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***Integration from below. Migrants' Practices of Citizenship and  
the Debate on Diversity in Britain***

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### **Abstract**

Drawing on fieldwork conducted among Latin American migrants in London, this article responds to recent calls from within anthropology for a greater disciplinary engagement with migrants' political engagements. This is here done by juxtaposing migrants' needs and mobilizations to the ongoing British, and to an extent European, public debate on their integration, which is characterised by a mounting neo-assimilationist and anti-multicultural offensive. Starting on the assumption that migrants should have a say about their own integration in society, the article explores the extent to which the public debate is sensitive to migrants' own collective concerns. It is from this grounded and empirically informed perspective that subsequently the article moves a criticism to both assimilationist and multiculturalist attitudes for their disregard for the condition of exploitation and lack of social and cultural recognition that afflicts newly arrived migrants. The article helps to rebalance the prevailing trend in policy and academic circles that treats migrants as objects of policies (to be managed, controlled, disciplined, etc.) ignoring their political agency and active collective engagement in the improvement of their disadvantaged conditions and perspectives. It also offers a corrective to emerging alternative approaches that tend to reduce migrants' politics to their role in sustaining long-distance diasporic communities.

### **Keywords:**

Integration, Migrants, Multiculturalism, Citizenship, Collective Action, Class, Latin American Migrants, Anthropology.

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## **Integration from below. Migrants' Practices of Citizenship and the Debate on Diversity in Britain<sup>1</sup>**

Drawing on fieldwork conducted among Latin American migrants in London, this article seeks to respond to recent calls from within anthropology for a greater disciplinary engagement with collective action and social movements (Escobar 1992; Edelman 2001; Gibb 2001; Nash 2005), a topic which in relation to migrants has received very little attention (Però 2005).<sup>2</sup> This response is here articulated not so much by engaging with the prevailing social theories on the collective action of migrants, a task which I have done elsewhere (Però 2007a), but by juxtaposing migrants' needs and mobilization to the ongoing British and to an extent European public debate on their integration. Starting on the assumption that migrants should have a say about their own integration in society, the article explores the extent to which public debate is sensitive to migrants' own collective concerns.

The article also offers a grounded account of the political strategies of a new migrant group that has so far largely been ignored in studies of migrants and ethnic minorities in the UK. In doing so the article helps to rebalance the prevailing trend that treats migrants as objects of policies rather than subjects of politics acting upon their disadvantageous condition (Hargreaves and Wihtol de Wenden 1993, Kofman et al. 2000, and Zontini 2002, see also below). The article also offers a corrective to recently emerged 'alternatives' which focus on migrants' involvement in transnational cultural politics and in sustaining long-distance diasporic communities as well as in 'homeland' politics, and which tend to privilege identity politics in isolation from the practices of citizenship migrants deploy to confront the conditions encountered in the receiving context.

Since the early 1990s the UK has been experiencing a new immigration flow from a large number of non-Commonwealth countries. This flow contrasts with that of the post-war years when migrants – now settled minorities – came predominantly from its former colonies. As pointed out by Steve Vertovec (2006), the UK is increasingly characterized by:

- a sizeable migrant population from poor countries with no direct colonial link to the UK (alongside those of Commonwealth and Western origins);
- a greater linguistic diversity;
- a proliferation of smaller groups (e.g. Latin Americans, Rumanians, Ghanaians, Kurds, Afghans etc.) alongside large and longstanding 'ethnic communities';
- a more fluid duration and greater variety of legal statuses;
- and greater transnational connections 'from below' (social, religious, political)

This emerging scenario, suggests that it is no longer appropriate to think and treat the UK as a 'post-immigration' country – i.e. a country merely characterised by the presence of long-standing ethnic minorities – as much research and policy-making activity has been doing. In this respect the UK is also a country of new immigrations – like Italy or Spain – but with one very important difference. In the UK the new immigrations have not taken place in a situation of relative ethno-cultural homogeneity – as in the above countries – but in one of high ethno-cultural heterogeneity. The specificity of the British case has been timely recognised by Vertovec who has branded it as 'super-diversity' (2006).

### **1. Changes in the British debate on integration and research strategy**

Parallel but only partly connected to the new immigrations are the transformations in the British public and policy debate on integration in the most recent years. These transformations are characterised by the emergence of a 'neo-assimilationist' wave which has put 'multiculturalism' – the prevailing public and policy attitude in the last decades – on the defensive. Multiculturalism is a kind of integration that characterised British society between 1960-2000 and which Ralph Grillo (2006) has summarised as follows:

By and large there was a consistent policy, emanating from certain key ministries [...] which on the one hand sought to control and regulate immigration, but on the other accepted that the bulk of immigrants and their families were actually here to stay. Secondly, there was a widespread desire to address issues of racial discrimination and racism, and inequalities and disparities of achievement between members of minority ethnic groups (especially their children) and the rest of the

population. Thirdly, there was a recognition of the legitimacy of cultural difference and a willingness to allow the expression of such difference, within certain limits, in the private sphere, and to some degree in the public sphere too (p.6).

Since the early-mid 2000s it has been increasingly common in public discussions of ethno-cultural diversity to hear dismissive statements on multiculturalism like the following one by the right-of-centre Daily Mail columnist Melanie Phillips:

My view is that multiculturalism [...] has been quite lethal in fact to our culture [...] it is actually an engine to destroy national identity, it's an attack on British identity because it says that [...] any attempt to impose or assert majority values – i.e. the values of the nation – is racist, so it's an attack on the majority as racist. And this has many disastrous consequences not the least of which is that we are thus unable to integrate our minorities because in order to integrate minorities you've got to have something to integrate them into. In the past we used to integrate them into something called British National Identity. Now we say we don't believe in that any more and instead it's everyone for himself. I think this breaks up a society and it fragments us into a kind of warring tribes [...] which is disastrous for everyone and it keeps immigrants out, it says "there is nothing for you to join up into", so it is profoundly exclusive in my view (Phillips 2006)

This 'backlash against diversity' (Grillo 2005), has not only come from the mainstream Right, but also and most importantly for its social and political implications from important sectors of the Left<sup>3</sup> who are now arguing that: the UK is too diverse; diversity undermines cohesion and solidarity; multiculturalism leads to separatism; a stronger subscription to British national values and way of living is to be expected of minorities and migrants.<sup>4</sup>

One example of neo-assimilationist thinking in its progressive inflection is offered by David Goodhart's article for the political magazine Prospect.

Britain in the 1950s was a country stratified by class and region. But in most of its cities, suburbs, towns and villages there was a good chance of predicting the attitudes, even the behaviour of the people living in your immediate neighbourhood. In many parts of Britain today that is no longer true. ...[W]e now not only live among stranger citizens but we must *share* with them. We share public services and parts of our income in the welfare state, we share public spaces in town and cities where we

are squashed together on buses, train and tubes, and we share in a democratic conversation – filtered by the media – about the collective choices we wish to make. All such acts of sharing are more smoothly and generously negotiated if we can take for granted a limited set of common values and assumptions. But as Britain becomes more diverse that common culture is being eroded. And therein lies one of the central dilemmas of political life in developed societies: sharing and solidarity can conflict with diversity. ....[T]he Left's recent love affair with diversity may come at the expense of the values and even the people that it once championed (Goodhart 2004: 30)

At governmental/policy level this 'neo-assimilationist' turn can be seen in the statements of leading Labour politicians ranging from David Blunkett who – when Home Secretary – began to demand from migrants and minorities greater conformity to British norms and values (see *The Independent on Sunday* 2001) to Gordon Brown who – when still Chancellor of the Exchequer – explicitly subscribed to both Phillips and Goodhart's positions (see Brown 2004) and who – once Prime Minister – talked about British jobs for British workers (Brown 2007). It can also be seen in the general disappearance in the most recent years of the word 'multiculturalism' from the policy documents of the Blair's Labour Government and in the increasingly negative connotation being attached to 'multiculturalism', now sometimes ironically referred to in informal conversations of academics, policy-makers and activists as the 'the *m*-word'.

This shift in Left-wing thinking about diversity is to be seen as part and parcel of the wider transformations that the political Left has undergone in recent years, which consists of a historical rupture with its redistributive history and identity. As eloquently pointed out by Gerassimos Mosconas (2002) the contemporary mainstream Left has undergone a major qualitative transformation consisting of a 'break' with its past, one which entails the abandonment of any attempt – even moderate – to redress social injustice in favour of a mild endorsement of neo-liberalism with its inherent inequalities.

[The] governmental left has, despite its social discourse, departed in practice from the defence of the interests of wage earners and particularly the 'poorest of the poor'. Social Democracy has thus been transformed from a political force for the moderate promotion of equality within a socio-economic system that is by definition inegalitarian, into a force for the moderate promotion of inequality in the face of forces that are even more inegalitarian. ...In effect, by calling into question the essentials of its basic

culture and former governmental practice, social democracy is verging on a rupture in its identity. (p. 293).

In particular, the neo-assimilationist turn of the mainstream Left constitutes, in my view, one of the latest forms in which its recent endorsement of neo-liberalism is manifesting itself: multiculturalism is costly, increasingly unpopular and unrewarding in terms of votes, and dysfunctional to the creation of a homogeneous citizenry easy to govern. In other words, multiculturalism is seen as running against the efforts that late-modern governmental forces are making to reinvent themselves as powerful actors (with power over the people) at a time when they have lost much of their economic power to global capital (powerless over the economy). On the contrary, neo-assimilationism articulated in a nationalist-patriotic rhetoric of the type illustrated above is seen as functional to facilitating such efforts.

In addition to the neo-assimilationist turn with its populist scapegoating of minorities and migrants for the shortcomings of complex social transformations and its nostalgic sense of 'loss' for a mythical cohesive past, the British debate on integration seems also characterised by a general treatment of migrants and minorities as *objects of policy* and not as political agents too. It is also essentially centred on the nation-state which has embraced the philosophy of 'governance' and the dismantling of its welfare structures.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, such debate at best includes voices from ethnic minorities, but not those of new migrants.

Unlike the prevailing public, policy and academic discourse on integration, this article prioritizes the perspectives of the new migrants, by focusing on the latter's collective action directed at improving their living conditions in the UK. In doing so, it has been guided by the following question: what concerns do new migrants have in the receiving society that make them mobilize? The new migrants' perspectives obtained by examining their collective action is thus the background against which I will – in the conclusions – examine and assess the British – and to an extent European – public debate on integration.

## **2. Migrants and the study of collective action**

As anticipated, the treatment of migrants as objects rather than subjects of politics has not only been characterising policy makers who act on behalf and in the interest of the neo-liberal state but also many scholars who often embrace uncritically the perspective of the nation-state (see Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2003) developing their research within the dominant policy frame, not least in order maximize their chances of funding from governmental bodies that are increasingly demanding policy relevant research. Scholars addressing issues of migrants and politics tend to do so at the macro-level, often in abstract and isolation from the lived experiences and practices of citizenship of the migrants themselves. For example, they do so by: counterpoising abstractedly integration models (e.g. assimilationism vs. multiculturalism); by focusing on the effects of migration on the politics and policies of the receiving state and on the electoral patterns of the 'host' population; by addressing the politics and policies of 'homeland' governments and diplomacies towards their expatriates; by considering migrants in connection to the rise of the extreme Right or in terms of security threats or in terms of manoeuvrable electoral blocs (for an overview of existing work on the subject see Castles and Miller 2003).

Migrants have 'existed' as political actors only when they are entitled to vote or when they put themselves forwards as political candidates. Of course, this narrow understanding of political engagements (often accompanied by an interest in migrants' compliance and conformism to the norms and practices of the host society) cannot account for the political practices of migrants in the many countries in which they do not enjoy formal political entitlements. Nor can it account for the practices of those migrant residents that are not from 'special' areas of emigration – as the Commonwealth or the EU in the case of the UK – and that as a result enjoy no formal political rights.

Moreover, for the most part the limited literature on migrants' mobilization has been concerned with explaining the emergence of migrants' political behaviour which has been done in terms of 'political opportunity structure' (or POS).<sup>6</sup> This largely theoretical concern with the ultimate 'origin' of migrant collective action has – however – favoured the neglect of the objects of migrants' contention as well as promoted a 'detached' and 'neutral' –



rather than 'engaged' and 'committed' – model of research on the topic. For example, research on migrants' collective action has scarcely been connected to the critical analysis of the hegemonic debate about the integration that contemporary migrants encounter in 'Fortress Europe', let alone to wider debates about global and social justice, citizenship and uneven development.

To be sure, not all scholars fall into the above categories, and some – especially from anthropology and feminism – have recently developed approaches that seek to reconcile in a critical manner the micro and the macro levels, the experiential and the abstract and to be more 'people-centred' and recognisant of migrants' agency and subjectivity. This 'alternative' scholarship is visible in the work of transnationalist scholars (e.g. Bash, Glick Schiller and Szanton Blanc 1994; Smith and Guarnizo 1998; Levitt 2001; including the powerful critique of 'methodological nationalism' developed by Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2003), in that of the emergent ethnographic scholarship on migrants' political agency (e.g. Reed-Danahay and Brettell eds. 2008), and – to a significant extent – in the political anthropology of migration which gave migrants' a prominent position in developing critical examinations of the institutional practices of receiving societies (in the European examples are Grillo 1985, Grillo and Pratt eds 2002, Carter 1997, Cole 1997, and Però 2007b).

This article will contribute in particular to the development of the second of these scholarships by applying a critical, committed and people-centred approach to the field of integration through the examination of a group of migrants' integrative efforts and practices of citizenship and their relationship with the public discourse about diversity of their 'host' society.

### **3. The significance of the Latinos**

In 'super-diverse' Britain a migrant group that has received little attention despite its numerical significance is that of Latin Americans. Unlike in the US where the Latin American population is on the whole much more established, in the UK Latinos are, for the most part, a 'new immigrant group' for whom there are not yet reliable official statistics.<sup>7</sup> In my fieldwork I have repeatedly come across Latin Americans estimating their presence around

500,000. This estimate figure is made up by some 250,000 Brazilians, 200,000 Colombians and 50,000 Ecuadoreans and other Latin American nationalities.<sup>8</sup>

Latin Americans arrive in Britain through a broad range of immigration channels and hold a variety of different statuses including many students, unauthorised/irregular migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees.<sup>9</sup> The majority of Latin Americans migrated primarily for 'economic' reasons (e.g. poverty and lack of opportunities for self-development) although, as often is the case among Colombians, migration can be the result of the combination of 'economic' and 'political' reasons. Apart from a sizeable group of refugees, there are many people who left Colombia for the generalized climate of violence, fear and instability that – with poverty – characterises vast geographical areas of the country.<sup>10</sup>

In Britain Latinos are predominantly residing in London, with significant concentrations in Lambeth, Southwark, Islington and Camden. They are heavily employed in the cleaning sector where they work for subcontracted companies (which are often multinationals) to clean commercial and public buildings (e.g. offices, hospitals etc.) often under very exploitative conditions.<sup>11</sup> They have also developed a wide range of 'ethnic' commercial and cultural activities. These 'self-directed' activities include: restaurants, bars, cafes, discos, food shops (e.g. groceries, butchers, etc.), *locutorios* (shops from which to phone 'home' at discounted rates), *giros tiendas* (shops from which to send remittances to Latin America, etc.), doctors and dentists, barbers and hairdressers, laundrettes and tailors, video rentals and music shops etc. Sometimes some of these activities are hosted in large multicultural/cosmopolitan shopping centres and markets, sometimes they are part of smaller 'all-Latino' shopping malls.

Not being from Commonwealth countries Latinos do not speak English as a second language. As many of them recognise, their linguistic competence at their arrival is on average rather poor and tends to improve slowly over the years.

Their voice in the British media and public discourse is absent as it is that of the other new migrant groups. In spite of such marginalization, the Latinos have an impressive and further growing 'ethnic' or 'community' media in Spanish that includes several radio programs and news magazines widely and

freely distributed covering developments in Latin American countries as well as in the UK. By addressing the entire Spanish-speaking Latin American collective in the UK, the Latino media are simultaneously facilitating the Latino population in the UK to imagine themselves as a 'community' (Anderson 1983; Chavez 1991).

Latino migrants – unlike Commonwealth and EU ones – are not entitled to vote in any type of British elections. This situation makes it particularly compelling to adopt a notion of politics that transcends the voting and standing for election typical of certain political science to include a broader range of collective political initiatives.

An important point to make here is that the wide range of social, cultural and economic initiatives and exchanges just outlined has been promoting physical and virtual encounters and networks among Latinos' migrants not only from the same nationalities but also from different ones. These encounters and exchanges are forging a growing sense of a common Latino identity which – as we will see – has recently begun to be deployed politically with important initiatives articulated by people of different Latin American nationalities and branded as 'Latino'. It is for this reason that soon after beginning fieldwork on Colombians' collective initiatives directed at the UK (the original focus of my research) I moved my focus from Colombians to Latin Americans.

#### **4. Latin American Mobilization in Britain**

As pointed out elsewhere in greater detail (see Però 2007a), Latin American migrants' political engagements in Britain can be schematically conceptualized as taking two parallel ideal-typical forms, those directed at a transnational level (especially towards Latin America) and those directed towards Britain.<sup>12</sup> Of course, as we shall see later on, in practice these types of engagement intersect and influence each other as people and organizations are often simultaneously involved in 'multi-directional' politics, engaging in homeland and transnational political practices as well as in 'integration' ones. However, an important point about Latin Americans in Britain is that in recent years their 'integration' politics has grown quite significantly quantitatively and qualitatively.<sup>13</sup> In particular, since 2004 the growing concern with issues of

long-term integration such as exploitation, marginalization, lack of recognition, legal status, racism, religious sectarianism, drug addiction, domestic violence, and political exclusion has started to be translated into new important collective initiatives which have gone beyond the 'charitable', publicly funded, short-term oriented provision of services connected to the immediate resettlement needs (basic information about health, welfare, immigration and so forth) that had characterised their initiative in Britain until then. This concern has effectively been expressed by one of my informants as follows:

We are realising that it's time to do something about our conditions here rather than just keep thinking about Colombia, as here we are having many problems like marginalization, lack of opportunities, education, religion (with the 'Christian' sects), drug-addiction... and it's not just the society here the cause of the problems but the mentality of the Latinos too. ...We are realising that a new way to approach politics in this country is necessary... rather than supporting the Labour Party automatically we are realising that we need to become more demanding and become aware also of our political and electoral weight for using it as a bargaining tool.

Below I will examine the two possibly most important new 'integrative' political initiatives, namely the Latin Front and the Latin American Workers' Association/T&G.

## **5. The Latin Front**

Arguably the most ambitious political initiative of the Latinos in Britain to date, the Latin Front (or LF) came into being in the second half of 2004 by the initiative of two liberal and middle-class Colombian women. The intent was to represent politically the interests of Latin Americans in the UK. Its official goals included: creating a sense of community; achieving recognition as an ethnic group; lobbying British and European Institutions to promote the rights of Latin American residents including the regularization of those with an irregular status, working rights, social security rights, voting rights, health and education, and citizenship for Latinos' children being born in the UK; and quantifying the Latino political 'weight' (for purposes of political bargaining).



[Fig. 1. The Front page of the (British-)Latino news magazine *Extra*, (February 2005) which reads: 'The hour has come! Join the Latin Front']

At least in the first year of its existence, the LF successfully intercepted and expressed the growing concern among Latin Americans for recognition as an ethnic minority and for the improvement of their living conditions in a long-term perspective as well as for the regularization of many of its members whose irregular/unauthorized status had confined them to a situation of great precariousness, insecurity, vulnerability and marginality. With a loose organizational structure and a great deal of pro-activeness and entrepreneurship, the Latin Front started off as an umbrella organization/movement with the ambition to federate Latinos' civic organizations and initiatives, create a strong unitary and representative 'community voice', and lobby British political institutions. As one of its founders defined it: 'the Latin Front is a political but not party political group'. For this reason the possibility of acquiring the 'charity' status had been discarded.

The political background of the Latin Front activists is quite heterogeneous.<sup>14</sup> The two founders have a liberal and centrist identity. One of

them has been simultaneously active with the Liberal Democrats in Britain where she stood as candidate Councillor at the local 2006 elections, and with liberals in her country of origin where – taking advantage of electoral law changes – she has tried to be appointed candidate MP for one of the abroad constituencies.<sup>15</sup> The majority of the activists involved, however, seemed to be of left-of-centre orientations. Among these, those who had the status of refugee or had left their country of origin due to political violence were prominent. Some also had taken part in political, civic and community initiatives in Britain. On the whole the Latin Front, at least in its first year of activity, was a collective and inclusionary initiative developed by a group of people that had a diverse political socialization, sensitivity and identity.

The main field of initiative in which the Latin Front operates is the party-political. Lobbying all the main British political parties and institutions has characterised the Latin Front from the outset. In its first year or so of existence, its activity culminated with the organization of three major public events with such parties and with a meeting with the home secretary. The public events were held in the hall of one of main Latino shopping malls of London with a lay out and arrangements designed to present the Latin Front and the wider Latin American collective in an authoritative and powerful way. As figure 2 illustrates two long desks were placed in a 'L' shape with the side facing the floor sitting the British Politicians and a LF moderator while the other sitting journalist from the Latino media observing the event to report to the wider community. An amplified lecture podium was placed next to the Politicians desk. A lot of care went into presentational details and arrangements. A programme was printed and distributed, all speakers and journalist wore badges and had a signpost with the logo and name of their organization. A professional cameraman filmed the entire duration of the event and professional photographers took pictures of the Latino leaders and British politicians throughout the event. A large printed banner reading 'Frente Latino' was placed over the invited politicians' desk.



[Fig. 2. The Latin Front meets British politicians, Spring 2005. Photo Davide Però]

The substantive politics of the Latin Front has been primarily directed at gaining recognition. The Latin Front mobilized to make Latin Americans visible and recognised as an 'ethnic minority', not least in the political arena where it aspired to represent politically the entire Latin American collective residing in Britain. It also mobilized for the regularization of un-authorized Latin Americans living and working in Britain and of their children, especially those born in the UK, for whom they asked for citizenship.

The strategy of appealing to British political institutions followed a pattern that consisted of deliberately ambiguous and flexible positioning. This strategy involved avoiding to ally a priori with only one political party and engaging instead in relationships and negotiations with all of them simultaneously so as to try and set them in competition with each other for the support of the Latin Front and of the Latin American population which it claimed to represent. The FL's visibility among various levels of British political institutions has been achieved by drawing on the political networks and capital that one of its two founders had built through activism at the Borough Level.

From the outset, the Latin Front has also carefully dealt with Latin American diplomatic institutions and personnel. In order to retain full autonomy, a courteous distance was deliberately kept to prevent powerful and skilled diplomats from interfering with their respective national and home-country agendas.

In trying to widen its support basis and construct a powerful image vis-à-vis British institutions, the Latin Front deployed a shrewd identity politics based on a strategic use of the 'Latino' category. This is a category that becomes salient outside Latin America to indicate some shared ethnocultural background vis-à-vis the rest of the population. Until then, the 'Latino' category had circulated 'spontaneously' in the everyday 'social' arena in London but had not yet been deployed contentiously. Other community organizations had used the term Latino to appeal to a wider population of potential users or members, but not yet for purposes of explicit political claim-making at least on such a large scale. Thus, the Latin Front is the most ambitious and grand-scale attempt to date to introduce 'Latino' as category of contention in the British political arena by making the most of the existing Latino identity, networks and resources. By clustering together all Latin American nationalities (and even southern European), this strategy has sought to convey the idea of the existence of a large and politically organized collective which is comparable to those of the established ethnic minorities and which therefore deserves similar attention from British institutions. It is a strategy that reflects the multicultural set up of the UK and its encouragement to organize around ethnicity.

However, this organization around ethnicity was not just 'instrumental' and derived from a 'cold' assessments of costs and benefits, but also by a 'genuine' belief – at least on the part of some – that organizing as Latinos is an intermediate stage necessary to create a larger and confederated movement to protect migrants' interests. As Ubaldo put it: 'we must learn to organize politically among Latinos and then begin to collaborate with other immigrant communities. If we can't unite among ourselves, how can we unite at a wider level?!'

The Latin Front has been very prompt to take every major opportunity to become active and visible. Perhaps the most emblematic example of this



responsiveness is its attempt to strengthen the links with the Brazilian community following the killing of an innocent Brazilian migrant – Jean Charles de Menezes – by the police who had mistaken him for an Islamist terrorist. The Latin Front for the occasion organised ad hoc events (including meetings with the Police) provided support and solidarity to Brazilians' protests and initiatives, and in so doing enhancing its visibility and links with both the Brazilians and British public institutions.<sup>16</sup> Since then one of the Latin Front leaders has become part of a number of committees (involving the police and other institutions) as representative of the Latin American 'community'.

The identity politics of the Latin Front extends not only horizontally across ethnic/nationality lines but also vertically across class lines seeking to appeal to Latinos from all classes and backgrounds. Little identifiable along the Left-Right continuum and in a somewhat populist and ambiguous fashion, the LF makes of political transversalism and ecumenism its own political flag. Indeed, the Latin Front leadership appears to conceive Left/Right divisions unhelpful to the goal of creating a single strong Latino ethnic community voice in Britain. This transversal character of the Latin Front represents in the eyes of many a good thing given that many Latinos (of any political affiliation) are likely to experience similar difficulties in the UK.

As one of its founders once said in a meeting 'All the efforts of the Latin American organizations must converge in a broad and strong bloc'. I found this view shared by many other Latinos who were not actively involved in the LF. Juana, for example, said 'it exists a common interest among many Latinos to have one voice representing us... for example many work and pay taxes and would like to be regularized or that there were an amnesty'.

### *Criticism and Achievements*

Despite the popularity achieved during its first year and the support of much of the Latino media, not everybody within the Latino 'community' subscribed to the idea of confederating under the overarching framework and leadership of the Latin Front. Indeed, the majority from the civic and political Latino organizations steered away from the LF invitation to join in. Reasons for such lack of support included reservations about the LF ambiguous political nature,

and the personal agenda and political affiliation of part of its leadership, including in relation to their home country (many Leftist Latin Americans also rejected the idea of a transversal and interclassist organization organized around ethnicity and opted for alternatives; see below). Some also saw the leadership of the LF as too involved in 'politicking', and 'vote exchange' both here and in Colombia. <sup>17</sup>

One way in which Latin Front activists explained the lack of support from many Latino community organizations was 'jealousy', competition and fear of being overshadowed losing the visibility, status and benefits acquired by carving out a niche for themselves over several years. They also explained the lack of support in terms of the obsolete participatory model subscribed by most existing community organizations, which entailed specialization in the provision of advice/assistance on short-term issues of immigration, housing and access to welfare but were clearly failing to respond to emerging preoccupations such as those of more long-term integration (e.g. education, marginalization, voting rights).

Despite the above criticism and while not achieving its objectives, the initiatives of the Latin Front have made Latin American migrants more visible in the eyes of the local and national British politicians and administrators. The LF has also conveyed the impression of certain organizational and mobilization skills and resources, even if they are still not considered as adequate interlocutors by the local authorities, as the following quotation from a Lambeth Labour Councillor shows.

Question: 'What did you think of last year's event organized by the LF in the shopping mall?'

Answer: 'Well I was very impressed first of all by the scale of it that was very good that there was such a large turn out of people. ...But in terms of a working event it's not the way to bring people together. ... nevertheless it gave an indication that there's a sizeable community that needs to be factored into the political process, and to try and make that happen you have to try and bring a crowd together and say to the politicians from all parts 'here we are' you know 'Would you like to address us? 'Would you like to hear what we have to say?' [...] So as a starting point it was a useful opening point. But in terms of a practical way to dwell below the issues and then set up a machinery to make it happening from there on it hasn't done much to take that process forward. [...]'.

Finally, after the Latin Front initiatives of 2005 some of its leaders have become part of mainstream public committees, such as the Refugee & Asylum Seekers Listening Group (which features the London Metropolitan Police). Even if such 'recruitment' may have had a co-optative dimension it still denotes some significant degree of recognition on the part of the British institutions, and represents an important institutional forum where to voice concerns and demands.


The Latin Front has also created a feeling of empowerment among Latin American migrants themselves, especially through the public meetings it arranged. It raised the awareness and boosted the confidence that Latinos possess the resources and skills that can turn them into a collective capable of positively influencing its own integration in the UK.

## **6. The Latin American Workers Association and the Transport and General Workers Union**

### *The Latin American Workers Association*

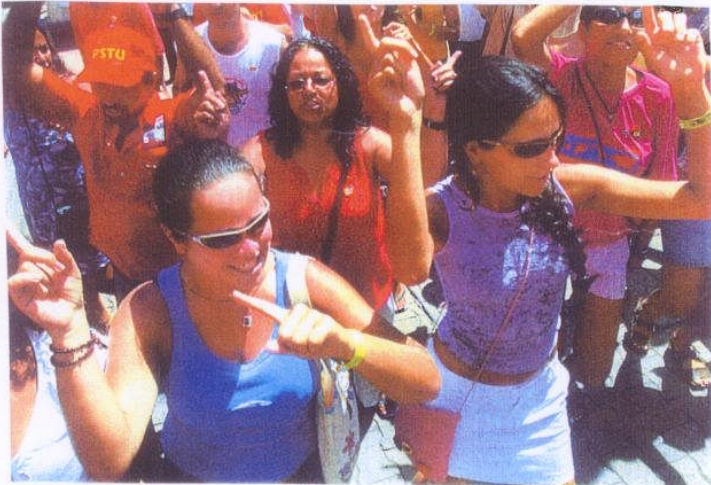
The Latin American Workers Association or LAWA was set up by three Colombians and one Chilean male Trade Unionists as part of the British Transport & General Workers Union (or T&G) in the second half of 2004, after they had existed in a more informal way for several months.<sup>18</sup> Forming LAWA was seen as a necessary step to protect and support more effectively the large number of Latin American workers experiencing super-exploitation and abuses of various types at the work place (Figure 3 reproduces a leaflet by LAWA listing some of these employers' malpractices). Until the creation of LAWA employment had been a crucial aspect of life which was left 'uncovered' by the existing Latino community organizations which – as we have seen – were concerned, on the one hand, with 'charitable' provision of services and information connected to the resettlement and the short-term, and on the other, with home-land and transnational politics . In the words of one of its founders:

The LAWA is the product of a necessity, which has emerged progressively after that many Latinos had solved their immigration, housing and benefits problems. ...Besides addressing some of the exploitative aspects experienced by Latinos workers in Britain, LAWA struggles for helping the Latinos workers coming out of the invisibility with dignity not by 'asking' (*pedir*) but by 'demanding' (*exigir*). Together with other workers organization – the Portuguese, the Turkish, the African – we share the same class need [necesidad de clase].



Asociación de Trabajadores  
Latinoamericanos

**¡Juntos seremos más fuertes,  
unete a nuestra organización!**



Ahora ya los latinoamericanos tendremos un lugar en Londres donde  
podremos informarnos y recibir asesoría en todos los casos  
relacionados en el area laboral como:

- Despidos injustificados
- No pago de salario
- Incumplimiento de los contratos de trabajo

Defendemos y representamos los derechos de los trabajadores no  
importa el status que se tenga en éste país.

Iniciamos atención: 020 8800 4281  
preguntar por 'Latin American office'

**SINDICATO GENERAL DE  
TRABAJADORES Y DE TRANSPORTE**

[Fig. 3: A LAWA's leaflet]

LAWA started out of an urge of Marcelo and Arturo to combat the many abuses experienced by Latin Americans at work. Together with Fernando and Pedro they looked for support in the British trade union movement in order to do that more effectively. The view that needs play a key role in the emergence of LAWA emerged also in an interview with another activist, Irene.

People mobilize because they have needs otherwise they don't mobilize. For instance, in the case of immigrant workers here [UK], they organize because they have a need. And what is the need? The exploitation being perpetrated by the cleaning companies and by the Colombian themselves, Latin Americans [supervisors and managers] who exploit other Latin Americans [cleaners]. It is out of necessity that people get organized: "they are stealing my salary, they are underpaying me, they are sacking me without a justification, they are violating my rights" this is why people get organized. If people had it all they wouldn't organize.

The kind of problems that Latin Americans experience and the nature of LAWA's activity are illustrated by Ines.

Sexual harassment, psychological maltreatment ... abuses concerning working time, verbal abuses and discrimination of all sorts. Essentially all that happens because one doesn't know the [British] laws ... and people [employers and managers] take advantage of that and abuse the power they've got. ...I myself had a case and after solving that, I stayed on working with them [LAWA] as a volunteer. I was abused verbally and psychologically by my managers. ...It happened in a clothes shop for which I worked.

Indeed, Ines saw her decision to mobilize with LAWA as being connected to her working conditions but also to her civic and political identity and formation.

Yes...it was like a means of protecting myself, because not only was I getting affiliated to protect myself in this case [see below] but also in future situations. It is a way of protecting oneself here as a worker, as an individual and as a human being. ...I also always wanted to collaborate to my community ... it's not possible that this [exploitation/abuse] is happening in a developed country and people just ignore it. ...So I said: "my community needs it [trade union work], the volunteers are few and also I am passionate about this kind of work"... I've always had the urge to help politically the people since high school. ...My mother always told me that I was 'the lawyer of the poor', that I always went out to defend this and that.

Although support in the field of employment was, in principle, available to Latino workers through the existing British trade unions, such support was not, in practice, accessible to them, for reasons of communication and language, trust, lack of relationships or links between the T&G and the Latin collective, and lack of adequate efforts on the part of the union to reach out for migrant workers.

An important concern in setting up LAWA was the preservation of its autonomy. LAWA founders had always been determined to form a political, rather than a civic or community 'charitable' organization. They wanted to avoid relying on public funding – as these organizations often do – because this would entail economic dependence on the state (an institution that they did not see as promoting the interests of working people and in particular of migrant workers) and political restrictions (for receiving public funding and a 'charitable' status). In the end, the four founders' guess about the need for LAWA proved right and the organization 'boomed' straight away (and with its Latino affiliations to the T&G) to the extent that after a few months of activity LAWA already struggled to keep up with the demand for assistance.

In terms of background, political socialization and experience the four founders all had a previous experience in trade union activism in their country of origin which was also connected to the reasons for which they had left their country. The other members of the directive committee also had a past of activism in their home country, although not necessarily in the trade union movement strictly speaking. LAWA has also begun to recruit activists among young people with a more limited political experience (if only for their younger age), as in the case of Ines.

Before setting up or joining LAWA, all its activists had been involved in one or more Latino civic organizations. Some became immediately active once in the UK, while others took longer as they went through a period of withdrawal, partly connected to the discouraging social environment (made of kin and acquaintances) in which they arrived and partly due to their contingent psychological situation.

As these organizers did not know each other in Latin America, it was their participation in the Latino civic and political circuit that brought them in

contact with each other and which they now – through the set up of LAWA – are in turn making more comprehensive and stronger. This relationship of symbiosis with the Latino associative circuit is sustained by LAWA's members participating in other Latino organizations which, in turn, contribute to LAWA's growth by referring to them people with work-related problems.

The field of political initiative in which LAWA operates can be described as 'socio-political'. LAWA is neither interested in party politics nor in lobbying national and local politicians and officials. They privilege political initiative in the socio-economic sphere around issues of workers' rights, and more generally, material justice. In addition to the protection of Latin American workers in the UK, they are connected to the initiatives of Social Forums and of the Global Justice movement. For example, in 2004 they participated in the European Social Forum in London. They have also been developing direct international/transnational links with trade unions in Latin America.<sup>19</sup>

In terms of 'identity politics' LAWA articulates a particular blend of class and ethnicity. Like the Latin Front, they are promoting greater ethnocultural recognition of Latin Americans at 'continental' rather than 'national' level, but unlike the former LAWA is doing that within the class framework of the trade union movement. Overall LAWA considers it important to be fully part of a large and organized British trade union, but feels there are ethnocultural specificities which require a 'customized' treatment hence their organization as Latinos within the T&G. However, as Fernando said, 'the objective and the essence of the struggle, as well as what unites us with other immigrant groups, is a question of class.' The attitudes that LAWA members have towards unauthorised migrant workers further help us to form an idea of LAWA's political vision. In Irene's own words 'Work is a right that all human beings have, if they are illegal or not is not something that makes any difference to us ... and this is why we also fight for [the regularization of] illegal immigrants'.

In addition to the cases attended at their office, LAWA has been involved in several initiatives for workers' welfare in London that ranged from supporting the strike and protest of the cleaners of the British House of Commons to the organization of training on working rights to its membership.

*'Justice for Cleaners': the Transport and General Workers Union and Latin American Migrants*

Latin Americans are becoming increasingly active also through the 'mainstream' Transport and General Workers Union directly (rather than through LAWA). For many Latin Americans this involvement developed as a result of the recent large-scale efforts on the part of the T&G – like the 'Justice for Cleaners' campaign – to organise workers in the cleaning sector who are almost all migrants and subject to strong exploitation. Although not centred around ethnicity, the trade union is a growing form of engagement among Latinos which is not only important in itself but also crucial to recognise if we want to avoid 'ethnacist' (Brah 1996) or 'culturalist' (Vertovec 1996) reductionism and be able to achieve a more comprehensive and complete understanding of Latino migrants' mobilization. In fact, at present there is a diffused tendency within migration and minorities studies to consider migrants and minorities as merely ethnocultural subjects overlooking all their other political identities, relationships and engagements, like those hinging around gender or – as in this case – class.

In terms of politics this mobilization represents a rather typical form of class initiative, i.e. one in which the socio-economic component is paramount and the ethno-cultural is complementary but still significant (expressed for instance by the resorting to migrant organizers). This is also a politics that targets all workers independently of their ethnocultural background, who in the cleaning sector happen to be essentially migrants (with a significant quota of Latin Americans). Alongside *Justice for Cleaners*, the T&G has also recently started to strengthen its pro-migrant stand by campaigning (together with other organizations) for the regularization of irregular migrants as it recognises that their immigration status renders them vulnerable to super-exploitation and abuses and condemns them to exclusion and marginality. As for LAWA, the prevailing attitude within the T&G toward unauthorized migrants is inclusionary, they tend to be seen as workers regardless of the legal status attached to them by the state.

The 'mainstream' T&G – through the 'Justice for Cleaners' campaign – has been adopting an 'organizing' strategy/model which has been explained to



me as consisting of reaching out for migrant cleaners at the workplace, creating there a sort of self-reliant trade union outposts. From then on the newly 'organized' workers will collectively and directly deal with the cleaning company which employs them without resorting to trade union officials from the central headquarters for mediation and assistance - except for extraordinary circumstances.



[Fig. 4. A T&G's Justice for Cleaners organized demonstration outside an international Bank hiring an exploitative cleaning subcontractor. Photo Davide Però:

The 'organizing' approach is different from the 'service' approach which by and large tend to characterise LAWA and which consists of providing support to migrant workers' needs on an individual basis in LAWA's headquarters.

The typical sequence of T&G Action can be summarised as follows.

- The T&G approaches the cleaning subcontractors (e.g. hired by a Bank, a Transport Authority etc) exploiting (migrant) labour to demand better conditions for the cleaners (e.g. living wage, sick pay, holiday pay,

pension contributions etc.) and the recognition of the trade union at the work place. Simultaneously it starts to unionize the cleaners and informing them about their rights and possibilities for improvements.

- The cleaning company usually rejects the T&G initial demands.
- T&G then starts to make simultaneous pressure from above and the outside as well as from below and the inside. From above and the outside, the union approaches the contracting company asking them to demand ethical and lawful practices from their own subcontractors. This is done by progressively attracting media and public attention on what goes on in the premises of these contractors in terms of exploitation and malpractices which can be damaging of the good public image and reputation of such contractors. Figure 4 illustrates this point: the T&G organizes a demonstration outside the contractors hiring an exploitative cleaning company. Figure 5 reproduces a T&G Justice for Cleaners leaflet distributed during one of such demonstrations denouncing the exploitative practices to which the cleaners are subjected to by the cleaning companies. From below and the inside, the newly unionized cleaners will start demanding for the application of the law and regulations where this does not happen and for the improvement of their employment conditions.
- Caught between these two forces, in the end the cleaning company gives in to the requests of the union and its cleaners.

# To the People of London.

We are the TUBE'S cleaners. We work in underground stations right across London, cleaning to keep the Capital moving.

Our day begins while most of the people of London are asleep. We work long hours, doing a hard, essential job, but for very poor rewards.

We earn just above the National Minimum Wage, far below the Living Wage needed to survive in London. Most of us get no sick pay, so we live in fear of how much even one day's illness can cost us. Most of us receive only 20 days paid holiday a year, the lowest legal minimum in the UK. We have no pension so dread spending our retirement in poverty. And while other TUBE workers receive travel assistance, we have to stretch our low wage to pay for our own.

We are struggling to make ends meet. We want to be treated with decency and dignity. We have had enough of our mistreatment by our employers which is why we are protesting today.

Our fight is not just about a fair wage, it is about Justice for Cleaners.

Our aims are simple...

- A living wage**
- Sick pay**
- Holiday pay**
- A pension**
- Union recognition and...**
- a TUBE pass!**

The TUBE companies can afford this. Help us in our fight for justice. Tell them to clean up their act.

With thanks

**The TUBE Cleaners of London**



[Fig. 5. A T&G's leaflet distributed during a demonstration against the exploitation of workers by cleaning companies.]

## *Criticism and Achievements*

While on the whole the T&G and LAWA are characterised by collaboration and broadly similar attitudes towards migrant workers some differences and sometime frictions exist as it is common in any large organization. It is beyond the scope of this article to examine them in any detail but one appears about the above described 'organising vs service' approach. For example, 'Justice for

Cleaners' is criticized for focusing on the big cleaning corporations and neglecting workers employed in smaller ones who need individual attention. Yet the organizing model is revealing successful to the extent of enabling a reinvigoration of the trade union movement in many advanced economies countries. Other differences hinge around (over-) bureaucratization, moderation and dirigisme.<sup>20</sup>

In terms of achievements LAWA and the T&G have unionized a remarkable number of Latin American workers (about one thousand). This process has happened in a relatively short period of time and by overcoming a number of fears and prejudices including those of deportation (recurrent and yet unjustified among unauthorized migrants) and those of dealing with *philoguerilleros* (a way of seeing trade unions which is recurrent among Colombians). The second achievement is the operationalization of the Latino workers protection which both LAWA and T&G have performed. Thirdly, they have also gained a greater visibility and popularity in the eyes of the Latin American collective and among employers who are becoming aware that there is an increasing chance to face the trade unions if they abuse migrant workers. Finally, on balance all this activity seems to have strengthened the overall integration of Latin American migrants into British society, particularly in the socio-political sphere.

## **7. Conclusions**

By focusing on Latin American migrants' mobilizations in London this article has responded to recent calls from within anthropology to engage more with the study of social movements and from within migration studies to rebalance the prevailing trend of considering migrants as objects of policy by looking at them as political actors. By examining Latino's 'integration politics from below', this article has also offered a corrective to recent alternative approaches to the above which have focused on the constitution of transnational communities and networks and which have conceived migrants' political practices as sustaining long-distance diasporic communities.

At the case study level the article has shown how Latino migrants' collective initiatives have recently broadened to include political mobilization

around issues of long-term integration and policy change in the UK. In particular, it has illustrated how Latino migrants have intensified their collective efforts directed at:

- combating the several forms of super-exploitation that so often affect them as workers;
- demanding political rights;
- claiming citizenship for their children born in Britain;
- calling for the regularisation of the many thousands of Latinos whose undocumented or irregular status forces them to live in fear and under conditions of vulnerability and marginality;
- demanding recognition as 'ethnic community' to levels that are comparable to those enjoyed by long-standing ethnic minorities;
- providing support to other (multi-ethnic) initiatives concerned with the achievement of dignified living standards for the London working classes.

This illustration has been provided by examining two different collective initiatives: the Latin Front (that operates mainly in the 'formal political' field by lobbying British political and social institutions) and the Latin American Workers Association /T&G (that operates mainly in the 'socio-political' field and as part of the wider trade union movement). The article also showed how these collective initiatives have made an unprecedented (at least for the UK) politicization and strategic deployment of 'Latino' as a category of contention. Moreover, the article has shown how these mobilizations are not only concerned with issues of cultural recognition (i.e. as an ethnic minority) but also with those of social recognition (i.e. in terms of residence and citizenship) as well as with material justice and inclusion (i.e. against exploitation and for dignified working and living conditions). In other words, the material presented has given a sense of *what* Latin American migrants in the UK mobilize about – namely, the improvement of the conditions of both invisibility and exploitation that they experience – and *how* – that is through a range of collective initiatives taking place broadly outside the formal political system and hinging around different combinations of ethnicity and class.

These collective efforts for recognition and dignified working conditions that Latin Americans have recently begun to make (in absence of voting rights)

denote active political engagement on their part. In fact, if – like Martiniello (2005) has recently outlined – one of the main indicators of ‘non-conventional’ migrant political participation in the receiving country are ‘presence in the trade unions’ and the ‘creation of collective actors’, then the instances of Latino collective initiatives presented here show that we are before a migrant group with significant political vitality.

These ethnographic findings enable the formulation of theoretical inferences in relation to British society at two levels: the actually existing British multiculturalism; and the public discourse on integration. The examination of Latinos’ mobilization reveals significant limitations of current multiculturalism in relation to the new migrants. Despite its rhetoric of appreciation of ethnic diversity, multiculturalism is de facto revealing difficulties in *recognising* the Latinos, both as an ethno-cultural minority and as *citizens*. More generally, British multiculturalism as a set of practices is showing problems in acknowledging the presence of the new migrants and adjusting to the situation of ‘super-diversity’ that has been developing in recent years. The recent neo-assimilationist wave – with its demand for homogeneity and conformism – is not encouraging a public debate on how a multiculturalism tailored around long-standing ethnic minorities should develop to recognise more effectively the new migrants and adjust to a situation of super-diversity.

The experience of the Latinos presented also reveals some strong limitations in the practice of multiculturalism regarding *exploitation*. British society is multicultural in the sense that it may be more tolerant and recognisant than others in Europe but it is also characterised by the diffused and structural exploitation of migrant workers.<sup>21</sup> This situation of marked material injustice that new migrant groups – like the Latinos – experience is an issue which is broadly neglected in the public debate on integration by both multiculturalists and neo-assimilationists. When preoccupations with people’s welfare are being expressed, these concern the defence of the shrinking welfare of those of ‘our own kind’ (to use Goodhart’s own words) against the erosive attacks not of Capital but of migrants and minorities. The silence over issues of material justice and welfare of migrants that we encounter on both sides of the debate on integration in Britain reminds us of the important

similarities that exist between multiculturalists and neo-assimilationists, such as the similar posture vis-à-vis neo-liberalism, one which has abdicated the promotion of equality in favour of the moderate but substantial acceptance of an increasingly unequal and exploitative system.

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## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Drafts of this paper have been presented at the Conference of the Canadian Anthropological Association, (Montreal, May 2006), in the seminar series of the School of Sociology and Social Policy of the University of Nottingham (February 2007) and at the B6 workshop of the International Migration, Integration and Social Cohesion network (Warsaw, April 2007). I wish to thank Pauline Gardiner Barber, Rainer Baubock, Winnie Lem, Jake Lagnado, Elisabetta Zontini and the two anonymous referees of *Focaal – European Journal of Anthropology* (where a version of this paper will be published; vol. 51, 2008) for their helpful comments.

<sup>2</sup> A reason for this seems connected to the relatively late engagement of the discipline with the study of migrants and migrations more generally (see Brettell 2000, Foner 2003). Concerned with the studies of 'cultures' as territorialized and bounded units (Brettell 2000) and informed by a 'sedentary metaphysics' (Malkki 1997), anthropologists focused on people who stayed put and ignored migrants.

<sup>3</sup> For an anthropological examination of the trajectory followed by Left in relation to the integration of migrants see Però 2007b.

<sup>4</sup> For a critical discussion of neo-assimilationism see Grillo (2005), but also Back et al. (2002), Cheong et al (2005), Vertovec and Wessendorf (2005).

<sup>5</sup> For an anthropological discussion of 'governance' see Però (2005b; 2005c).

<sup>6</sup> As pointed out elsewhere (Però 2007a), the idea that migrants mobilize as a result of the favourable opportunities provided by institutional context of the receiving society contained in these studies is problematic for they tend to provide a mono-causal explanation of migrants' mobilization which is based on a rigid and nation-state centred notion of political opportunities structure and which overlooks the role of other factors, such as migrants' political socialization and background, the exploitative and marginalizing conditions they experience, and the migrants' own networks.

<sup>7</sup> While in the US Latin American and Latino seem to be used to refer respectively to recently arrived migrants and to longer-standing people of Latin American background, in Britain this distinction does not seem to apply.

<sup>8</sup> At least for the Colombians, these estimates are consistent with those reported in Bermudez (2003) and McIlwane (2005), although somewhat exaggerated as pointed out by Guarnizo (2007). The number of people with a Latino background in the UK is likely to grow further also because of their high birth rates (Lewenstein 2006: 2).

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<sup>9</sup> For the Colombian case see Guarnizo (2007).

<sup>10</sup> See Macilwane (2005). This 'political' violence is paralleled by a 'common' violence which is particularly present in deprived urban areas.

<sup>11</sup> For an analysis of Latin Americans' involvement in the contract cleaning sector see Lagnado (2004).

<sup>12</sup> For an examination of the political transnationalism of Colombian migrants in the United Kingdom see Bermudez Torres (2006).

<sup>13</sup> For an overview of the broad and heterogeneous range of both 'transnational' and 'integrative' engagements of Latin American Migrants in Britain see Però 2007a.

<sup>14</sup> Heterogeneity characterised also the work activity of its main activists which included: journalists and media professionals, students, teachers, cleaners, doctors, shop owners and law advisors.

<sup>15</sup> This reveals 'host' and 'home'-country politics can be articulated not only simultaneously but also in synergy.

<sup>16</sup> Once more, this initiative was not just strategic/instrumental but represented also a genuine anxiety on the part of the Latino migrants (many of whom are of an irregular status) about being subjected to intensified anti-terrorist checks for having 'olive-colour skin' somewhat similar – in the eyes of the police – to certain stereotypes of potential terrorists.

<sup>17</sup> In addition, after about a year of activity several key Latin Front activists abandoned the project due to the realization of the impossibility of transforming the Latin Front into an open and participatory umbrella organization/movement and to the feeling of having been 'used' to confer the Latin Front greater authority and representative character.

<sup>18</sup> During the 'pre-T&G' period much of LAWA's activity was conducted in coffee shops, fast foods, and private homes.

<sup>19</sup> The development of such links shows how, in the context of politics, transnational and integration practices do not constitute a 'zero sum game' as they often intersect and are articulated simultaneously by the same social actors.

<sup>20</sup> The discrepancies characterising the LAWA/T&G relationship constitute an interesting and yet complex and delicate matter which would deserve a nuanced and accurate account which is not possible to provide in this context.

<sup>21</sup> These exploitative conditions have been legitimized and even encouraged by New Labour's 'managed migration' policy approach which while arguing in favour of (a very modest number of) migrant workers, it has been simultaneously stripping them from many substantial rights, see Flynn 2006.