authors state though, that with most migrants at this stage the involvement ends, as their individual goals could maybe be settled. While those migrants, that don't need help, don't even get in touch with NGOs, also few stay

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37 KUKITA, Jun (1998): "*Empowerment towa Nanika*". Gendai No Esprit 376:10-34. In: Inaba et al. (2001:22)

with the NGOs after having been "*empowered*". Thus, the crucial step is to make use of the empowered ones also for those who have not yet made bad experiences. NGOs play a major role as through the ones, that actually seek support, they can also get in contact with the rest of the community. In the case of the return migrants from this study, many migrants stated that they "*want to be an inspiration to others*". Hence, they aim at distributing their experiences and knowledge on the situation at hands, which can possibly contribute to enhance the overall critical attitude on migration in the Philippines. All migrants in the interviews said that they would like to see the Philippine people to have choices again and some of them through the help of NGOs and others individually want to work on this process of giving people choices. As this way of empowering people to decide on their own basically aims at economic and societal structural change it is a political act.

The field of migrant NGOs in the Philippines is wide and some of them may have a substantial impact on government decisions. On the first conference I went to after arrival I happened to meet a local priest, who told me to contact, MIGRANTE for them being the strongest, the ones, the government hears most. Also Piper (2004:48) sees it the same way. She says, that MIGRANTE is the most successful, which consists of all former migrants. Nevertheless, the question arises whether NGOs don't just make an unbearable situation easier to handle by helping the people out. This might hold true considering the fact that all migrants I spoke to who faced major problems in their migration or afterwards got help through NGOs to overcome these problems. Nevertheless, this is only one aspect of their activities. The other aspects are active consciousness rising for the societal structures that keep migrants down, the information on inner and international norms, such as human trafficking laws; and the aim for structural change. As Piper (2009) noted the impact migrants and migrant NGOs had on laws decreased over time and so far ended with the introduction of external voting rights. If this is the end of the story, we don't know yet and will only be shown in the further development of this field.

While most Philippine NGOs are actually Philippine based, the question remains though in how far NGOs can speak for the majority. With currently about 8,7 million Filipinos overseas, a probably far higher amount of people that have been abroad before and an even higher amount of people that are related to some migrants, one can assume that it is a high percentage of people that would actually support migrant activism that aims at ameliorating work conditions, governmental activities and an increase in investments in the economy in order to enhance the situation of all Filipin@s. Hence, the NGOs mentioned in this thesis mostly are Philippine based and founded by migrants themselves. They enact a role of migrant advocat-

ing and active support. Because the members are mainly recruited among former migrants, it seems like are bottom-up attempts to encounter problems of this large part of Philippine population. As was shown, some of the interview partners found help, support and empowerment in NGOs and as a consequence started their own lobbying for migrant rights in different ways. Insofar NGOs showed the effect of politicisation.

7. Conclusion

I wrote this paper to explore some specific aspects of Philippine labour migration which is in itself a vast research field. While migration in the Philippines is a widely-known circumstance since the colonial times, it became a state-led development path in the 1970s under the authoritarian president Marcos. The connection of migration and development as well as the connection of migration and politics in the Philippines has ever since been an ambiguous one. By actively supporting citizens to go abroad, the country tried to equal out its high local unemployment rates and gain foreign currency. While this might have had some positive economic impacts (which were not discussed in this thesis) it also opened the field for many grievances among migrants and their families as well as many public discussions on its consequences in family lives for example.

I entered this field with the focus on migrant political consciousness, political activism and a possible link to democratisation. Building on a literature review and a field research in the Philippines, I explored how political consciousness of migrants, especially those somehow affiliated to NGOs, is constituted after return and what the main aspects of expression are. On top I tried to figure out if this political consciousness is a consequence of certain aspects of migrants' experiences in labour migration and whether there is a connection to political participation. The last research question I posed was if migrant political consciousness also contributes to democratisation. To gain clear answers to these questions theoretic stances on political consciousness were introduced, but also democratisation and migration theories. Conducting eight in-depth qualitative interviews with return migrants and analysing them along with Mayring's guidelines on content analysis, I tried to filter the aspects answering my research questions.

Concerning the first question on how their political consciousness was constituted, I could detect many interesting aspects. The main result of this thesis is that among all interview partners only two did not seem to have a high level of political consciousness. All other interviewees explicated among other constituencies of political consciousness the structural reasons for labour migration. They stretched the Philippine government's role in this process but also international structures that keep the country and the government in this subordinate position. Many migrants were critical of the government's lack in attempts to enhance the status quo of Filipin@s in the home country. Indeed they had gained attitudes and ideas on how the government should act in order to decrease socio-economic disparities and difficulties such as poverty in the country. Some of the migrants, particularly those, that were engaged in NGOs,

drew on human rights, international norms and moral ideals in order to found their understanding of the situation (Ijzendoorn 1979, 1980). Moreover, they criticised that the Philippine government does provide migrants with pre-departure seminars but ignores pleads for help while overseas and does not provide return migrants with the necessary information on how to get support. All in all, political consciousness as well as increased agency could be detected. Political participation as an expression *of* political consciousness was detected but also political participation in the sense of approaching government organisations and asking for help with migrant advocacy groups as a step *to* political consciousness were found. In the following I will conclude, which aspects determined steps of agency among the interviewed migrants.

Concerning research question number two, migrant NGO activity as a consequence of political consciousness, it has to be stated that all migrants had some kind of affiliation with NGOs or other forms of socio-economic activity. While one of the migrants actually led campaigns and founded an NGO, most others entered NGOs on the basis of need. The two other men in the data, approached NGOs and other organisations for financial, bureaucratic and repatriation support. The women I interviewed had approached NGOs for either support with contracts being breached, financial security for their half-Japanese children or traumata. Nevertheless, all the women I interviewed who had gone through the process of being supported by NGOs and started working there felt empowered due to this activity. As mentioned above it was particularly them drawing from other (international) right discourses. They said that now the same thing could not have happened to them any more as they are more aware of their rights. This coincided with the understanding of legal approaches to empowerment (Banik 2008, Palacio 2006) that focus on people's opportunities to access legal means in order to enhance their situation. Migrants learned through this process on how to increase their agency in their rather unfortunate position by using laws, financial funds and other kinds of government support. Indeed, in this case the process seems to be the other way around than what had been anticipated in the research question. While particularly one migrant also had a high political consciousness without the aid of NGOs (in fact he founded one himself) some migrants faced severe troubles abroad and because of this fact entered NGOs. There they got politicised and found out about more ways of political participation and their own agency through their activities in civil society organisations.

Looking for the trigger of political agency among the returnees interviewed, it can be said, that probably, migrants would not have gotten in the situation to have to look for support or become politically active in other ways, if their migration experiences would have been flaw-

less. Indeed, my interview partners stated that they needed to experience these hard ships and feel it on their own bodies to know what they have to fight for, which parts of the system they have to oppose. In this sense the main influential factors on political consciousness and in a following political participation – defined in a broader term than only the attendance of elections – was increased due to their experiences of exploitation and oppression, expressed in a high political consciousness. Some opposed these situations at hand while they were still abroad but others returned rather feeling apathetic to a political system that only takes advantage of them but does not provide them with securities. Here, the second way of politicisation comes in. Some of the interview partners had only contacted NGOs for help, because of insurmountable problems with their child's citizenship status, repatriation or personal traumata. With these migrants also exploitation and oppression was the trigger, but the decisive aspect for political consciousness and agency became the activity in these NGOs.

To find a link to democratisation, from this standpoint migrant activism can be seen as a political act. Migrants took use of their citizen rights and approached governments, led campaigns and focused – partly with the background of NGOs – on structural change in this field. As this is according to Merkel (2003) the slowest aspect of democratisation in the sense of a democratic transition, migrants reinforced democratic methods. Also from a collective point of view, migrants in the Philippines took use of many political means in order to – deliberate or unconsciously – support and extend democratic institutions. From a procedural perspective on democratisation, migrants contributed to the enlargement of democratic inclusion, as they campaigned for external voting rights all over the world until they were actually ratified in 2004. As was shown in the chapter on Hong Kong already then the first migrant acts of political activism arose because the authoritarian leader Marcos had tried to introduce overseas taxation on these labourers and found severe migrant activism as an answer.

Transnationalist approaches to migration (Bauböck 2003, Vertovec 2004, Basch et al., etcetera) but also Lauth and Pickel (2008), discussing external factors, figured migrants out as possible actors in democratisation. Also in the overthrow of Marcos, migrants were by some authors found to have been an active part. While Corazon Aquino, the wife of the deadly shot opposition leader, returned to the Philippines from the United States in 1986 in order to push for chance, it was transnational networks in the USA but also activist groups in the Philippines that led to the system change (Basch et al. 1997; Glick Schiller et al.; Thompson 1996). From a democratisation theoretic perspective, with Aquino overthrowing the authoritarian regime with the help of the masses (Welzel 2006, Welzel/Ingelhart 2008), the transition to democracy formally started. Nevertheless, the beginning of this democratisation process was

critical as already after a couple of weeks, she was voted president during these demonstrations. Thompson (1996) sees this as the formal starting point which only slowly led into democracy. Croissant (2004), Loewen (2004) and Merkel (2003) still remark many flaws in the Philippine democracy, but nevertheless migrants played their share in democratising the country. At least, they reclaimed their own role in the state by protesting and campaigning, which turned them into a collective pressure group against governments. Particularly due to the list of large protests against various topics and for various rights, no president of the Philippines could risk acting openly against the well-being of OFWs. Protesting against the application of death penalty in the case of Flor Contemplacion, the Philippines ratified Republic Act 8042, Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act ensuring migrants' rights while abroad (Solomon 2009). In general, in the Philippines, while democracy in hard facts does not score high, mass mobilisation works well and has induced system changes, in the case of Marcos and in the case of Estrada.

Also empirical studies showed that migrants are not necessarily in favour of democracy as such. Due to the fact that they - even if they spend their labour migration in an acknowledged democracy – are usually excluded from basic political and social rights, but especially from citizen rights, they often find themselves in difficult situations. Rother (2009) figured out that the total number of migrants aspiring democracy after return actually decreased. Particularly, migrants who had spent their temporary labour migration in Saudi Arabia explained the positives of the system there. Although they as well as return migrants from Japan in his study turned out to show decreased belief in democracy, they carried soft indicators of democracy in them. To the contrary the majority of migrants in his study highlighted the merits of freedom of association and freedom of press after returning. The next result also holds true for my data and many other approaches described above: political remittances as a one-way path into democracy do not work. This is due to the fact that migrants are politically excluded in their receiving states but also see the bad sides of democracy, as was shown in the case of OPAs in Japan. Moreover the only migrant in my scope who had gone to an old, European democracy, returned with probably the lowest political consciousness among my interview partners. There, he was indeed excluded from political and social rights, because he was in the country on a tourist visa. As he was lucky with his employer, he never faced any troubles and made friends. This migrant together with a second one who indeed faced distress, are the only ones in the whole scope who admitted to not really know anything about the political system in his country of temporary migration, the Netherlands.

As a following, it can be stated, that within the scope political consciousness of migrants was actually high. They anticipated change and found explanations for structural inequalities and socio-economic reasons. The risen political consciousness is based on the experience of exploitive and oppressive labour migration. Nevertheless, migrants might also return powerless and only regain their agency through the help of NGOs (or other migrant advocacy groups). Critical political consciousness was also developed through this way.

Approaching the topic through a sociological perspective and not for example an economic one, all in all, migrants, as indicated by some of the theoretic approaches, showed to be actors of change. The fact that they turned into actors of change, such as also seen in other empirical examples must not be derived from pro-democratic attitudes, as critical awareness and agency can also occur without democratic ambitions in theory. All in all, migrants in the Philippines took some – collective – steps in order to regain appropriate weight in the home country's democracy, considering the mere amount of about a tenth of the whole Philippine adult population.

7.1. Reflections on the paper – methodological critique

To put the results in a broader frame, a couple of final remarks have to be made. First of all, some aspects of this study particularly concerning the methodology of qualitative research.

As it is normal in an interpersonal communication situation that a base for common understanding has to be found, this process takes differing duration in the respective interviews. While some migrants quickly realised what the main focus of my interest was, others put more weight on different aspects. Nevertheless, as soon as the migrants anticipated what my focus was, they looked for experiences in their lives which could fit. This might have led to them highlighting aspects, which were more important to me as a researcher than them as the person concerned.

Here comes in a second challenge of doing research in a different cultural setting. With culture also world views and different underlying realities come in, which are in themselves, distinct to what I may be able to discern as an Austrian student. Aspects in my study, which were important for the research questions, might not have had any weight to my interview partners. As well, as in this research the connection was only to be made between migration and political consciousness, agency and democratisation, some aspects which might have been preliminary for the answers had to be left out. An example for this would be the highlighting of cor-

ruption, which, looking through Filipino newspapers seems to be an overall big topic in the country and not only a phenomenon among return migrants.

The Philippines and migration provide researchers with a large field of studies, statistics and researches. The data accumulated in this field in fact is so wide, that it is hard to grasp every aspect in the course of writing a thesis. The literature I opted for out of this extensive field was – pragmatically - dissected with the focus on the research questions. It is remarkable that the data collected with eight - by comparison short – interviews is similar to the main quantitative study on a similar topic I found.

Out of the pragmatic necessity to only include a narrow scope in this thesis, the focus which was chosen, were people, who had returned from migration and had become active or organised in NGOs. Thus, it remains unclear how the political consciousness of people who would have returned apathetic for the same reasons looks like. All in all, also in this sense, this thesis – as probably all research papers - has an underlying bias of focusing on those that actually got socio-politically active, which should not be left out of consideration.

7.2. *Outlook*

As a consequence of the pragmatic need in this thesis to deal with a small, reductive scope, two more aspects were left out which would be interesting to analyse. One aspect would be the more open sample of interview partners to also include people who do not actively participate in migrant advocacy groups. This happened basically with the pilot interviews, which were not included in this thesis. Indeed, these pilot interviews showed the aspect that also among them, two had faced severe troubles, without being able to encounter them on their own although they also approached government agencies and the like. They gave up their fights for outstanding wages after the government ignored their pleads. Thus, the second interesting aspect is the role that Philippine NGOs play in the development of a critical political consciousness and agency.

A hypothesis in this context could be, that the main determinant for an increase in political consciousness and migrant agency are not political remittances from the political system abroad, but the density and strength of migrant networks and NGOs abroad and at home which determine migrants' understanding of their situation and the results of their agency.

This aspect will be partly adopted in another paper, I intend to write in the near future. From a cultural – and social anthropological perspective, I will try and discern the role NGOs have

played in forming my interview partners' steps and usage of particular terms. This will aim at uncovering the discourse(s) prevalent in the Philippines, its media, government institutions and the adoption of international rights standards, but also the particular role NGOs play in this process.

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Interview with Mike: Manila, 4/3/2011

Interview with Tia: Quezon City, 24/3/2011

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9.　Annex

9.1.　Interview guideline

The interview guideline in fact was very short and loose. It mainly contained big aspects, which I tried to direct the communication to:

− 　Would you be so kind to tell me a little bit about your migration experience?

− 　How was your situation abroad? [work conditions and rights, social rights]

− 　How did you like your host country?

− 　What is the political system there?

− 　Did you encounter any problems?

− 　If so, what did you do?

− 　What do you think about politics in the Philippines?

− 　What about the Philippine government?

− 　Which country do you think is better for the people? [concerning rights, social systems, …]

− 　What comes to your mind thinking about freedom?

− 　What is the position of migrants in the Philippines?

− 　Can you think of reasons for ...? [Here the questions picked up topics mentioned by the migrants in the interview earlier]

− 　What do you think could be done better?

9.2. *My research ethics*

All interviews were conducted in English. This was important to me as I wanted to encounter the migrants without a mediator, so it works more directly to build up a communication on a similar level of mutual understanding. I am not an English native speaker, neither were the migrants. But as I don't really speak Filipino and most migrants, especially better educated ones in the Philippines, speak English, it was the best possible common ground.

Obviously, the interview partners were asked, whether it is okay to tape the interview and whether they would like me to change their names for the final draft.

In order to become familiar with my interview partners, I always spent some time before the interviews only chatting about them and myself, to clarify life situations, try to build up trust and take some steps in overcoming the divide of object and subject in the interviews.

Another aspect is, that I always brought up before they started telling me their migration histories was, that I am interested in everything, but if there is anything that happened, which they don't want to share, I can accept that and they don't have to feel obliged to openly present their worst experiences. Nevertheless, I was told a couple of stories, which I found hard to digest and it felt really intimate being informed that well.

The migrants could choose, where to meet for the interviews.

Finally, I agreed with all of them to actually send them this thesis, so they know what the output is.

9.3. *Abstract*

This thesis sets out to explore a small aspect of the vast field of connections between development, migration and politics in the Philippines. Here, migration became a state-led development path in the 1970s with the ambiguous outcome of leaving many of the national labour force abandoned, exploited and oppressed in various work sites around the world. While the Philippines have overseas governmental institutions in most receiving countries, migrants cannot be protected against all eventualities and due to the economic dependence of the Philippines, the country also does not dare interfering in every situation.

With this background, the study tries to figure out how migrants after their return perceive the Philippine state and their migration experience. More exactly, the study concentrates on whether migrants become 'politically conscious', broadly defined as critically aware of socio-economic structures, a politicised role of themselves and the joint role of labour migrants in the country. Some empirical researchers and theorists have induced the possibility of migrants as actors of change who bring home often normatively loaded ideas from their destination country. This notion of one-way remittances of political ideas could not necessarily find confirmation in this thesis.

Rather to the contrary, the main results are that migrants often face difficulties which lead to them having to anticipate change, approach governmental and non-governmental organisations and stand up for their rights. Although these are not always successful attempts to impose themselves on their rights, some changes to the Philippine state have been induced by migrants in general. These are particularly the passing of the Absentee Voting Bill and in combination with grassroot mobilisation and protest in the Philippines, the overthrow of the authoritarian regime in the 1980s. Hence, this study on top presents influences of Philippine migrants on the political system at home and tries to pin down migrants' role in democratisation processes.

9.4.   *Summary in German [Zusammenfassung auf Deutsch]*

Im Zentrum dieser Diplomarbeit steht das ambivalente Verhältnis von Politik und Migration auf den Philippinen, welches spätestens seit den 1970er Jahren davon geprägt ist, dass Regierungen Migration forcieren. In diesem weiten Forschungsfeld wird die Forschungsfrage auf die Aspekte des politischen Bewusstseins, politischer Aktivität von und Demokratisierung durch MigrantInnen begrenzt. Die konkret zugrunde liegenden Forschungsfragen lauten:

- Wie ist das politische Bewusstsein von RückkehrerInnen nach ihrer Rückkehr aufgebaut und worin drückt es sich aus?

- Welche Faktoren im Migrationsprozess führen dazu, dass politisches Bewusstsein entsteht und es zu politische Partizipation kommt?

- Inwiefern können diese Prozesse als Demokratisierung verstanden werden?

Antworten auf diese Fragen werden in dieser Diplomarbeit zunächst in theoretischen Ansätzen gesucht. Hier zeigt sich, dass sowohl Ansätze zu externer Demokratie als auch aus Migrationstheorien kommend - vor allem Transnationalismus - MigrantInnen als Akteure wahrnimmt. Klare Antworten, inwiefern dies von statten geht, bleiben theoretische Annahmen – mit wenigen Ausnahmen wie dem Hervorheben von Medien oder wohltätigen und politischen Heimatclubs - eher schuldig. Diese sind erst in praktischen Studien zu finden. Hier gibt es Ansätze, die in der Arbeit auch Behandlung finden, wie politische Rücksendungen (political remittances), transnationale politische Aktivität, Diffusion von Normen und Ideen. Es kristallisiert sich in diesem Teil der Arbeit heraus, dass politische Rücksendungen nicht als ein lenkbarer, normativ geladener, positiver Aspekt von migrantischem Einfluss auf die Heimat gesehen werden können. Diese beinhalten auch anti-demokratische Tendenzen oder Abhängigkeiten der Heimatgemeinde von den MigrantInnen, was sozio-ökonomische Ungleichheiten verstärkt.

Im Falle der Philippinen können MigrantInnen eindeutig als politische AkteurInnen wahrgenommen werden. Bei dem Sturzes des Marcos Regimes 1986 waren unter anderem Netzwerke von MigrantInnen in den USA daran beteiligt, eine kritische Stimmung in der Heimat und unter amerikanischen PolitikerInnen zu schaffen und die erste demokratisch gewählte Präsidentin nach dem Umsturz kehrte selbst gewissermaßen aus dem Exil zurück. MigrantInnen haben auch in anderer Hinsicht eine Rolle bei der Ausdehnung der Inklusion politisch demo-

kratischer Rechte gespielt. Es kam zu Kampagnen für externe Wahlrechte, was bis zu diesem Zeitpunkt fast ein Zehntel der potentiell zurückkehrenden, im Ausland wohnenden philippinischen Bevölkerung betraf. 2004 kam es zur Ratifikation dieses Rechts.

In der empirischen Studie, die ich selbst durchführte, haben sich auch Aspekte von Demokratisierung gezeigt, diese fußten aber eher auf einer erhöhten politischen Handlungsbereitschaft und -fähigkeit denn auf prozeduralen Kriterien politischer Partizipation, denn gewählt hatten die befragten MigrantInnen auch schon vor ihrer Migrationserfahrung. Der zentrale Aspekt in den Interviews war das selbst Erleben von Ausnutzungs- und Unterdrückungsverhältnissen im Ausland, das die Menschen dazu brachte, Hilfe bei Nichtregierungsorganisationen, Regierungsinstitutionen der Empfängerländer und des Heimatstaates sowie untereinander zu suchen. Erhöhtes politisches Bewusstsein zeigte sich bei fast allen InterviewpartnerInnen, jedoch war bei einigen nicht unbedingt die eigene Reflexion dieser Ausnutzungsverhältnisse alleine ausschlaggebend, sondern ihre Tätigkeit in den NGOs, welche zu hohem Bewusstsein für strukturelle Ursachen, aber auch Veränderungswünschen der Gesellschaft und Politik führten.

Relativ gesehen muss das Ergebnis insofern werden, als, dass diese Studie nur auf MigrantInnen, die in irgendeiner Form Hilfe bei NGOs suchten oder selbst welche gründeten, fußte und – als qualitative Forschung - nicht ein Abbild aller RückkehrerInnen sein kann, von welchen mit Sicherheit viele nicht diesen Weg des „*Empowerment*", wie einige der InterviewpartnerInnen es nannten, einschlugen.

<h1 style="text-align:center">CURRICULUM VITAE</h1>

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Fremdsprachen

Sprache	Verstehen	Sprechen	Schreiben	
Englisch	Fließend	Fließend	Fließend	TOEFL
Französisch	Sehr gut	Gut	Gut	Maturaniveau
Spanisch	Grundkenntnisse	Grundkenntnisse	Grundkenntnisse	Reisen
Arabisch	Grundkenntnisse	Grundkenntnisse	Grundkenntnisse	Sprachaufenthalt