

The Cross-Border Connection

Immigrants, Emigrants, and Their Homelands

ROGER WALDINGER



Harvard University Press

Cambridge, Massachusetts

London, England

2015

Immigrants, Emigrants, and Their Homelands

IMMIGRANTS ARE the people who leave one country behind to settle down somewhere else. Or so the dictionary contends. While citizens and sometimes even the scholars see the phenomenon in just this way, close observers of the immigrant experience in the United States have long known better. Though the huge transatlantic movements of the last century of migration generated millions of settlers, they also produced a continuous flow of people moving in the other direction. As discovered more than a century ago by the team that the US Immigration Commission sent to Europe, the results of the homeward bound flow were difficult to miss:

The investigators . . . were impressed by the number of men in Italy and various Slavic communities who speak English and who exhibit a distinct affection for the United States. The unwillingness of such men to work in the fields at 25 to 30 cents a day; their tendency to acquire property; their general initiative; and most concretely, the money they can show, make a vivid impression. They are dispensers of information and inspiration, and are often willing to follow up the inspiration by loans to prospective migrants. (Wyman 1993: 6)

As the commissioners unintentionally pointed out, the very same migrations that peopled America was a way of knitting old and new worlds together. Return migration belonged to a broader complex of social ties, facilitating migration while also channeling ideas, information, experiences,

and capital back to the places from which the immigrants had originally come. Though separated by thousands of miles and an ocean that took days, not hours, to cross, the migrants and stay-at-homes maintained the connection. Millions of letters crossed the Atlantic to be read, sometimes by the individual recipients, sometimes by one of the literate villagers, in a public event that disseminated the news to a far wider audience. While the letters were designed to keep relatives and friends informed of the latest developments in the migrant's life, they had other, deeper effects—namely, that of reporting on the advantages to be gained from life in the new world, thereby encouraging even greater numbers to engage in the migrant flow. The envelopes didn't contain news only: looking inside, one found cash. That money should flow from one side of the Atlantic to another was no accident; rather, this was the very idea that impelled migrants to leave home. Earning money in places where wages were high but spending money where the cost of living was low, the poor exploited the rich, using their access to the resources of a wealthier country to make life better back home. Migration didn't just generate social change back home; it was also often the lever for political transformation. Nationalist movements found fertile soil in the United States. With agitators freely plying their trade without fear of government repression, and a population base doing well enough to provide material assistance, the immigrants provided valuable support for the movements seeking to take apart the multiethnic empires that prevailed during the last era of mass migration.¹

One never wants to say that the more things change, the more they stay the same. But the careful student of contemporary immigration to the United States can't help but notice the similarities. Yes, America's foreign-born population has grown rapidly over the past four decades: ever since 1970, when the foreign-born population fell to its historic nadir of 4.7 percent, the foreign-born presence has been continuously rising. The forty million foreign-born persons now living in the United States make up 13 percent of the population; numbers are growing so rapidly that the immigration rate—measured as the annual flow of persons as a percentage of total population—is approaching levels seen during the last century of migration, when the country's population was less than one-third its current size.

If there is plenty of migration for settlement, evidence of connections linking "here" and "there" is no less striking than it was a hundred years ago. Of course, the places of origin are no longer the same. Although there is a continuing flow of migrants from Eastern Europe, transatlantic migration now takes on very modest proportions. Instead, the new immigrants come mainly from elsewhere in the Western Hemisphere, with sizable and

growing numbers arriving from Asia and still small but expanding populations coming from Africa.

Regardless of origins, the immigrants of the current era of mass migration are maintaining home country connections, doing so in ways that remind one of the past but also look quite different, as changes in technology, communication, as well as the social environment would lead one to expect. Yesterday, the simple letter did an excellent job of bridging here and there, even though the passage from one side to another was far from speedy. Today communication between migrants and their relatives and friends can be instantaneous. A huge, near-constant flow of telephone traffic moves between the United States and the countries from which its immigrants come. While telephone lines might not extend to some of the small, isolated villages from which the immigrants come, the rapid diffusion of cell phones allows almost everyone, everywhere, to be connected. Telecommunication may not be free, but it's not terribly expensive: competition within the telecommunications industry is constantly driving prices down. While the best prices are to be found on the Internet, cheap telephone cards are sold in just about every other store in the immigrant neighborhoods of Los Angeles, New York, Miami, and increasingly every other major US city. Access is also growing at the other end: the migrants' friends and relatives at home may be too poor to own a phone, in which case the purchase can be made by the migrant abroad.

As in the past, people and money are moving back and forth. At Christmastime, airplanes headed for El Salvador or Jamaica or Port-au-Prince are packed with immigrants, many equipped with US passports, on the way to spend the holidays with relatives still living at home. As with communication, the ethnic tourism of immigrants and those of their relatives lucky enough to enter the United States with a visa is a good business, attracting investors eager to serve this market and help it grow. Even more attractive, perhaps, is the business of sending the dollars earned by the immigrants in the United States back to the countries from which they have come. The flow of remittances has burgeoned to impressive proportions. Remittances received by developing countries are large (the second largest source of development finance after direct foreign investment); rising (up by almost fivefold between 1989 and 2011); stable (with less volatility than other sources, such as capital market flows or development assistance, and much less severely hit by the financial crisis that began in 2008); and free, requiring neither interest nor repayment of capital (Sirkeci, Cohen, and Ratha 2012). With so much money leaving a rich country and heading toward a wide variety of poor countries, there is no shortage of actors seeking to facilitate what the immigrants want to do on their own

accord. Remittances rank as a top priority for the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the American Development Bank, to name just a few. For the private sector, the remittance business is an opportunity to be exploited, which is why large American banks are taking over Mexican chains, Central American banks are opening branches in Los Angeles's immigrant neighborhoods, and all of the banks, whether US or foreign, are opening their doors for undocumented immigrants.

In the past, the emigrants' efforts to get ahead on their own won them the contempt of the compatriots and states that they left behind. As depicted by the famous Mexican writer and former diplomat Octavio Paz, in his book *The Labyrinth of Solitude*, written in the middle of the last century, the emigrants who looked for fortune across the border did so at the price of their souls:

[The *pachuco's*] whole being is sheer negative impulse . . . he has lost his whole inheritance: language, religion, customs, beliefs. He is left without a body and a soul with which to confront the elements, defenseless against the stares of everyone. (1950 [1994 ed.]: 14-15)

While Paz looked down from Olympian heights, popular culture spread the same view, with most Mexican movies, for example, portraying migration to the United States and Mexican American life in *el norte* in a negative light (Maciel 2000).

But that was then, and this is now. Yesterday's traitors have become today's heroes, as today's sending countries realize that emigration of so many nationals is a stroke of good luck, provided that the emigrants don't cut their ties to their old homes. Consequently, sending countries are reaching out to their expatriates, providing them with services, trying to solve the problems encountered in the United States, intervening with US authorities and policy makers, doing what they can to ensure that the flow of remittances doesn't stop, and converting the migrants and their descendants into ethnic lobbyists. The very same Mexican government that long ignored the nationals living north of the Rio Grande now embraces them. Mexico's consular infrastructure mirrors the size and dispersion of its emigrants: from Alaska to Arkansas and from Minnesota to Florida, Mexico's fifty-one consulates are spread across the United States, with mobile units regularly connecting with emigrants in more far-flung locations. While the consuls' job description includes resolution of everyday problems, the Institute for Mexicans in the Exterior focuses on the longer term, providing programs designed to build diasporic awareness and loyalty, while also providing an institutional framework linking migrant leaders and Mexican officials (González Gutierrez 2006a; Laglagaron

2010). The Salvadoran government has done the same on a smaller scale, making special efforts to ensure that the many Salvadorans living in the United States without full legal status take advantage of opportunities to gain permission that will allow them to live legally in the United States on a temporary basis, without any guarantee of long-term, permanent residence (Popkin 2003; Nosthas 2006).

Although immigrants' "here-there" connections are the subject of burgeoning scholarly interest, the results are disappointing. Committed to theories of globalization, proof of which they find in immigrants' extensive cross-border ties, most researchers have ignored the ways in which contemporary nation-states (especially the most powerful among them) circumscribe the immigrants' social connections while transforming their identities. Methodologically, too much of the research has focused on concerted cross-border activities rather than on the more common and routine sort, and paid little attention to the processes that bind the immigrants to their new homes. Remittances and their consequences have been the subject of extensive, sophisticated quantitative research, telling us much about this one side of a multifaceted phenomenon, but little, if anything, about other myriad connections extending from receiving to sending state and then back again.

This book seeks to do better. Rather than restricting the focus to either the sending or the receiving side, it encompasses both. By analyzing the factors that both promote *and* supplant cross-border involvements, this book goes beyond the usual polarities, highlighting the impact of globalization while showing how it stands in tension with the continuing force of the nation-state. The book uses multiple methodologies, intersecting with the full range of relevant disciplines: anthropology, history, political science, and sociology. I draw on an abundance of sources: fieldwork; documents; newspaper accounts from the US mainstream and ethnic media, as well as the foreign press; a broad range of large-scale, representative surveys conducted in the United States and the countries from which today's migrants come; as well as a vast secondary literature.

The next chapter will set the intellectual context, explaining how scholars have sought to understand the connections between immigrants and their homelands. This chapter critically assesses the sprawling and ever-expanding scholarship on the phenomenon known as "immigrant transnationalism." As I will show, this literature has produced a new way of looking at migration, demonstrating that connections between place of reception and place of origin are an inherent, enduring component of the long-distance migrations of the modern world. The problem, however, is that connectivity between sending and receiving societies is cause *and*

effect of international migration. Hence, discovering that migrants engage in cross-border activities begs the question, sidestepping the challenge of understanding the sources and types of variations in these connections that migration almost always produces: Why might these linkages persist, attenuate, or simply fade away? What different patterns characterize the many forms of cross-border involvement—whether occurring in political, economic, or cultural spheres, or involving concerted action or everyday, uncoordinated activities of ordinary immigrants? And what happens as the experiences and resources acquired through migration filter back to the home country?

Chapter 3 begins the job of answering these questions. I start with the premise that the people opting for life in another state are not just *immigrants* but also *emigrants*, retaining ties to people and places left behind. Few international migrants come as lonely adventurers; instead, they move by making use of the one resource on which they can almost always count—namely, support from one another—which is why social connections between veterans and newcomers lubricate the migration process. But the chains of mutual help extend across borders as well since the cross-border progression of families takes place at a much slower rate, in more erratic, incomplete fashion, with both migrants and stay-at-homes depending on one another for survival. Thus, in moving to another country, the migrants pull one society onto the territory of another state, creating a *zone of intersocietal convergence*, linking “here” and “there.” Still of the sending state, even though no longer *in* it, the immigrants transplant the home country society onto the receiving-state ground. In the process, *alien* territory becomes a *familiar* environment, yielding the infrastructure needed to keep up here-there connections and providing the means by which migrants can sustain identities as *home* community members while living on *foreign* soil.

The migrants cross borders in order to access resources that do not spill out from the territories of the rich states where they are contained. As the newcomers settle down and acquire competencies that the new environment values and rewards, the migrants gain ever-greater capacity to help out relatives and communities left behind. But then, the paradox of international migration kicks in: the migrants find that their own lives, just like the resources that lured them to a foreign land, get confined to the territory on which they have converged. Physical distance proves a hard constraint on continuing cross-border interchanges, leading almost inevitably to social separation. The new society that they have entered simultaneously transforms and absorbs the migrants, making them increasingly different from the people left behind and reducing the needs and motivation

to keep the ties. Over time, an increasingly large share of the core familial network changes location; as the center of social gravity moves from "there" to "here," the costs and benefits of maintaining the cross-border connection prove increasingly unfavorable. Hence, the migrants increasingly find themselves not just *in* the receiving state but increasingly *of* it, leading intersocietal *convergence* to give way to intersocietal *divergence*.

Moreover, the fact that international migration is not just a social but a political phenomenon structures the ties between "here" and "there." Though territorial boundaries have become more heavily guarded, they prove to be protective once they are traversed, insulating migrants from the pressures of the home state and providing them with political freedoms previously unavailable. The material and the political combine: the receiving country's wealth generates resources used for leverage back home; further weight comes from the skills, allies, ideas, and experiences acquired in a new political system. Consequently, some migrants maintain long-term engagements across borders, presenting themselves as members of the community they left behind, though they often advance interests distinct from those that have remained in place. These many cross-border migrant involvements—whether short- or long-term, whether maintained by individuals calling home or traveling or by organized groups seeking to influence policy—galvanize responses from sending states that seek to influence and embrace emigrants and a diaspora found in the territory of another state. In the process, the boundaries of the homeland polity become the object of conflict. The migrants, wanting full citizenship rights, seek a cross-border extension of the polity, one that corresponds to the intersocietal convergence produced by migration. Government elites and many of the stay-at-homes prove resistant, opposed to the costs imposed by extending political entitlements to those who voted with their feet for life in a foreign state and who increasingly behave like the foreigners among whom they live. But neither homeland, grassroots politics, nor state efforts at diaspora engagement interests the mass of the migrant rank and file. *Intersocietal divergence* becomes the dominant trend because most immigrants and immigrant offspring become progressively disconnected, reorienting concerns and commitments to the place where they actually live. Starting out as strangers, the migrants are turned into nationals—a process that also estranges them from the people and places where their journey started.

Chapter 4 shows how migration generates cross-border connections of all types. The typical migrant doesn't turn her back on the place left behind: travel, communication, and material exchanges all bridge kin and communities separated by space, effectively allowing emigrants to be

immigrants at the same time. Only an elite group of "transnationals" seems able to live their lives across borders; however, that option proves impractical for almost all. Access to the technology that might shrink distance is highly uneven, with significant disparities *among* immigrants but even greater disparities *between* immigrants and stay-at-homes. And while long-distance communication is easier and cheaper than ever, the brute fact of physical separation still matters. Keeping things moving between "here" and "there" requires scarce resources that are unequally shared, of which money and the capacity to move back and forth freely across borders are the most important. Consequently, relatively few migrants succeed in maintaining high-intensity cross-border contacts of all types. Moreover, the incentives to connect and the resources needed to do so follow opposing tracks: years of residence in the country of reception increase the material capacity to engage in the cross-border circuit, but they paradoxically reduce the motivation to do so.

Cross-border social ties may be dense and relatively persistent, but, as Chapter 5 will show, they don't suffice to maintain immigrants' engagement in the politics of their homelands. Political detachment occurs for a variety of reasons: Prior experience told the migrants that their state could do little to help, which is precisely why they voted with their feet. Homeland political matters also lose salience once the migrants have transitioned to a new polity, where homeland political activity generates only symbolic rewards and the environment lacks the features—namely, party mobilization and the example and influence of politically oriented neighbors and friends—that would spur attention to homeland matters. Hence, while most migrants maintain extensive social ties to the places left behind, political attention starts low and quickly flags. For a minority of immigrants, the experience of migration to a richer, democratic country paradoxically *facilitates* their continuing home country engagement. Living abroad, migrant political activists enjoy protection from home-state officials eager to tamp down dissent. Over time, most migrants, including the disadvantaged, get ahead: the economic resources leveraged as a result of migration gives them clout that homeland officials generally can't afford to ignore. In the case of the United States, political structure and political culture facilitate and encourage homeland-oriented activism and motivate ethnic lobbying. In this context, moreover, a long history of rallying around homeland causes has made homeland-oriented activism a fully acceptable, almost normative path of Americanization.

Chapters 4 and 5 mainly highlight the microlevel, providing ample evidence of cross-border connectedness, but these chapters focus principally on the receiving side and the pressures that weaken home country ties.

The remainder of the book expands the focus to encompass the country of origin, thus swiveling to zero in on the *zone of intersocietal convergence* and linking places of *emigration* with places of *immigration*. Chapter 6 turns to the large canvas and develops a framework for understanding the interactions between emigrants and emigration states. This chapter emphasizes the dualities at the heart of the migration phenomenon: immigrants are also emigrants, aliens are also citizens, foreigners are also nationals, nonmembers are also members. At once *of* the sending state but not *in* it, the migrants are members whose everyday cross-border connections and ongoing needs draw the sending state across borders; residing abroad, however, their claims to belonging are undermined by their presence on foreign soil. At once *in* the receiving state but not *of* it, the migrants can access the economic and political resources available in their new home, using these resources to gain leverage in the home left behind; as outsiders, however, their rights are circumscribed and their acceptance is uncertain, vulnerabilities that can be aggravated if continuing homeland involvement triggers the suspicion of receiving-state nationals. Both conditions activate interventions by home states seeking to influence and protect nationals abroad. While extension to the territory of another state keeps options inherently constrained, even limited engagements can inflame the passions of receiving-state nationals, already anxious about the foreigners in their midst.

Chapter 7 applies the framework developed in Chapter 6 to a specific case—that of Mexico and Mexican emigrants in the United States—via a comparison of two different types of emigration policy: expatriate voting, a relatively new development, and provision of an emigrant identity card, a long-standing component of traditional consular services, though one that has recently been transformed. Focusing on the complex set of interactions linking migrants, sending states, and receiving states, this chapter identifies the key differences and similarities between these two policies. Both policies suffered from a capacity deficit inherent in sending-state efforts to connect with nationals living in a territory that the home country cannot control; both also generated conflict over membership and rights. Nonetheless, Mexico's efforts to resolve the immigrants' identification problems in the receiving society proved useful to millions; by contrast, a tiny proportion of emigrants took advantage of the first opportunity to vote from abroad. These diverging experiences demonstrate that sending states can exercise influence when intervening on the receiving-state side, where the embeddedness of immigration provides a source of leverage. By contrast, the search to reengage the emigrants back home encounters greater difficulties and yields poorer results because the emigrants' extraterritorial status

impedes the effort to sustain the connection to the people and places left behind. In the end, the chapter shows that extension to the territory of another state yields far more constraints than those found on home soil as well as unpredictable reactions from receiving states and their peoples, not to speak of nationals who no longer perceive the migrants as full members of the society they left.

Chapter 8 continues to scrutinize the zone of intersocietal convergence, this time tightening the frame to see what happens when immigrants come together to do good for the local communities they left behind. Here the spotlight falls on an immigrant universal: namely, the hometown associations that crop up in countless migrant destinations throughout the world. Though often formed in order to reduce feelings of isolation and create a familiar environment in a strange world, contemporary hometown associations increasingly seek to raise funds in order to assist the very same communities where the migrants originally lived but from which they had to depart. This chapter shows how conflict, both among migrants in the host country, and between migrants in the host country and stay-at-homes in the homeland, is an inherent aspect of hometown association activities and their efforts to create sociability "here" and development "there." The reader will also see that the hometown migrants now living abroad find it difficult to decide what they share in common and that those who do engage in organized efforts to span "here" and "there" represent a select few. Moreover, the issue of how the migrants and their associations relate to the people and institutions left behind is often a dilemma that gets resolved in any number of ways, not all of which render satisfaction for either side.

With this book, I hope to provide both an innovative intellectual perspective and a guide to the immigrant reality unfolding before our eyes. As opposed to the globalists who see immigrants living in two worlds and the nationalists insisting that these same home country connections be cut, I will show that the immigrants are instead between here and there, keeping in touch with and trying to remain true to the people and places that they have left behind while simultaneously shifting loyalties and allegiances to the people and places where they have settled. The pages to follow tell this story in its full complexity, attending to the many, often unanticipated ties linking "here" and "there," as well as the factors that break them apart.

The Dialectic of Emigration and Immigration

EVERY IMMIGRANT is an emigrant, every alien a citizen, every foreigner a national. Though this duality lies at the heart of the migration process, it is one that scholars all too often evade. For the proponents of assimilation, the people crossing borders are just *immigrants*, moving to settle, which is why they quickly adapt to the ways and respond to the expectations of the new society they have joined. By contrast, the proponents of transnationalism see the migrants as *emigrants*, keeping up contacts and involvements with the people and places left behind. The transnational perspective provides a useful corrective to the conventional viewpoint, which overlooks the inherently cross-border nature of migration itself and the ways in which population movements across states always build other, subsequent bridges across boundaries. While the transnational perspective rightfully emphasizes this cross-state dimension, it is nonetheless too pat, pretending that migrants can lead lives across borders, when in fact the dialectic between immigration and emigration is a source of constant tension.

The people crossing international borders are active makers of their own destinies, continually seeking to move ahead. Yet they do so under circumstances and conditions not of their own choosing, which is why the decision to move to the territory of another richer state simultaneously empowers the migrants, allowing them to triumph over adversity, but also

forces them to confront a set of new, painful dilemmas from which there is no escape. In this chapter, I develop a new perspective on the tension between immigration and emigration, showing how the intersocietal relations produced by migration across borders are shaped by the influences of place, space, nation, and state. *Like* the scholars of transnationalism, I understand international migration as a regular, recurrent process extending social relations across states. *Unlike* those scholars, however, I explain how those cross-state networks collide with the forces that cut social ties at the water's edge.

INTERSOCIETAL CONVERGENCE In opting for life in another country, the migrants pull one society onto the territory of another state, unintentionally and unconsciously producing a convergence between here and there. Intersocietal convergence—labeled the “transnational social field” by the scholars of transnationalism—results from the migrants’ own survival strategy. The newcomers turn to one another for help in order to solve the everyday problems of migration: how to move from old home to new, how to find a job and settle down, how to pick up the skills needed to manage in their new world. In the process, the migrants extend and embed their networks, creating a new community where the density of familiar faces, tongues, and institutions reproduces the world left behind. As the home country society gets transplanted onto receiving states, *alien* territory gets turned into a *familiar* environment, putting in place the infrastructure needed to keep up here–there connections and providing the means by which migrants can sustain identities as home state *nationals*, even while living on *foreign* soil.

Moreover, for many, though not all migrants, cross-state connections often comprise part and parcel of the familial survival strategies that propel migration in the first place. That pattern holds best for labor migrants—exemplified by the Italians of yesterday’s era of mass migration and the Mexicans of today’s—among whom movement from poor to wealthy societies is a way to generate resources at the point of destination to be used at the point of origin (Massey et al. 1987; Gabaccia 2000). Migrations of this sort send one household member to a place where wages are high, who in turn transmits savings to be spent on consumption and/or investment in a place where the cost of living is low. Families with members abroad also secure an informal insurance system because the income from migrants working overseas can offset the losses that take place when things go wrong at home. Agrarians subject to unpredictable changes of all sorts—whether floods, drought, high seed prices, or low harvest prices—find particular benefit from the risk reduction that remittances

provide, but as volatility is more likely to hit developing rather than developed countries, migration can yield insurance effects for city-dwellers as well as ruralites (Taylor and Martin 2001).

Hence, connectivity is part and parcel of the migration experience itself: what flows across borders—information, resources, and support—provides ample motivation for family members separated by space to maintain strong social ties. Of course, migration of low-skilled laborers, usually of peasant background, is only one variant on the many migration types. High-skilled labor is far more likely to be welcomed as well as wanted, yet these streams often involve a temporary, sometimes circular component, as exemplified by the foreign graduate students enrolled in American universities or the foreign engineers on short-term contracts in high-technology companies. By definition, refugees and asylum seekers cannot go back, at least not as long as the homeland conditions that expelled them persist. While for some the breach is definitive, for others the ties to the places and, more important, people left behind remain compelling.

Reinforcing the strength of those connections is the fact that family migration often involves a multistage process. Sometimes, entire nuclear families move in one fell swoop. But the risks and uncertainties involved in the move to a strange, often distant place make serial migrations a common pattern. At the turn of the last century, as Donna Gabaccia (2000) has explained, young Italian men headed off for the Americas, leaving behind their married “white widows” (as contrasted to the true widows, clad in black), with some of these married spouses later following their husbands across the Atlantic. Historically, a similar pattern characterized Mexican migration, especially from the beginning of the *bracero* program in the early 1940s up until the legalization of undocumented workers in 1986. In other cases, however, such as the migrations leaving from the Philippines, wives are more likely to depart than husbands. Alternatively, a young, unmarried person moves abroad and then, whether formally or informally, later sponsors the movement of the person who will then become his or her spouse. As for minor children, they are less costly to take care of if left behind with spouse or grandparent; children may follow once the migrating parent develops the earnings capacity needed to allow families to move from the relatively low-cost place of origin to the high-cost place of destination, sometimes doing so in tandem, in other cases, serially, one by one. In yet another pattern, a spouse returns home, leaving migrant children in the care of the parent who has opted for long-term residence in the place of immigration. And it is rare that every significant other changes place of residence. Migration is generally for the young, not the old, which is why obligations to aging parents at home

often keep remittances, letters, phone calls, and visits flowing well after roots in the host country have become deeply established.

While at the turn of the twenty-first century, as at the turn of the twentieth, social and economic considerations of these sorts stretch migrant kin networks internationally, an added pressure is at work today, namely, receiving states' ever-greater focus on migration control. Under these circumstances, the emigrants are often those most likely either to gain passage through legal means or to get around the obstacles meant to discourage residence or entry by those without authorization. In either case, the opportunity is too important to be foregone, leaving family members—a category especially likely to include children—lacking that option and thus having no choice but to stay behind. Though reunification may later occur, the process is often protracted and uncertain, proceeding at the whim of institutional and legal factors over which migrants have no control. As family reunification has become increasingly costly, hard, and time-consuming, so too have cross-border family ties become more common and persistent (Mazzucato and Schans 2011).

Thus, in myriad ways, migration pulls kinship networks across borders, entwining the survival strategies of migrants in the place of destination with those of the relatives still in the place of origin. Because the migrants rely on the stay-at-homes, those exchanges are bi-directional, going well beyond the receipt of funds furnished by those who have moved abroad. Parents leaving children behind rely on grandparents to provide care; migrants planning to return home after migration count on their kin and friends to look after houses built with the savings from remittances; alternatively, remittance houses can be used to subsidize the stay-at-home sibling responsible for everyday care of aging parents. Moreover, disaster isn't reserved for the stay-at-homes: migrants who have lost jobs may turn to the stay-at-homes for material assistance; likewise, the latter have a role to play in furnishing the home country documents—sometimes only available on-site—that the migrants need in order to consolidate their place in the society of residence (Mazzucato 2009).

These connections produce greater connectedness. The social ties between points of destination and origin keep the migrations flowing: information about the opportunities found elsewhere leaks out beyond the initial circle; veteran migrants help newcomers, who in turn tend to show up where the previous movers had settled; ongoing contacts—letters, phone calls, return visits—tell the stay-at-homes that they would do better moving elsewhere. As long as new arrivals keep coming, the connections are refreshed, with the newcomers' intense interest in keeping up

ties to the stay-at-homes making it easier, more convenient, and cheaper for the old-timers to do the same. Though with time many migrants put down roots, large numbers maintain ongoing connections to the people from whom they are now separated by borders, sending back remittances, making the occasional trip back home, purchasing ethnic products made in the home country, and communicating with relatives and friends at home. The burgeoning of these cross-border connections, as well as their growing complexity, swells the size of the market, creating economies of scale and opportunities for specialists in the provision of here–there connections, lowering the cost and increasing the convenience of maintaining home society ties.

But keeping the connection often proves elusive: a variety of factors embed migrants in the nation-state society where they actually live, tearing them away and differentiating them from the people and places left behind (Waldinger and Fitzgerald 2004). Initially, territory has limited significance in structuring the social field linking host and home; with time, however, social boundaries are rearranged so that they increasingly align with the national borders of the states in which migrants and stay-at-homes reside. Consequently, although the scholars may insist that the migrants create transnational communities suspended between “here” and “there,” the reality is otherwise: the migrants find that they are betwixt and between their new and old homes, *in* the country of immigration but *of* the country of emigration. Neither one nor the other, the migrants are *foreigners* (Mexicans, Italians, Senegalese, and so on) *in* the country where they reside, but *immigrants* (French, Germans, Americans, and so on) whenever they return back *home*.

PLACE From the start, place matters, and far more than either scholars or migrants would like to think. Distance-shrinking technologies—ranging from the letter to the telegraph, to the telephone, to the worldwide web, to the mobile phone, to the no-cost phone conversation held over Skype—do bring “here” and “there” closer. However, the chronocentrism of contemporary social scientists—convinced that today has no parallel in what went before—leads them astray. A long-term perspective highlights the continuing synergistic effects of long-distance migration and long-distance communication. Thus, during the last era of mass migration, changes in literacy, technology, and public infrastructure made the transoceanic and transcontinental delivery of letters increasingly predictable and fast: rail tied interiors to ports and ships moved across the seas at increasing speeds (Moya 1998). What had taken a year in the late

eighteenth century, fell to a few weeks by the mid-nineteenth and dropped to roughly a week a half century later, with lower postal rates and higher literacy on both sending and receiving sides sending volumes still higher (Sinke 2006). Hence, the exchange of letters was often more than adequate to keep migrants and home communities tightly connected, propelling a stream of “transatlantic gossip” and keeping migrants under the “social surveillance” of hometowners both “here” and “there” (Gabaccia 2000: 87).

When read aloud to the neighbors by the village’s one literate resident, the letter also had a broader informational impact that today’s email—sometimes deleted *before* it is read—is unlikely to possess. On the other hand, everything is *not* the same. The advent of the Internet allows migrants and stay-at-homes to communicate instantly and almost without cost, with a spontaneity approaching the conditions of face-to-face contact. With videoconferencing, bringing together “image, sound, and simultaneity” (Mattelart 2009: 12), long-distance communication moves yet closer to interaction on site.

But there is no death of distance, as it simply cannot be killed. The same global inequalities that propel migrations from poor to rich countries deprive the stay-at-homes of the technology most likely to facilitate long-distance contact. In contrast, the migrants gain from the surrounding, technologically advanced environment but often without fully benefiting from its potential. Held back by the inequalities experienced before and after migration, the advances in telecommunications technology often exceed both their skills and their ability to pay. As for those fully up-to-date on the technology front, there is no way to erase the effects of having changed longitudes: even if free and of the highest quality, no telephony will put Vancouver and Manila in the same time zone. Things are easier if relocation keeps one in the same time zone—as with Mexican immigrants in Texas communicating with relatives in Guadalajara, or Moroccans in Paris talking to relatives in Tangiers. However, even those best situated, whether in terms of geography, technology, or both, cannot fully escape the liabilities of contacts that take place via long distance.

Unlike face-to-face communication, communications separated by space have a discontinuous, erratic, removed character not found when people are interacting in place. Those discontinuities yield an across-the-board impact, but they particularly affect those displaced by long-distance movements since migration often loads the content of communication with hard-to-handle matters. Emails or texts can be sent at any time, but these media essentially function to communicate information, not the emotions required to maintain close, and especially intimate, relationships

(Giglia 2001). Moreover, communicating about the resources flowing plentifully from points of destination to points of origin—in particular, finances, whether funds to be sent or money that was spent—is inherently difficult, which is why conflict so often results. Unlike a face-to-face encounter, where meaning is conveyed by gesture not word and where messages can be received and sent at the very same time, the phone often proves inadequate for the task. In the requests for remittances, the migrant, unwilling to tell her family just how hard things are abroad, hears an endless set of demands; in the reluctance to send more money, the relatives at home hear a familiar voice grow foreign and cold. Absence of physical presence also strikes at the connection that migrants *and* stay-at-homes hold in common: separation means that the two no longer share the same experiences and, above all, the home that they once held in common. For the migrants, the place of origin is likely to be fixed, stuck in time; in contrast, those still on the ground know that it is changing, responding both to shifts in the immediate environment as well as signals from the migrants.

All the while longing for the place left behind, pragmatism, rather than nostalgia, rules the migrant's day, shifting key social relations—spouses, children, parents—from point of origin to place of destination. The strategy of sending workers to states where wages are high while leaving families in states where the cost of living is low works in the short run but proves hard to sustain over the long term. For a while, migrants can manage to subordinate personal needs to the imperatives of family members afar, but as the sojourn continues, postponing the dream of return to next year and then the year afterward, the capacity to maintain the necessary level of deprivation proves more than many migrants can bear. Spending more in the place of destination disrupts the migrants' ability to maintain the international family economy on which a trans-state way of life depends. The next logical step is to relocate family members so that they are all living in the place where wages are earned; however, that change further upsets the balance between spending and earning since it also reduces the capacity either to send resources home or to squirrel them away for investment at some later point in time (Piore 1979).

As the social center of gravity crosses the border, the cross-border ties weaken, if only because the costs are high and the rewards tend to diminish. Moreover, time and distance weigh heavily in the balance, inevitably imposing costs and creating barriers for those who want to maintain contacts with the stay-at-homes. Despite distance-shrinking technologies, cross-border engagement remains costly, reducing the population motivated or able to keep up home country ties. The most successful immigrants may

have the resources needed to keep up a constant pattern of travel and satisfying long-distance communication, but the very same factors generating the capacity for cross-border engagement, namely, deeper, more effective engagement with the receiving society and its members, weaken the motivation to keep up the connection to the place earlier abandoned.

By contrast, resource constraints weigh heavily on the many who would like to sustain the connection: forced to pick and choose among the available options, they are apt to fix on a combination of lower-cost activities as opposed to those that are the most resource-taxing. Though vital, economic success does not guarantee access to the full array of cross-border connections: only those lucky enough to combine economic resources with the legal entitlements needed to move freely back and forth across borders can pursue the full range of cross-border connections. As for the rest, increasingly severe receiving-state efforts to impede entry and permanent settlement tend to yield territorial capture and immobility (Hernández-León 2008). In the meantime, contacts in the new environment cross ethnic boundaries, yielding ties to nationals whose social worlds are largely, if not entirely, encompassed by national borders and which, in turn, tend to absorb interest and time at the expense of long-distance, cross-border relationships.

SPACE The capacity to maintain successful, satisfying, continuing connections is not simply a matter of resources, whether technological, economic, or political. No less important is the fact that the people on the two sides of the chain are no longer one and the same—an ironic result of the same global inequality that triggers migration.

Resource containment provides the motivation for boundary-crossing: migrants leave home, departing for richer states, because displacement lets them capture the wealth contained in the developed world, an option not available were they to stay in place. In that sense, migration provides a way to exploit the world's rich, gaining access to the wealth that remains within borders and thereby funneling some of those benefits back to the people confined to poorer states.

The duality at the heart of the migration experience means that the emigrant orientation proves sticky, continuing to exercise influence even as the movers turn into immigrants and put down roots that make return difficult. Yet even while facing the place of origin, the migrants are no longer the people they were when they departed from home. Over time, they are not simply *in* the rich countries to which they have moved but rather *of* those countries as well. Though the specifics of the migrants'

new homes vary from one territorial unit to another—which is why nation and national identity also matter—the democratic countries of the developed world share much in common; consequently, the encounter with the behaviors, institutions, and resources contained within those spaces yields similar effects, regardless of the precise point on the globe.

Migration transforms the migrants. To some extent, that process conforms to what the literature calls “acculturation,” absorbing the tastes, preferences, and behaviors of the specific national society in which the migrants have settled and acquiring the skills appropriate for that setting, most notably, the dominant language. Language is both a symbol and a tool of membership, functioning simultaneously as the means of communication and as a meaning-laden indicator of group membership since the capacity to speak a common tongue defines the boundaries between insiders and outsiders. For these reasons, language possesses powerful emotional connotations, well beyond its instrumental value. Home, as Alfred Schuetz noted decades ago, is where shared meanings and understandings can be taken for granted, which is why he understood “‘to feel at home’ [as] an expression of the highest degree of familiarity and intimacy” (1945: 370). Precisely for that reason, as noted far more recently by Brubaker and colleagues, “the experience of speaking ‘one’s own’ language is often associated with a feeling of phenomenological comfort, a sense of being at home in the world” (2006: 254).

The conventional literature focuses on the society of *immigration*, concerned with the linguistic boundaries between groups of foreign and native origin living in the *same* territory. Bringing in the *cross-territorial* dimension raises a different question: how does the acquisition of *host* society language competence affect functioning in the language of the *home* country? The answer is likely to depend on the degree of language shift. To the extent that the first generation retains the mother tongue for most purposes, using the dominant tongue only in those domains where its use is required, the capacity to communicate across borders, as if they had not left home, is likely to continue undiminished. But not every immigrant retains their same level of proficiency. In particular, those who migrate as children are more likely to resemble those foreign-origin children born in the country of *immigration*: exposed to the mother tongue at home, but using the dominant tongue in all other domains, relegating the mother tongue to kitchen-level proficiency. Hence, the shift from the immigrant to the dominant tongue might *reduce host society* social boundaries between foreign-origin minorities and native-born majorities while also *increasing* the *cross-border* social boundary between stay-at-homes in the

country of *emigration* and immigrants and their foreign-born offspring residing in the country of *immigration*. If home is where the heart is, the emotional attachment to the place left behind is likely to be sundered if the capacity to speak as if one had never left home has also been lost.

But the conventional conceptualization of acculturation is too narrow and too rigid, assuming the separation of culture from social structure and equating the distinctive, cultural elements of the new environment with the particularities of any one place. Instead, migration entails a change in the interior of the person, one both entailing and resulting from practical adaptations to a different social structure, the nature of which is generic to the wealthy, technologically advanced, bureaucratized societies on which the migrants have converged. The initial problems are those of everyday competence: for example, learning how to make change in a new currency or relating prices to those encountered back home, discovering the ways in which higher earnings and higher cost of living have to be balanced in order to still have money left over to send home, or coming to master the time demands of work schedules more rigid than those known at home (Peñaloza 1994; Pribilsky 2007).¹ Those same imperatives lead the migrants to pick up the tools needed to comprehend and appropriately respond to the behavior and expectations of the people and institutions around them, whether when shopping, driving, or looking for a job. Just how the migrants stand in the eyes of the others around is among the lessons absorbed: insofar as they realize that they are not fully wanted or accepted, they have all the more reason to retain their attachment to the people and place left behind. On the other hand, as the migrants grow increasingly proficient in reading the national code, they also perceive that equal treatment, even if violated in practice, is the norm and one with sufficient appeal that it might be sent home. Likewise, interaction with institutions provides instruction in a different style of administration, one whose bureaucratic ways may induce a preference for rules and predictability that is unlikely to be satisfied by institutional practices in the place left behind.

But there are also imperceptible changes imposed by the new routines, though often later accepted: accommodating to a longer, more precise, more demanding work schedule, which in turn leaves less time to others but may also breed a preference for timeliness. Likewise, there are new behaviors prompted by opportunities or experiences not acquired before: the option to satisfy material needs previously repressed or those newly acquired, after which might come the financial pressures that accompany consumption, in turn reducing one's capacity to help others or infusing every form of help with explicit expectations of return.

Even migrants who start at the bottom quickly gain access to the good things that the rich societies have to offer, leading habits obtained before migration to erode. In the societies of *emigration*, scarcity induces scarcity consciousness: spending today proves too risky when tomorrow is uncertain; better to economize for the fallow period that is sure to come. The same factor leads to the bridling of individual wants: when survival depends on the support and involvement of others, gratifying the self at the expense of those around one means cutting oneself off from help at a time of inevitable need.

But self-sacrifice in the interest of the intimate collectivity is not the way of the *immigration* societies of the rich world. From the standpoint of the developing world, the wealth of the developed world does indeed trickle down to the rich countries' poorest residents, which is precisely why international migration is an upward mobility strategy par excellence. The immediate fruits of that upward mobility take the form of the everyday amenities that the people of the developed countries take for granted: indoor plumbing, hot and cold drinkable water, heated (and sometimes even air-conditioned) residences, gas cooking, and electric lighting (Dreby 2010: 30). Shortly thereafter comes consumption: once the newest arrivals learn how to manage money, they then discover that they can both save money to send home *and* buy more than they ever purchased before. Hence, the newcomers quickly "adapt to abundance," to borrow the description coined by the historian Andrew Heinze (1990). As Heinze pointed out, patterns and norms of consumption are the most readily detectable and easily learned of the new society's ways, especially since better settled relatives and friends, having already assimilated these lessons, are there to pass them on. Satisfying in and of itself, consumption also sends signals: to the others around one in the society of immigration, the clothes, the car, and the jewelry convey the message that one is just like them and not a bit less; to those still at the point of origin, possessions are a way to telegraph that one has made it and in ways that the stay-at-homes have not been able to attain. Consumption produces further consumption, in part because it allows for the expression of an individual identity that had been suppressed in an economically more constrained environment. And it also yields further individuation, providing a means to satisfy the self apart from the collective unit and often in defiance of its preferences and expectations.

Hence, the migrants' continuing engagement in the contacts between "here" and "there" demonstrates *both* the enduring power of the home country connections *and* the factors that weaken those ties from within. Thus, rather than jettisoning the place left behind, the migrants often

want to engage with it. However, they do so with a combination of assets and liabilities: assets resulting from the resources and experiences acquired in the years abroad, and liabilities resulting from the gap in expectations, preferences, knowledge, and contacts produced by the years of absence.

Moreover, the migrants typically engage in ways that involve exporting aspects of the foreign reality that they have encountered and internalized, an activity labeled as “social remittances” by the sociologist Peggy Levitt (1998). For a minority, engagement takes the form of concerted efforts at producing change, optimistically, via democratization (Shain 1999), a goal that does not necessarily coincide with the preferences of home country elites. Alternatively, the migrants may pursue involvement through collective investments in hometown projects, designed to furnish the stay-at-homes with some of the benefits that the migrants identify as their gains from movement abroad, albeit goals that may be tenuously related to the priorities of the communities from which the migrants come.

But the most powerful demonstration of the migrants’ transformation can be seen in the individual but parallel actions that they undertake on their own. As an example, consider the houses that the migrants construct in their hometowns and what those homes signal about the people who build them (or have them built) and the messages these investments send. On the one hand, the remittance house, to borrow the phrase coined by the architectural historian Sarah Lopez (2010), testifies to the continuing pull of the place of origin—an attraction difficult to explain from the rational choice point of view adopted by the scholars emphasizing assimilation in the reception society because so many of these houses turn out to be wasteful palaces in which their owners never live. But on the other hand, the remittance house demonstrates how deeply the immigrant has been transformed by the experience of living in a different, much richer country with distinctive consumption patterns and very different expectations regarding the relationship between the individual and the community, not to speak of the new, more privatized needs that the destination society breeds. Moreover, it is via this paradoxical relationship to the home society that the emigration message springs: what better way to demonstrate the benefits gained by migration than by bringing them home and in a form that no one can ignore?

NATION The duality between *emigration* and *immigration* belongs to the social aspect of population movements across borders. But precisely because these flows take people across states, they entail an inherently political dimension, creating yet another source of tension.

In traversing frontiers, migrants produce intersocietal convergence. However, the states the migrants leave *as well as* those they enter are linked to meaningful social identities understood in territorial terms. Since national identity is relational, defined in contrast to alien states *and* people, the migrants' quest to belong both "here" *and* "there" is contested by nationals on both sending *and* receiving sides. Whether in place of origin or in place of destination, the prevailing view is that "we" are "here," while "they" are "there," in alien states located on the other side of the border and where the aliens are contained. Thus, while migration shows the social scientist that social relations are not inevitably contained within states, nationals in both sending *and* receiving states are disinclined to accept the message, *believing*, instead, that territory and identity *should* coincide (Waldinger, 2007c).

Emotionally tied to the people, town, region, or nation left behind, migrants often seek to sustain these connections. However, members of the nation-state societies to which the migrants have moved frequently find these displays of concern and affection disconcerting. In the societies of the developed world, monistic political cultures have weakened under the impact of globalization, tending instead toward pluralism. Hence, holding on to premigration identities is increasingly acceptable as long as these are accompanied by an attachment to the place where the migrants reside and people among whom they live. Thus, while multiculturalism flourishes in one form or another, it is profoundly asymmetric: the newcomers can retain ties to the old country and aspects of its ways, but they need to master the native code. Moreover, no one expects nationals to take on the foreign ways of their new foreign-origin neighbors. Language remains a potent symbol of national unity, which is why the nationals throughout the developed world not only expect the newcomers to learn the native tongue but want it to remain dominant. Indeed, the United States exemplifies this tendency: a somewhat greater acceptance of cultural diversity is accompanied by an emphasis on learning English, with public opinion not ready to insist on "English only" but strongly endorsing "English first" (Citrin and Sides 2008: 39). Similarly, ethnic political organizations are tolerated but are also viewed as possibly undermining national cohesion; the political loyalties of the foreign-born are open to suspicion, and there is widespread support for the views that there are too many immigrants and that national borders should be better controlled—evidence that the residents of the developed world can be more accepting of foreigners who wish to become nationals without ever becoming one-worlders.

In general, the immigrants and their descendants respond positively to this message, concluding that one does better if one can present oneself to be just like everyone else. Engaging in the necessary adjustments is often acceptable to the people earlier willing to abandon home in search of the good life; the everyday demands of fitting in, as well as the attenuation of home country loyalties and ties, make the foreigners and their descendants increasingly similar to the nationals whose community they have joined. Some groups do effectively retain certain ethnic attachments and old-country ways while adding on a national tool-kit; nonetheless, there does not seem to be any case in which the foreigners and their children wish to appear as if they are "fresh off the boat." Indeed, all the evidence points to the contrary: remaining a greenhorn entails far too many disadvantages. In contrast, picking up the linguistic, cognitive, and interpersonal tools needed to get by and then get ahead in the new society proves far more rewarding. Though native-born residents of global cities, hearing strange tongues, worry that a Tower of Babel will be soon among them, in reality, foreign languages quickly lose ground to the dominant tongue. Some groups, especially Spanish speakers in the United States, add English to continued mother tongue facility. But the views of such alarmists as Samuel Huntington (2004) notwithstanding, the old pattern remains in place: the immigrants' children reserve the mother tongue for private places; in public, it is a dominant-language-only (or at worst, mainly) world.

Of course, *some* migrants and their descendants may continue to identify with the home community. They tend to articulate a new, deterritorialized view, redefining the nation as a community encompassing its nationals, wherever they might live. That perspective often resonates with the concerns of sending states and their officials because the greater resources secured by movement to a richer country invariably yield consequences for home communities and populations. For the most part, the emigrants' cross-border involvements are strictly social and highly particularistic, directed at the migrants' kin and no one else. However, private actions undertaken *abroad* have profoundly public consequences *at home*, as demonstrated by the huge flow of migrant remittances traveling from rich to poor countries. Hence, the migrants' cross-state engagement invariably yields home country responses, one component of which involves retaining the loyalties of the people who voted with their feet for life in another state.

Living on *foreign* ground, the emigrants' claim to *membership* in the national community in the place where they no longer live is contested. As Nancy Green felicitously noted, the expatriate can easily slip into the

ex-patriot (Green 2012: 7), in which case exit may be seen not as departure but rather as desertion and hence disloyalty. Sentiments of this sort are widely shared, as evidenced by the historically negative portrayal of emigrants in Mexican popular or political culture or by the terms applied to Israeli emigrants, who, unlike the immigrants to Israel, went down, not up. And then there is the characterization of the Cuban exiles as *gusanos* ("worms") offered by the Castro regime. Further vulnerability lies in the *immigrants'* presence on the *foreign* grounds where they actually reside. The claim to identity with the stay-at-homes may ring true to some but definitely not all because those with in-person contact can readily detect the ways in which the *immigrants* (variously described as "gringoized Mexicans;" "gold-chainers," which criticizes the conspicuous amount of jewelry worn by Dominicans returning to the island from the United States; "riches Marocains de l'Europe" instead of "residents Marocains a l'étranger;" conspicuously dotting their hometowns with US- or European-styled "dream houses") have become *unlike* those who have stayed behind. Hence, political actors have tangible reasons for contending that nationals *there* have become increasingly like *them*, no longer fully belonging to the national *us* that still live *here*.

STATE The very same population movements that knit societies together also transplant the migrants into a distinct, separate political environment. While controls around that territory may impede the back-and-forth movement needed to sustain homeland *interpersonal* ties, separation at the territorial line is the source of the political feedbacks that immigrations recurrently produce. The receiving state's borders yield two effects, keeping *in* wealth while keeping *out* the tentacles of the sending state, thus providing the migrants with both resources *and* the political protection against home state interests that might seek to control them. Consequently, life *abroad* gives the immigrants *home* country political influence never previously experienced, while their new political environment recurrently gives rise to social movements built in the place where the migrants *live* but designed to effect change in the place that they have *left*.

The irony is that exercising influence at home results from entry into an alien state where arrival *never* yields instant citizenship, and acceptance into the policy often follows only after long years of residence. Exclusion from receiving-state citizenship entails vulnerability: most important is the threat of losing any right to residence. Nonetheless, once present on the soil of a democratic society, migrants enjoy at least some rights, which is why conflicts suppressed at home often burst into the open when migration entails movement to a less coercive environment. As social boundaries

are relatively diffuse, migrants develop close ties to citizens, generating allies with unquestioned political entitlements. Because the immigrants' cause can be framed in terms that resonate broadly—whether appealing to beliefs in human rights or self-determination—they find additional ways to bridge the internal boundary of citizenship. Depending on the circumstances, the *immigrants* can gain receiving-society membership by proxy, connecting to organized receiving-state interests whose unquestioned rights of intervention help secure the space for autonomous, migrant social action. Hence, moving to *foreign* soil gives the *emigrants* a powerful *home* soil punch.

Emigrant politics take a variety of forms. In some cases, as with the Irish, Tamils, or Croats, migrants engage in state-seeking nationalism, seeking to build a new state out of an existing, multiethnic polity. In other cases, they pursue regime-changing nationalism, trying to replace the old regime, whether from left to right, as with the anticommunist Cuban exiles in Miami, or from right to left, as with Salvadorans who flocked to the United States in the 1970s and 1980s. Other emigrant political actors and movements have more pacific goals, most notably regaining home country membership, as evidenced by the many campaigns for expatriate voting rights. With the vote in hand, many expatriates then engage in campaigning, encouraging visits by homeland leaders and contributing funds to homeland parties.

Accompanying emigrants are more widespread private actions with homeland consequences of an inherently political nature, the most prominent being the large-scale transmission of resources. For these reasons, emigrants' decision to vote with their feet almost invariably yields sending-state efforts at diaspora engagement, seeking to sustain national loyalties beyond national borders. The portfolio of relevant policies is vast, ranging from monitoring the emigrants to activating their national solidarity, to protecting them and furnishing them with services, to providing them with incentives to continue transmitting resources across borders, to extending the ballot to persons who live and vote from abroad.

While the actions of sending states *and* of emigrants extend politics across borders, the capacity to maintain a viable political connection runs up against the constraint of extraterritoriality, limiting sending states' capacity to connect to nationals living *abroad* while constraining emigrants' capacity to connect to the *foreign* polity outside the boundaries of the country where they actually reside. Thus, for sending states, the practice of diaspora engagement proves difficult, as opposed to the rhetoric, which is cheap. Symbolic measures are available to any state, no matter

how weak or incapable of servicing its citizens at home. The stratagem is not a bad one because it tugs on the membership sentiments of the emigrants, who are not only ready to help less fortunate fellow nationals living at home and deprived of a functioning state but are willing to do so for free. Going beyond symbolism, however, means expenditures of a nontrivial sort. As noted by a Mexican diplomat, attending to the needs of a population that "has decided to leave the country and settle permanently in the United States" adds to the obligations of states "with so few resources and so many domestic problems" (González Gutierrez 1993: 225). Not surprisingly, opposition from voters, lobbyists, or demonstrators who have opted to stay behind gets in the way of efforts to "implement promised policies of [emigrant] inclusion" (Ostergaard-Nielsen 2003a: 5). Moreover, even when resources are available, sending states can engage the emigrants with only a limited number of tools. Because the migrants have crossed territorial lines, using coercion to achieve the usual goals of extracting resources or ensuring political compliance is no longer an option. For the most part, sending states can only exercise influence, doing what they can to mobilize resources that might engage, mobilize, and protect those citizens who have opted to build lives on the territory of another state.

Likewise, displacement to the territory of a different state, representing a new people, can be a source of homeland leverage for those still interested in the place left behind, but typically it yields impacts that work in the opposite direction. Home states can do relatively little for the migrants in the territory where they actually live (Fitzgerald 2009), reducing motivations to purely symbolic or intrinsic rewards, which are unlikely to be compelling for most. Options for participation are also limited, with obstacles high. Although home country political parties maintain foreign branches, and candidates travel abroad to garner expatriate support and material assistance, campaigning on foreign soil costs considerably more than on native grounds, especially if the former is a developed and the latter a developing society. Where they exist, expatriate electoral systems might attract greater migrant attention, but none can reproduce the national voting infrastructure on the territory of another country (Nohlen and Grotz 2007).

Absent mobilization, the pressures to detach from home country politics intensify. Political life is fundamentally social: participation responds to the level and intensity of political involvement in one's own social circles, which in turn generates political information (Rosenstone and Hanson 1993). However, the circumstances of settlement are likely to lead

to spiraling disengagement. Even areas of high ethnic density rarely possess the ethnic institutional completeness and political infrastructure that would stimulate engagement with home country matters. The migrants' status as immigrants orients them toward receiving-state institutions, and media practices—even if conveyed via a mother tongue—provide at best modest coverage of home country developments. Absent powerful inducements, clear signals, and the examples of significant others, the costs of participation may easily outweigh its benefits. Since, by contrast, immigrants often realize that they will settle in the places where they live and where political participation is also easier, so all pressures lead to disconnection from home country politics.

Conclusion

Though failing to deliver on its promise, the transnational perspective has nonetheless performed a useful scholarly function. By attending to the many cross-state connections, which international migrations *invariably* produce, it has moved migration studies beyond the largely unconscious, implicit nationalism of established approaches, highlighting important aspects of the migrant phenomenon that prior research had largely ignored. The incidence of immigrants' cross-border activities is therefore beyond debate. The challenge is how to understand the processes that put them in place and maintain them, even as these very cross-border connections come under pressure, weakened by the impact of place, space, nation, and state.

In departing from their *home* state and opting to live on foreign soil, migrants displace social relations to the territory of another state, producing a convergence of societies. How to understand this displacement depends on one's point of view. From the standpoint of receiving states and their people, migration produces the arrival "here" of foreign persons who should have stayed "there," in foreign lands. The perspective at the other end of the chain is not all that different: the national "we" can longer fully be found "here," with "us," but rather "there," with "them" in their foreign lands.

The migrants, in contrast, find themselves between here and there. Over the short to medium term, they often succeed in maintaining a bridge, keeping in touch with and trying to remain true to the people and places that they have left behind. The motivation to do so is also potent: inertia keeps at least some of the migrants' significant others rooted in home territory, thus prolonging the migrants' home country orientations.

The long term, however, looks different, as *intersocietal convergence* recedes in the face of *intersocietal divergence*. Distance yields effects that few can escape, changes in communication technology notwithstanding. In the end, the absent cannot be present, no matter how strongly they insist otherwise: migrants and stay-at-homes inevitably undergo different experiences, producing differences that accent the impact of geographical distance, and core social networks shift from old to new homes. Moreover, both foreign-born and especially their offspring take on the traits of those around them, willy-nilly picking up the everyday habits and tools that make it easier to fit into the new environment and adapting to the greater abundance and individuation of the socioeconomic context in which they live. While the move into a new political jurisdiction, combined with the economic resources resulting from life in a richer country, generates political influence for homeland-oriented activists, political boundaries yield different effects for most. By voting with their feet for residence in a different state, the migrants create new obstacles for long-distance engagement. On the one hand, home states have limited scope for solving the *immigrants'* problems in the place where they actually live; for the *emigrants*, on the other hand, cross-border involvement in the place from which they departed entails high costs and few benefits.

Even though the *emigrants* insist that they still belong to the "we" of the society of origin, those who remain behind are rarely of the same opinion; in their view, rather, at heart these are *immigrants who* are no longer like "us" but are rather like the foreign people among whom they live. In fact, the stay-at-homes are not entirely mistaken since the longer the *emigrants* stay abroad and the more deeply they implant their roots in new soil, the more different they become from those who never left home, which lends a foreign character to the demands directed toward the community of origin. The nationals of the society of reception are willing to tolerate the immigrants' foreign attachments, but only up to a point; the more insistently and visibly the immigrants engage abroad, the more they threaten their acceptance among nationals, who tend to see the immigrants as "them" from "there," and not as part of the "us" that belongs "here."

In the end, scholarship needs to understand the factors that promote *and* supplant cross-border involvements. That goal requires a departure, from both the views of the globalists who see immigrants living in two worlds as well as those of unself-conscious nationalists standing with their backs at the borders. A better perspective emphasizes the collision between the processes that recurrently produce international migrations, extending social and political ties across states, and those that cut those

linkages at the water's edge, transforming immigrants into nationals and shifting their preoccupations and social connections from home to host states. Applying that optic in the chapters to come, I will show why the immigrants are so often between here and there, keeping touch with and trying to remain true to the people and places that they have left behind while simultaneously shifting loyalties and allegiances to the place where they actually live.

Conclusion

Foreign Detachment

ON JULY 4, 1984, the *Wall Street Journal* called for a laissez-faire immigration policy, allowing labor to flow as freely as goods. Saluting immigrants, the editors asked whether anyone would “want to ‘control the borders’ at the moral expense of a two-thousand-mile Berlin Wall with minefields, dogs and machine-gun towers?” Answering no, they proposed a constitutional amendment: “There shall be open borders.”

The *Journal* has kept beating that drum, reflecting the views of American business, which generally believes that the more immigrants, the better. Most Americans, however, see the matter differently. For the last decade or more, Republicans have been striving to heighten the already high barriers at the US-Mexico border, while pushing to reduce rights and entitlements for immigrants living on US soil. Not wanting to appear soft, Democrats have played along, with deportations reaching an all-time high under a president eager for Latino votes.

Similar challenges appear elsewhere. After 1945, western Europe looked for workers abroad, only later to learn it had instead received people. Struggling to integrate the guest workers’ children and grandchildren, the Europeans are now striving to tap into global flows of highly skilled labor while simultaneously keeping unwanted, low-skilled newcomers off the old continent.

How to respond to international migration is not a dilemma for the residents of the rich countries alone. Bad as things are at the US-Mexico

border, the Mexico-Guatemala border is a circle closer to hell; for decades a country of *emigration* and then a country of *transit migration* (by Central Americans), Mexico is now becoming a country of *immigration*, creating a furor that even gringos can understand. Further afield, migration to South Africa from Zimbabwe and Angola has triggered xenophobic violence, adding to the burdens of the post-apartheid transition.

Notwithstanding the obstacles put in their place, the people from abroad continue to move, crossing borders to find a place where life can be better. They do so for good reason: since migration involves changing a poorer for a richer place, migration is good for the migrants. In fact, the poorer the migrants' point of origin, the more they gain from migration. On average, migrants from the poorest to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries experience a fifteenfold increase in income, a sixteenfold decrease in child mortality, and roughly a doubling of child school enrollment. By crossing boundaries, the migrants achieve what the natives of the rich countries enjoy not out of merit but by the luck of birth in a wealthy place. As development economist Lant Pritchett notes in his provocatively titled *Let Their People Come*, "Nearly all the differences in wages between individuals in rich and poor countries are explained by the *location* of the work, not their personal characteristics" (2006: 20). Hence, a Salvadoran high school graduate in the United States makes as much as his US-born counterpart but almost nine times as much as a similarly educated compatriot living back home.

Migration isn't good only for the migrants: it does good things for kin and communities left behind. Moving to rich countries, the migrants consume at higher rates, gaining access to everyday comforts that the people of the developed world take for granted, all the while saving money that they send home, at a volume greatly exceeding the level of official aid and often comprising more than 10 percent of the GDP in many developing countries.

While migration helps the migrants, it does little if any damage to the people among whom they settle. Increased migration has little impact on destination country per capita income, and any of the slightly detectable effects appear to be positive. Migrant workers are most likely to compete with prior migrants, making aggregate labor market effects small or nil.

And yet the people of the receiving countries want migration to stop. The reasons are multiple, but ultimately they are all informed by a single view of the world. In that optic, people, state, and society are one and the same thing. We, let's call them the United Statesians, are the people both of the United States and *in* the United States. US society is found "here,"

where "we" live; similarly, the borders of US society extend to the territorial boundary but not one inch further. "They," the foreigners, live "there," in foreign places. "We" and "they," "here" and "there" shall forever remain distinct.

This view claims to represent the world both as it is and as it should be. Perhaps the world should be one where we, and only we, live here, and they, and only they, live there. Yet whatever one thinks about how the world *should* be, reality persistently takes a different form.

And so what social scientists and men and women in the street take for granted isn't really what they should expect. Rather, networks of goods, ideas, and (most important for this book) people regularly and normally spill across territorial lines. Consequently, international migration means cross-border connections, now the subject of a burgeoning, ever more lively scholarly literature. For most scholars, the concept of transnationalism provides the prism for understanding the ways in which international migration brings here and there together. In a sense, the fascination with transnationalism has been a scholarly boon, pushing researchers to shift their intellectual stance. Instead of standing with one's back at the borders, looking at the "immigrants" and the ways in which they become like the people among whom they now live, the transnational perspective has refocused attention on the connections between places of origin and destination and the factors that make distant places so often interlaced.

But the problem is that the transnational perspective provides only a way of seeing, not a way of understanding. Knowing that migration builds circuits through which people, resources, ideas, and influence subsequently cross borders is a good place to start. But to move further, one needs other tools, those that I have tried to provide in this book. At once immigrants *and* emigrants, aliens *and* citizens, foreigners *and* nationals, the migrants are caught in a dialectic of constant tension. In searching for the good life—often in opposition to the preferences of both receiving and sending states—international migrants also pull one society onto the territory of another, generating *intersocietal convergence*. In propelling them onto a different environment, that very same search changes the migrants in fundamental ways, gradually producing *intersocietal divergence*. But the passage from one stage to another does not entail a process of linearly declining home country ties, since in the short- to medium-term, settlement actually increases the migrants' capacity to engage with the people and communities left behind.

Cross-border ties typically spring from the connected survival strategies pursued by both migrants and their closest relatives at home. In developing societies, *emigration* is often undertaken without the goal of

immigration: rather, relocating to a developed society takes place so that emigrants can gain the access to the resources that can be found only there. In turn, those gains get channeled back home in order to stabilize, secure, and improve the options of the kin network remaining in place. Relocation to a richer state yields the potential for enjoying the fruits of its wealth. However, the emigrants are also *foreigners* not knowing the ropes and *aliens* lacking the full protections granted citizens, and therefore encounter risks and uncertainties of myriad sorts. When trouble strikes—a job gets lost, a fine has to get paid—or when opportunity arises—a document must be produced to acquire a more secure status—the emigrants have no choice but to turn to the stay-at-homes for help. As assistance from the latter is often the condition of exit—grandparents taking care of children or siblings looking after property—the emigrants' dependency on the stay-at-homes gives the former all the more reason to attend to the needs of the latter. These intertwined survival strategies of emigrants and stay-at-homes yield continuing exchanges of money, support, information, and ideas; as migrant populations grow, those exchanges broaden and deepen, producing an infrastructure that facilitates and reinforces these bidirectional flows.

In today's world, moreover, these decisions to build family economies across borders reflect the additional impact of receiving states' ever intensifying effort to police national boundaries. While leaving home for life abroad requires both finances and social capital, those resources no longer suffice; migrants need to find a way through or around control systems. Since not every family member can penetrate borders with equal ease, those most able to cross go first. Consequently, other kin members are left home to wait, remaining there until a visa allows for legal passage or resources permit yet another unauthorized crossing.

The political and social logic of international migration thus produces international families. Consequently, while no longer *in* the society of origin the migrants remain *of* it, living in a *zone of intersocietal convergence*, a conceptual space in which home and host societies overlap. The very logic of the migrants' project then steadily pushes them inward, away from the outer edge of the zone of intersocietal convergence where they began. After all, the immigrants encounter a *foreign* environment, which has to be *learned*. Unlike natives, for whom the complexities of everyday life are invisible and unconsciously navigated with tacit skills acquired from day one, immigrants need to pick up basic competencies: how to make change; how to move around in the new, puzzling world; how to find the foods to which one is accustomed and to learn which of the new possibilities are pleasing; how to transmit and receive information reliably

when the other party to the conversation speaks only the native tongue. Hence, behavioral changes are immediate, potentially involving small, almost imperceptible, virtually costless steps, each one of which makes the next advance a bit easier. Thus, the cumulative, continuous nature of the process renders the strange familiar, while yielding results that validate the original search for the better life. As time passes, one steers one's way through the formerly foreign world without thought, using newly acquired skills to demonstrate competence in ways that bring recognition and reward and yield exposure to an entirely different mix of people than those known before leaving home.

Transitioning from the outer toward the inner bounds of the zone of intersocietal convergence transforms the migrants, making them less like the people left behind and more like the people among whom they have settled, changes that in turn yield paradoxical consequences. As the migrants gain greater control over their new environment, learning how to navigate and manage it and thereby capture more of the resources found around them, their potential for making a difference back home grows. With greater stability migrants can also invest in maintaining the connection, whether by traveling home with greater frequency or engaging in activities oriented to the hometown community or even national polity. For much the same reasons, the migrants trigger the attention of home states, which reach out across boundaries to nationals abroad, seeking to gain their share over the human and financial resources generated by the migrants' move to another country.

However, greater capacity also transforms the relationships crossing boundaries. Over time, the initial, rough equilibrium between the flows emanating from new and old homes falters, as advantage shifts to the migrants. Consequently, the migrants gain leverage, with the resulting power asymmetries affecting their interactions with the stay-at-homes. That greater leverage lets them engage in community matters from afar, as we have seen in Chapter 8. And, as shown in Chapters 5, 6, and 7, it also facilitates the migrants' emergence as political actors with the capacity to both help and harm home state interests, giving sending states further incentive to expand their geographic scope, thereby gaining the infrastructural capacity needed to connect with and influence citizens abroad.

Thus, *intersocietal convergence* gradually gives way to *intersocietal divergence*. As the balance in the duality between *emigrant* and *immigrant* shifts from the former to the latter, the migrants find themselves not simply *in* the society of reception but increasingly *of* it as well. Residence in a rich country yields qualitative as well as quantitative changes, turning the migrants, if not into new people, then into people very different from

While *cross-border* contacts and connections to the *homeland* come under pressure, *cross-ethnic* contacts in the *host country* grow ever more prevalent, yielding ties to nationals whose social worlds are largely, if not entirely, encompassed by national borders, and which, in turn, tend to absorb interest and time at the expense of long-distance, cross-border relationships. Of those relationships, the most important are the most intimate, producing the households in which the next generation will grow up. While migrants who move as a couple typically share a connection to a specific *place* of origin within the *country* of origin, those who move as unattached adults encounter a much broader range of possibilities. Sometimes the ties furnished by hometown networks furnish a spouse, but that hardly exhausts the range of options. Marriages leading to the crossing of lines—whether simply involving two different places from the same country of origin or a more radical shift across national, ethnic, linguistic lines—change the household context in ways that weaken the signals and resources needed to transmit cross-border connections to the next generation. Consequently, boundaries that may have been important before migration and that may remain salient in the places from which the migrants came no longer have the same meaning in the place where the migrants now live.

Thus, movement across the zone of intersocietal convergence both strengthens *and* weakens the linkages that cross borders. As host country ties grow increasingly dense and in-place connections extend to host country nationals and other persons *outside* the zone of intersocietal convergence, *intersocietal divergence* becomes the prevailing pattern. But as international migration is an inherently political dimension, the facts that foreigners are also home country nationals and aliens are also home country citizens affect the motivation to keep up cross-border ties and the means by which they are pursued.

Every immigrant starts out as an alien *within* the society of reception but *outside* its polity. With the exception of the stateless, *every* emigrant remains a citizen *outside* the society of origin and only sometimes within its polity. In a sense, every state is also a sending state, as in a globalized world, citizens abroad comprise too large a fraction to be ignored. Hence, predominantly emigration and predominantly immigration states find themselves in a situation of some symmetry, which is why both parties have an interest in letting the other extend across boundaries to connect with citizens, wherever they are.

In the receiving state but not *of* it, the migrants confront a mixture of resources and vulnerabilities, benefiting from the wealth and freedom of the new environment but never fully free from the risk of rejection or the more devastating threat of ejection. *Of* the receiving state but not *in* it, the

those who left home. Identity, as the dictionary defines it, means the condition of being the same. But sameness ends once the migrants leave kin, hometown friends, and compatriots behind, which is why their identity is rapidly in flux. Migration engenders a change in the interior of the person, one both entailing and resulting from practical adaptations to a different social structure. As a result, the migrants develop a new set of wants, needs, and expectations that are no longer fully compatible with the ways of life and modes of behavior back home. Those changing orientations generate conflict in the cross-border relationship.

Moreover, the locus of the migrant's key connections also tends to shift over time, though that transition may be highly protracted. Regardless of the motivation leading any one family or individual to leave home, the core familial network almost always moves gradually, erratically, and incompletely: some significant other is usually to be found at home. Because other commitments, such as property ownership, keep emigrants rooted in the place from which they began, inertia exercises considerable weight.

Nonetheless, as the sojourn abroad persists, the social center of gravity is apt to cross the border, at which point the motivation to keep up cross-border ties falters. The needs of life in the place where the migrant actually lives soak up an increasing share of disposable income, reducing the resources available to remaining relatives at home, even as those ties become increasingly fraught. Because physical relocation yields *dislocation*, managing those relationships becomes all the more difficult. No longer in their proper, accustomed place, the migrants find that distance can be compressed, but it can be shrunk only so far. As shown in Chapter 4, technology, geography, the exigencies of daily life, and the very global inequalities that motivate migration all conspire to prevent the migrant from being "here" and "there" at the same time.

Distance impinges with particular force on the selective group of emigrants who seek engagement not just with the core members of their familial network but with the broader community from which they departed, the story told in Chapter 8. Wanting to do something good, the emigrant activists find that doing so proves problematic, in part because the complexities of cross-border coordination are daunting, especially for hard-working immigrants with limited technical skills trying to be cross-border citizens in their limited spare time. Cross-border activists may often claim that "the absent are always present" but delivering on that promise typically exceeds the emigrants' capacity. Instead, these efforts at homeland-oriented civic activity demonstrate how different the migrants are from the communities and people to which they are still attached and how often cross-border civic coordination founders on the shoals of dispersion, distance, and disconnection.

migrants' cross-border activities and engagements promote a deterritorialized vision of a national community extending across state boundaries. Living abroad, however, the migrants' foreign location undermines their legitimacy as political actors back home. For developing states, servicing the needs of citizens abroad entails allocating resources from those who chose to stay to those who chose to exit; however, the latter are too connected to the homeland to be ignored. Moreover, a failure to respond to the *immigrants'* problems feeds back in the form of political difficulties back home. As we have seen, building up the external state infrastructure to meet emigrants' needs has the advantage of reinforcing loyalties while also reinforcing an activity in which state and emigrant interests converge: namely, the sending of remittances. But as Chapter 7 has shown, states can do only so much for people who reside on the territory of another state, whose nationals already regard foreign-origin residents possessing persistent foreign loyalties with suspicion.

International migration inherently produces *intersocietal* convergence without necessarily producing a corresponding *interpolity* convergence. In leaving the home state, emigrants retain citizenship but *not* all citizenship rights. Crossing the territorial boundary usually takes the emigrants outside the home polity, which then proves off-bounds to those no longer living on home grounds. Chapters 5 and 7 demonstrated that residence abroad hardly precludes political activity oriented toward the home state, in part because the wealth accessible in the developed world is a source of political capital that the migrants can use to influence conditions in the country where they no longer live. No less important are the consequences that result from moving into a different political jurisdiction, as crossing political boundaries also lets the emigrants escape the home state's coercive power. However, that evasion allows for political freedom only when territorial presence is a source of destination society *civic* rights. Where those conditions hold—as in most democracies—emigrants gain the capacity to organize, protest, raise funds, and lobby, even if destination-society citizenship and full political rights remain out of reach. When combined, the freedoms and economic resources made possible by emigration have the potential to pack a powerful punch, forcing home state officials to listen to and sometimes accommodate people they would have despised had the emigrants not been able to leave home.

As we have seen, homeland politics leaves the mass of rank and file largely indifferent. To begin with, emigration is a form of voting with one's feet: *against* the state of origin and *for* the state of destination. Post-migration political involvement offers few incentives, especially for the many migrants who never engaged before departing. The key impediments

derive from the extraterritorial context itself, which lacks a political infrastructure capable of connecting migrants to the homeland polity, quite in contrast to the situation in the new environment, where on-site opportunities for participation are broadly on offer, even for those lacking full legal status.

Nonetheless, some fraction of the emigrants—usually small but often too big to be ignored—wants full citizenship rights and therefore tries to pull the home country polity across boundaries so that it extends to the foreign territories where the departed nationals can be found. As indicated by the growing number of countries that allow for some form of expatriate voting, cross-territorial polity extension is increasingly common, albeit to a limited degree. For the most part, that phenomenon involves the politics of recognition, not the politics of redistribution, as home states have limited capacity to respond to the number one concerns of their citizens abroad—which have to do with matters of immigration, *not* emigration. For that reason, the extension of voting rights often entails little more than a costly exercise in symbols, proving of little interest to the rank-and-file immigrants pursuing their search for a better life. Moreover, neither sending-state elites nor ordinary sending-state citizens find the demands for extraterritorial political participation fully convincing. As experienced from the sending side, the same people who claim to be *emigrants* appear often to be acting like *immigrants*; that they also live in *foreign places* provides further reason to think that they are unlikely to share the interests and needs of those people still living on *native grounds*.

Home country polity extension entails *interpolity convergence* only when full citizenship rights for *emigrants* are coupled with full citizenship rights for *immigrants*—an outcome that requires immigrants to traverse the internal, formal boundary of receiving-state citizenship. Citizenship, as Rogers Brubaker famously pointed out, is simultaneously inclusive *and* exclusive, binding together the citizens and keeping out the foreigners. Crossing the territory doesn't necessarily yield eligibility for receiving-state citizenship; only certain classes of legally present persons can apply and even they have to meet certain preconditions. Once immigrants are eligible for citizenship, it often proves hard to acquire, entailing expenditure of effort and savings, with unpredictable outcome and reward of uncertain value. And since citizenship is tied to national identity, the acquisition of a new citizenship is a matter of the heart, not just the brain. If, as so many scholars have argued, the nation is understood and felt as the family writ large, then abandoning one nationality and replacing it with another may seem like an act of betrayal in which one turns one's

the options. In a polity like that of the United States, immigrant politics is particularly attractive, as the political culture validates the pursuit of homeland politics and the political system makes it possible. Though certain limits cannot be crossed, emigrant politics yields a predominantly integrative impact. Paradoxically, homeland activism becomes an apprenticeship in host country politics.

Thus, in the end, the very same decisions that produce intersocietal *convergence* eventually yield intersocietal *divergence*. To be sure, separation does not necessarily entail detachment. On the contrary, for the most part, the migrants are actually in-between: *in* the country of immigration but *of* the country of emigration, *foreigners* where they reside but *immigrants* whenever they return home. Even if many migrants and, even more so, their descendants drift away from any homeland attachment, that origin remains meaningful to some and sufficiently so to entail investment of energy and time. But engagement with the homeland is ultimately shaped by migration and habituation to the expectations and rhythms of a physically separate, economically richer, culturally distinctive place. Consequently, the interactions between migrants and their descendants, on the one hand, and homeland leaders and everyday people, on the other, fall subject to tensions that coincide with territorial divides.

Crossing Boundaries: A Look Ahead

While international migration is good for the migrants, its revival has also been good for migration scholarship. The continuing flows of people across borders and the endless controversies provoked by this phenomenon have spurred a burgeoning of migration scholarship transforming a once peripheral, somnolent area into an exceptionally lively interdisciplinary field. Yet for all the research effort poured into this topic, migration scholarship has not reached its full potential. The central handicap stems from the field's distinctive division of labor, with one literature situated at the point of origin studying *emigration* and the other at the point of destination studying *immigration*. The sociology of *emigration* demonstrates how the people crossing borders actively shape their own destinies, doing what neither home nor host state wants, getting ahead by making effective use of the resource that they almost all possess—one another. The sociology of *immigration* explains why a move to the territory of another richer state simultaneously improves the migrants' lives but transforms them in ways that they could not have expected, often producing distance from the people, places, cultures, and loyalties left behind. The

back on one's family as well one's country. Hence, the emotive pull of home country citizenship may add to the material and cognitive costs imposed by receiving-state citizenship requirements, with the result that the transition from *emigrant* to *immigrant* may nonetheless leave substantial numbers remaining as *aliens* in the state where they actually live. Ironically, therefore, those with the strongest affective tie to the homeland may have the least capacity to pursue those connections effectively because moving back and forth across the national border is easiest for those who have already acquired receiving-state citizenship.

While democratic states vary in the degree to which they facilitate or impede naturalization, they all provide a door through which long-term foreign residents can become citizens of the country where they actually reside. The combination of host country citizenship *acquisition* and home country citizenship *retention* yields a convergence of polities paralleling the convergence of societies that results from the extension of social networks across boundaries. While sending states are not particularly keen on the polity's cross-territorial extension, they see virtue in the acquisition of host country citizenship, which by furthering immigrant integration into the destination society increases emigrants' capacity to transmit resources, whether remittances, ideas, or innovations, back home and allows the immigrants to speak out for home country interests in ways not possible when still standing outside the polity. For these reasons, sending states increasingly offer emigrants the option of dual citizenship, as the right to retain home country citizenship removes the stigma of disloyalty and thus relaxes the inner emotional constraint impeding immigrants from becoming nationals of the place where they live.

The civic rights accorded by democratic societies technically allow any emigrant to pursue homeland politics on alien soil, but only with the acquisition of receiving-state citizenship does the door open wide. In that pursuit, the selective, often unrepresentative, group of *emigrant* activists frequently takes the path of *immigrant* politics, as mobilizing resources in the destination country is best done with the political skills required by that environment. To exercise influence, homeland activists inevitably engage with mainstream political figures, in the process gaining the skills and building the host society political network needed to do so with success. Learning how to play the political game facilitates entry into the receiving-state polity, which in turn yields greater influence; thus activists initially motivated by homeland concerns often move deeper into host country politics, whose rewards are also hard to ignore. The shift from emigrant to immigrant politics takes a variety of forms, with political structure, political culture, and historical experiences widening or narrowing

problem is that these two separate sociologies describe the same people, thus failing to see the internal tensions and contradictions arising among people who are simultaneously immigrants *and* emigrants.

That defect can be rectified by following the approach adopted in this book: namely, to focus on the cross-border dimension, thereby defining international migration as a distinctive field of study, encompassing but going beyond "immigration" and "emigration" as conventionally defined. The cross-border nature of the phenomenon reminds us that the immigrants who are also emigrants are also *foreigners* from *foreign* places. Whereas social science shows that international migration is a normal event, repeatedly bringing one society onto the territory of another state, nationals have a different view, believing that state, society, and territory *should* be one and the same. Disturbed by the influx of foreigners, many nationals respond with hostility: some insist that boundaries *around* the state be tightened; others demand that boundaries of the political community *within* the state be narrowed; some are more accepting but expect the newcomers to take on the native code and switch loyalties from home to host societies. Those reactions, comprising an inherent part of the phenomenon, shape and circumscribe both the *emigration* options of those seeking to leave home and the *immigration* options of those who have ventured to a different land in search of a better life.

With the cross-border dimension in view, one no longer sees emigration through the perspective of the people of the developed world, who, wanting immigration reduced, believe that their states' policies have failed. Rather one also considers the developing world perspective, from which standpoint the migration controls imposed by the United States and the other rich democracies are all too effective. Doors to international trade in goods and services have opened wide, leading differences in international prices for goods to drop: a Big Mac bought in a developed country is not even twice the cost of the Big Mac purchased in countries at the 20th percentile. By contrast, differences in international wages have grown immensely, making gains to migration ever greater than before. Current wage ratios between numerous pairs of possible origin and destination countries (e.g., Vietnam and Japan at 1:9) are far higher than the "historical ratios between the mass senders and the United States" (Pritchett 2006: 20). Although migration entails social and psychological costs deterring many potential movers, evidence indicates ample readiness to migrate. The Gallup poll estimates that 700 million people wish to migrate *permanently*: among them, 6.2 million Mexicans and fully *half* of the respective populations of El Salvador, Haiti, and Ethiopia. Letting the world's poor move would appear to have immensely beneficial effects:

according to one analysis, free migration could as much as *double* world income (Pritchett 2006: 32). One need not go so far: if rich countries would let their labor force rise by a mere 3 percent, the gains to poor country citizens would exceed the costs of foreign aid by a factor of almost five (World Bank 2006: 5).

However, “let them stay *there*; do *not* let them come *here*” is the developed world’s fundamental goal; far from inept, the United States and the other rich democracies do a remarkably effective job of facilitating cross-border movement by citizens of wealthy countries while forcing people from the developing world to queue up for visas or climb over walls. Consequently, migrants’ decision making is inherently related to the policy decisions and preferences of the nonmovers in the developed world, making the determinants of emigration inextricably linked to the politics of migration restriction.

Focusing on the *international* dimension of the phenomenon also highlights the difficulties that the researchers of *immigration* encounter in identifying the population *into* which the immigrants and their offspring are meant to assimilate. The “mainstream” is apparently the concept of the day; however, as it also implies the existence of a sidestream, one also needs to explain who gets into the sidestream, who stays there, and why. Alas, the conventional approach provides no such account. Politically, the population described as the mainstream is divided, whether by ideology, class, region, religion, or some material interest. Moreover, assimilation into the mainstream and a corresponding diffusion of identity is *not* what nationals want. Rather, they clamor that foreigners become nationals—in the US case, “Americans”—replacing the particularism imported from abroad with the particularism found in their new home.

As emphasized throughout this book, the immigrants are not just foreigners; they are also *aliens*, a condition shared by *every* foreigner crossing national boundaries, whether as legal permanent resident, temporary worker, tourist, or undocumented immigrant. *Social* boundaries may be blurry, but *legal* boundaries surrounding the myriad formal categories of alien are bright. While the import of alien status varies by citizenship regime, exercising least weight where citizenship is a birthright, nowhere is its significance trivial. Naturalized citizens currently comprise one-third of all foreign-born people living in the United States; another third are legal permanent residents; another third belongs to some other, more tenuous legal status. Undocumented immigration in Europe is lower, but naturalization barriers are higher. While immigrant offspring born in the United States are citizens, many young immigrant offspring *growing up* in the United States are born abroad. No small fraction is undocumented;

many more have undocumented parents or siblings. Consequently, the brightest boundaries are not imported and have nothing to do with ethnicity; rather, they are fundamentally political, made *in* and *by* receiving states, exercising long-term consequences at the individual level and beyond. Beginning outside the body politic, migrants have limited ability to influence "who gets what," let alone "who is what," making it easy for nationals to ignore the needs and preference of those who have no organized voice.

Hence, the scholarly path ahead entails attending to the links between "here" and "there" while also highlighting the cross-state and political aspects that distinguish *international* migration from other forms of long-distance movement. International migrants do not move under circumstances of their own choosing; rather, they contend with states trying to control movement across both the *external* borders of the territory and the *internal* borders of membership and citizenship. Consequently, politics and policy shape migrant options, yielding bright, formal, relatively unyielding boundaries. In seeking to sort and sift, states respond to their citizens, whose preferences for a bounded community—not just a prejudice but also an ideal—put them at the heart of the phenomenon. Therefore, the study of international migration encompasses receiving as well as sending contexts, focusing both on the processes that recurrently produce population movements across states *and* the mechanisms by which nation-states attempt to keep themselves apart from the world.