Immigrant transnationalism

Roger Waldinger   University of California Los Angeles, USA

abstract   To say international migration is to say cross-border connections: the ties linking sending and receiving countries are a salient aspect of the migration experience, appearing during present as well as past eras of migration. This article reviews the sociology of these cross-state ties and spillovers, typically associated with the literature on transnationalism. The article discusses the intellectual history of the transnational perspective on migration, offers a critical evaluation and then presents a different approach, designed to identify the mechanisms generating and attenuating cross-border connections across a range of activities. Focusing on the experience in the Americas, the article then turns to the empirical literature, synthesizing the results of research on cross-border social ties, homeland politics and homeland spillovers. The last section suggests new avenues for future research.

keywords   cross-border connections ◆ diaspora ◆ immigration ◆ sending countries ◆ transnationalism

Once known as 'the uprooted,' immigrants are now often called 'the transnationals'. Whereas it might be more accurate to say that they are really 'the transplanted', almost all scholars agree that international migration means cross-border connections.

This new sensitivity results from pathbreaking work by anthropologists who launched the 'transnational perspective' in the early 1990s. Underscoring the ways in which the migration of peoples produces a spillover of ideas, goods and civil and political engagements across national boundaries, they triggered an outpouring of research.

The students of immigrant transnationalism deserve much credit, seeing that connections between place of reception and place of origin are an inherent, enduring component of the long-distance migrations of the modern world. Just like the migrants bridging home and host societies, a transnational perspective links the mutually exclusive preoccupations of migration researchers, who, in either focusing on sending or receiving societies, assume that state and society normally converge. The better perspective, as this new literature has shown, sees that social networks recurrently extend beyond states, which is why the study of those connections provides new light on our understanding of international migration.

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 just 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 feed back to home territory?

These are the questions explored in this article. I trace the intellectual history of the transnational concept and literature, providing an evaluation and then a perspective that can illuminate variations in the cross-border ties generated by migration. Subsequently, I review the empirical literature, focusing on cross-border social connections, homeland politics and homeland spillovers. The last section outlines directions for new research.

The career of a concept

The transnational concept has had an honorable career, though one that most scholars of immigrant transnationalism have curiously ignored. Originating in the mid-19th century (Saunier, 2009), credit for landmark use of the concept belongs to the early 20th-century American intellectual, Randolph Bourne, whose 1916 essay on 'Transnational America' responded to the jingoism of the times. Calling for a cosmopolitan America that would accept immigrants' dual loyalties and ongoing home country connections, Bourne argued that America could *transcend* nationalism by accepting the contributions of multiple nationalities: 'In a world which has dreamed of internationalism, we find that we have all unawares been building up the first international nation' (1916: 93). Yet Bourne was not so much an internationalist as a proponent of a liberal American nationalism, advocating a multiculturalism *avant la lettre*.

While Bourne was forgotten by all but the historians, phenomena explicitly labeled and understood as 'transnational' gained the attention of a growing scholarly audience, well before they were noticed by migration scholars. American diplomat, turned law professor, Phillip Jessup was first to identify the phenomena that were specifically 'transnational' and to explain why this new concept was needed. Writing in the early 1950s, Jessup noted that the 'line between the internal and the transnational is rather thin' (1956: 26). 'The growing concern for minorities, human rights, and the genocide convention' marked 'the invasion of the domestic realm of the national state. Forty years ago it was unthinkable that a state administering colonies should be called to international account for its management.' As of the mid-1950s, noted Jessup, it had already become routine.

Jessup early sounded the themes that later gained prominence – the diminishing importance of territoriality, the constraints on state sovereignty, the role of non-state actors. His proposal to separate out a distinctively transnational, from the international, realm quickly gained traction in law. Political scientists then headed in a like direction. In the early 1960s, Raymond Aron (1966) proposed the notion of a 'transnational society', encompassing a broad range of activities and beliefs crossing frontiers. While Aron doubted that 'transnational society' could affect inter-state politics, other international relations scholars picked up his idea, attacking political scientists' traditionally state-centric view. Nye and Keohane highlighted 'transnational relations' – 'contacts, coalitions, and interactions across state boundaries that are not controlled by the central foreign policy organs of governments' (Nye and Keohane, 1971: 331) – contending that 'the reciprocal effects between transnational relations and the interstate system' were 'centrally important to the understanding of contemporary world politics'. Nye and Keohane never quite clarified whether the growing role of non-state actors, and their enhanced ability to penetrate state boundaries, was an add-on to the existing state system, or rather the emergence of a new stage altogether. Counterposing transnationalism as the ideology of some of the rich to nationalism as the ideology of the poor suggested the latter, but what transnational*ism*, as such, might entail was never fully fleshed out.

This early interest in matters transnational helped galvanize the field of international political economy, with attention focusing on the growth of the entities labeled 'transnational corporations'. However, the broader, theoretical claims developed by the political scientists interested in transnational relations and their impact initially made little progress: in a debate pitting 'state-centered' vs 'society-dominated' views of world politics, the transnational perspective proved vulnerable to a demonstration that the state *still* mattered (Risse-Kappen, 1995), a view that the persistence of international tensions through the close of the 'short twentieth century' (Hobsbawm, 1994) made compelling. With the end of the Cold War and the tremendous diffusion of transnational non-governmental organizations, perspectives then changed: interest in a broad array of non-state actors breathed new life into the transnational concept.

The attention drawn to transnational corporations helped push the transnational concept from law and political science to the study of migration. Transmission took place via anthropology, for reasons related to the discipline's underlying orientation and theoretical disputes that erupted during the 1980s. Territory had long defined the division of labor between sociology and anthropology, with the former taking responsibility for societies where the researchers actually lived, and the anthropologists the foreign places where the 'others' resided. In disrupting the 'isomorphism of space, place and culture', the international movements of people – whether of elites or workers – blurred the boundaries of the anthropologists' field, displacing it toward both a multiplicity of spaces and the connections extending across 'culture', 'society', 'community' and 'nation' (Gupta and Ferguson, 1992).

The anthropologists directly responsible for applying a transnational perspective to the study of migration responded to one particular, boundary-blurring phenomenon: the long-term, back and

forth migrations and persistent home country connections, characteristic of the Caribbean. According to Glick Schiller, Basch and Blanc-Szanton, the strength and prevalence of these ties, described as 'transnational' social fields, demonstrated that neither settlement nor the severing of home country ties was inevitable. In the contemporary age of migration, rather, 'transmigrants … maintain, build, and reinforce multiple linkages with their countries of origins' (Glick Schiller et al., 1995: 52). With so fundamental a change, entirely new conceptualizations were needed. 'Transnationalism' became the label used for identifying the social connections between receiving and sending countries; 'transmigrants' denoted the people who forged those ties and kept them alive.

In entering migration studies, transnationalism acquired a meaning distinct from the 'new transnationalism' of political scientists and global historians: a cross-state phenomenon linking actors *differing* in national backgrounds and ethnic affiliations, but *sharing* a commitment to principled ideals, as exemplified by scientists, environmentalists, human rights activists, or the left-wing internationalists of old. This type of transnationalism signifies 'universalist or *anti-nationalist* processes and ideologies' (Fitzgerald, 2004: 229), unlike the particularistic cross-border connections linking migrants and stay-at-homes.

Terminological confusion notwithstanding, the idea of 'immigrant transnationalism' quickly took off. Since migration is an inherently transitional process, invariably yielding back and forth moves and exchanges, what the anthropologists called 'transnationalism' could almost always be found. The transnational concept also provided immigration scholars with a way of thinking about globalization, of which the mass migrations of peoples and the spillovers they generate comprise an especially visible edge. Though fed by somewhat different intellectual currents, ably traced by Dufoix (2003) and Ben-Rafael (2010), the burgeoning interest in diasporas and their many facets – cultural, political, and economic – further shifted attention to the cross-border activities highlighted by the newly elaborated transnational perspective.

With the intervention of Alejandro Portes, the study of immigrant transnationalism entered the scholarly mainstream. In a widely read 1997 article, outlining the immigration research agenda for the next century, Portes put the study of 'transnational communities' at the top of the list. Two years later, commanding the platform in a special issue of *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Portes elaborated a full research program. Scholarship on transnationalism, he argued, had to focus on 'occupations and activities that require regular and sustained social contacts over time across national borders for their implementation' (Portes et al., 1999: 219). Equally important was a change from the qualitative approaches that identified the phenomenon to survey research that alone could establish the prevalence of transnationalism – as Portes defined it – and identify 'the major factors associated with its emergence' (Portes et al., 2002).

Though methodological controversy inevitably followed, these disputes only added grist to the mill, as the tide of transnationalist scholarship continued to swell. Portes' emphasis on a kind of hard transnationalism consistent with the concept's etymological roots – a condition of being, beyond the nation – ultimately demonstrated that relatively few migrants met his stringent requirements. Thus, by defining transnationalism narrowly and focusing on the relatively small group of 'transmigrants', he heralded the 'transnationals' as a new, distinct class only to shove them to the periphery of the migrant experience.

Since so few migrants pursue cross-border activities coalescing in a coherent, consistent way, scholars adopting a transnational perspective have increasingly opted for a more disaggregated view. Unpacking the notion of 'transnational community', Faist (2000) argued that some cross-border activities and exchanges are particularistic, entailing connections between specific families or kinship groups, whereas others work at a higher level of aggregation, involving identification with a trans-border community. Levitt and Waters (2002) took another tack, differentiating between homeland engagements that took a concrete, behavioral form and those entailing a symbolic, identificational component. Glick Schiller (2003) distinguished between transnational 'ways of being', or ongoing cross-border activities, and 'ways of belonging', practices signaling an identity with another people or place. Similarly, many researchers emphasize transnational *practices*, substituting the fine lines associated with 'transnationalism' with a continuum, in which the regular, sustained trans-state practices of the transmigrants shade off into something more erratic and less intense (Levitt, 2001a).

Cross-border activities: Varieties and sources of variation

While the advent of the transnational perspective produced an 'excited rush to address an interesting area of global activity' it also left 'much conceptual muddling' (Vertovec, 2001: 448). Indeed, the unending effort to refine concepts and definitions, as well as the quarrels surveyed above, point to deeper

problems. One involves a core ambiguity, pointed out in a widely cited article published just when the literature began to take off:

> The 'nation' in transnational usually refers to the territorial, social, and cultural aspects of the nations concerned. Implicit in anthropological studies of transnational processes is the work of the 'state,' as for example, the guardians of national borders, the arbiter of citizenship, and the entity responsible for foreign policy. Transnational and global phenomena conflict with the jurisdiction and power of states and are what might be called 'trans-statal'. This term has not gained common usage, but the conditions suggesting it are reflected in the works of those who write about globalization and transnationalism. (Kearney, 1995: 548)

Thus, the concept of 'transnationalism' conflates 'state' and 'nation', the first referring to territorial units, the second to social collectivities. By definition, international migration involves connections that cross the territorial units of the global. However, connectivity and social collectivity are analytically and practically distinct. Unfortunately, few scholars have attended to the matter, instead defining transnational 'in common sense terms as "cross-border" (and therefore, technically, "trans-state")' (Fox, 2005: 172).

Substituting a concept referring to territorial organizations with one referring to putative political communities yields numerous problems. Connectivity does *not* imply collectivity: masses of migrants communicate with relatives abroad, whom they may support and visit; far fewer engage with activities linking them to a broader place of origin collectivity, whether at local or national level. *Some* migrations take a multi- and inter-polar form, generating dispersed, but connected populations who use these far-flung linkages to advance their situation (MaMung, 1999); however, *most* do not. Instead, the prevalent pattern involves two-way ties, linking place of origin with place of destination, but leaving the scattered populations abroad unconnected. Identification or affiliation with a collectivity defined in place of origin terms does *not* imply connectivity, as demonstrated by exile communities that frame identity in home country terms, but do so against the home regime (Dufoix, 2002), making contact with the émigrés a source of peril for those still at home. Though connectivity and collectivity *can* go hand in hand, the long-distance collectivities to which *some* migrants have been attached also involve many different types. Sometimes, they truly transcend the nation, as exemplified by the internationalism of the migrant radicals of the 1900s. Ironically, the scholars of contemporary immigrant

'transnationalism' instead focus on social collectivities involving long-distance, cross-*state* affiliations of a *particularist* sort. Even these attachments differ, sometimes connecting migrants to established nations, sometimes to would-be nations seeking their own states, sometimes to local communities, a topic to which the students of immigrant transnationalism have ironically devoted particular attention.

The continuing controversies obscure a more profound difficulty: identifying the phenomenon of interest and the intellectual puzzle it poses. International migration inherently generates cross-border connections: migrants' remittances, letters, phone calls, visits, investments in their home communities yield feedbacks spurring additional departures; by channeling newcomers to establish settlements, cross-border networks also reduce the social, psychological and economic costs of migration, thus putting it in reach of a growing population. These ongoing feedbacks also explain why migrations, once begun, are so slow and so difficult to stop.

The growing scholarly interest in matters transnational has had the virtue of highlighting these connections and their ubiquity – linkages ignored by traditional preoccupations with immigrant assimilation or integration. In these approaches, everything of importance transpires *within* the boundaries of destination states, converting an inherently political phenomenon involving the encounter between aliens and nationals into a matter of the relationship between minorities and the majority. Focusing on the cross-border dimension also demonstrates that population movements across borders inherently raise issues related to rights, citizenship, political participation and national identity in both home *and* host societies – questions obscured by the traditional intellectual division of labor between research that is either home-society *or* host society focused (Waldinger, 2003).

However, adopting a transnational perspective does no more than sensitize scholars to the importance and prevalence of cross-border ties. A more productive approach begins by noting that migrants and stay-at-homes may maintain connections via a 'transnational social field' while simultaneously being pulled in opposite directions by the 'national social fields' to which they are attached. As recommended by Levitt and Glick Schiller 'ascertaining the relative importance of nationally restricted and transnational social fields should be a matter of empirical analysis' (2004: 1009). To date, however, that agenda is largely a matter of exhortation, not implementation.

Moreover, if this new perspective simply notes

that 'some migrants continued to be active in their homelands at the same time that they become part of the countries that received them' (Levitt and Jaworsky, 2007: 130), it just points out an empirical anomaly, one easily absorbed by assimilation theory. The advocates of assimilation (Alba and Nee, 2003) furnish a straightforward, rational choice explanation of the mechanisms leading immigrants to reduce home country connections: the same motivations impelling migration – the search for a better life (Zamudio, 2009) – encourage a cutting-off of home country ties, since orientations toward the host country and its expectations yield the greatest rewards. By contrast, the proponents of a transnationalist perspective portray the 'migrant experience as a kind of pivot which while anchored, pivots between a new land and transnational incorporation' (Levitt and Glick Schiller, 2004: 1011), a purely descriptive statement, lacking a framework to explain which 'migrants manage that pivot', how they do so, under which conditions, with what success and for how long.

That challenge can be met by identifying the mechanisms generating *and* attenuating cross-border connections. As noted earlier, international migrations inherently yield ties and flows extending back from receiving to sending states. These connections lead to greater connectedness, driving down the costs of cross-border exchanges; migrants' movement to a rich society provides them with the resources needed to keep up cross-border ties even as they move ahead in their new country; those resources combine with the new freedoms made possible by emigration to produce continuing engagement with homeland politics, often providing the migrants with greater levels of influence than previously experienced; seeking to access those resources while controlling migrant behavior, sending states develop policies aimed at engagement with their diasporas.

On the other hand, a variety of factors embed migrants in the national social field, tearing them away and differentiating them from the people and places left behind (Waldinger and Fitzgerald, 2004). Initially, territory may have limited significance in structuring the social field linking host and home, but time sharpens the social boundaries between 'here' and 'there'. Though migrants and stay-at-homes may stay connected, migration pulls them apart, as each undergoes experiences that the other cannot completely share. Despite distance-shrinking technologies, cross-border engagement remains costly, reducing the population motivated or able to keep up home country ties. As the migrants' social relations shift from home to host societies, on-location costs grow, raising the burden of cross-border exchanges, while the growing difference between migrants and stay-at-homes makes benefits decline. Because the political infrastructure connecting migrants and their descendants to the home state is often weak and incomplete, involvement with home country social collectivities entails significant effort and correspondingly high opportunity costs; by contrast, the hostland offers lower cost opportunities to participate on-site, which in turn, generates rewards with which home states cannot compete. While *some* migrants and immigrant offspring maintain involvements with home country collectivities, those engagements are shaped by interests and preferences born out of the migration experience; given the costs of cross-border political connections, those involvements are both episodic and asymmetric, allowing the migrants to intervene at home, but impeding collaboration with stay-at-homes.

Moreover, national identity remains relevant on both sides of the territorial divide. While migration shows the social scientist that social relations are not inevitably contained within states, nationals in both sending *and* receiving states tend to *believe* that territory and identity *should* coincide. Thus while migrants are often motivated to sustain a connection to the people, town, region, or nation left behind, members of the nation-state societies to which the migrants have moved frequently find these displays of concern and affection disconcerting. In a world of mutually exclusive nation-states, persons with foreign attachments remain open to question, and all the more so when the relevant nation-states coexist on less than friendly terms. Thus, both sending states as well as immigrant rights advocates often worry about the consequences of homeland engagements, the former worrying that it will imperil immigrant integration, the latter disliking the immigrants' display of nationalism and anxious about the ill effects it might produce (Ostegaard-Nielsen, 2003).

Furthermore, while *some* migrants and their descendants may continue to identify with the home community, they do so as residents and sometimes members of a foreign country. As their lifestyles, preferences and behaviors are no longer fully native, but rather reflect the experience and patterns prevailing in the place where they actually live, their claims to belonging are met with skepticism, if not rejection, by the stay-at-homes. While not sufficient to prevent all migrants and migrants' descendants from maintaining multiple memberships in home and host societies, these cross-pressures make it increasingly difficult for many.

With this perspective in hand, we now explore the empirical contours of immigrants' cross-border connections. Given the complexity of global migrations and the burgeoning literature, we focus on selected aspects of the experience in the Americas,

with special attention to the United States and the hemispheric migration streams to which it is linked.

Cross-border connections: Social and political dimensions

Social connectivity

Mass migrations recurrently yield cross-border ties. Many analysts insist that the technological changes of the current age of mass migration have had a transformative effect, 'permit[ting] easier and more intimate connections' (Levitt, 2001b: 22) among migrants and stay-behinds and providing 'the basis for the emergence of transnationalism on a mass scale' (Portes et al., 1999: 223).

A more careful view highlights the continuing synergistic effects of long-distance migration and long-distance communication. Long-term changes in literacy, technology and public infrastructure in the lead-up to the last age of migration made the trans-oceanic and trans-continental delivery of letters increasingly predictable and fast: rail tied interiors to ports and ships moved across the seas at growing speeds (Moya, 1998). What had taken a year in the late 18th century, fell to a few weeks by the mid-19th, and dropped to roughly a week a half century later, with lower postal rates and higher literacy on both sending and receiving sides further increasing volumes (Sinke, 2006).

The mail also provided the means by which European migrants sent home 'a rain of gold' (Esteves and Khoudour-Castéras, 2009). Earnings harvested in the Americas financed moves across the ocean, releasing migrants from the poverty constraints keeping them at home, and prolonging the migrations, after wage convergence reduced the relative rewards of displacement (Hatton and Williamson, 2005). Remittances provided an exceptionally stable flow of income (Esteves and Khoudour-Castéras, 2009), with strong macro-economic effects, as in Italy, where remittances pushed the economy into movement, furnishing the currency needed to keep exports and imports in balance (Choate, 2009).

Today, ongoing declines in transport and communication costs and the advent of entirely new means of communication continue to facilitate ties between migrants abroad and communities at home. The most compelling indicator is remittance sending: remittances received by developing countries are large (the second largest source of development finance after direct foreign investment); rising (up by almost 100 percent between 1999 and 2004); stable (with less volatility than capital market flows or development assistance); and free, requiring neither interest nor repayment of capital (Ratha, 2005).

Equally impressive has been the exponential growth in the volume of international telecommunications, with more rapid growth in US-bound traffic from developing as opposed to the OECD countries (Kapur and McHale, 2005: 124–5). Just as the declining cost of postage hastened the flow of letters back and forth the Atlantic a century ago, 'cheap calls' have been described as 'the social glue of migrant transnationalism' (Vertovec, 2004). Migration has helped drive the growth in international telephone traffic: an analysis of 160 countries between 2001 and 2006 shows that a 10 percent increase in the size of bilateral migrant stocks is associated with a three-person increase in bilateral telephone traffic, a more robust effect than that produced by short-term visitors, bilateral trade and bilateral foreign direct investment stocks (Perkins and Neumayer, 2010).

Though a plane ticket remains much costlier than an international phone call, air travel between source and destination countries has also boomed, as exemplified by the 10-fold increase in United States–El Salvador air traffic between 1990 and 2004. The emergence of this traffic corridor almost entirely dominated by migration-related travel has triggered new commercial strategies, further making connectedness easier and cheaper (PNUD, 2005). Potentially most revolutionary is the advent of the internet, allowing migrants and stay-at-homes to communicate instantly and almost costlessly, with a spontaneity approaching the conditions of face-to-face contact. With videoconferencing, bringing together 'image, sound, and simultaneity' (Mattelart, 2009: 12), even that barrier falls, though for many migrants, this technology entails costs and system requirements that put it out of range (Benitez, 2006).

These cross-border activities comprise the 'transnational social field', encompassing migrants and stay-at-homes. While ties may extend from 'here' to 'there', cross-border linkages neither come together in a single package nor persist in stable form. As noted, cross-border engagement can be costly, reducing the population motivated or able to keep up cross-border ties. Likewise, resource constraints compel many to pick among the available options. The image of the wired and footloose immigrant, communicating across borders in real time or traveling to home and back with little bother, tends to 'privilege the experience of the connected migrants, neglecting those without a connection, yielding a particularly truncated image of the realities of migration' (Mattelart, 2009: 30). Only migrants equipped with the material resources *and* the legal entitlements needed move back and forth across borders at will enjoy the full array of cross-

border connections. At the other end of the chain, the costs of travel and, more decisively, border controls, keep the stay-at-homes in place (Arias, 2009).

Access to distance-shrinking technologies varies on receiving *and* sending sides. Migrant densities boost international calling rates, though impacts and incomes are positively correlated in both receiving and sending states (Perkins and Neumayer, 2010). Access to the internet and mobile phones peaks among the high income countries on which migrants from the developing world converge (Hamel, 2009). Nonetheless, internet usage rates among immigrants in the US fall well below the national level, with usage among Mexican immigrants still lower (Fairlie et al., 2006). Among sending countries, poverty as well as infrastructural capacity continue to reduce telephone access for migrants' significant others still at home. Similarly, the digital divide across countries grows as GDP per capita declines. Whereas immigrants in New York or Los Angeles may find it relatively easy to go online, their relatives in isolated villages in Mexico or Haiti, still accessible only by dirt road, are far more likely to be off the grid.

Consequently, while the incidence of cross-border connections is high, the type and durability of connection varies greatly. On the sending side, data from the Pew World Survey for 35 developing countries indicate that roughly 32 percent of respondents regularly write to, telephone or visit friends or relatives in other countries; however, barely 3 percent receive money regularly, with another 10 percent receiving money once in a while.[1] Similarly, tabulations from the Latin American Public Opinion Poll show that almost a quarter of Mexicans report having a relative abroad; however, of that group, 35 percent say that they are never or rarely in contact with these relatives no longer living in Mexico and only 24 percent receive remittances.[2]

A similar pattern emerges on the receiving side. A recent nationally representative survey of Latin American immigrants in the United States found that some form of cross-border activity was common. Almost 70 percent called home monthly or more frequently; 52 percent sent money home in the prior year; 33 percent traveled home within the 24 months prior to the survey. On the other hand, roughly 20 percent reported no ongoing home country connection. Moreover, the three activities were weakly correlated, with migrants appearing to choose between traveling or remitting, and many combining both activities with regular telecommunications. Further analysis showed that the frequency of phone calls home and the probability of remitting declined with length of stay, with phone calls dropping steeply in early years and bottoming out with extended US residence. The probability of recent travel, on the other hand, increased in the first 15–20 years of residence, but then dropped. Shifts away from the foreign tongue consistently yielded diminished home country attachment. By contrast, migrants with key engagements located in the home country were generally, though not consistently, more likely to engage in cross-border activities than otherwise typical migrants (Soehl and Waldinger, 2010).

In the end, while mass migration generates an infrastructure facilitating cross-border activity, intense and consistent engagement is relatively rare. By contrast, the typical migrant is likely to maintain ties of some sort, linkages that also attenuate as the locus of social relations shifts from home to host societies.

Homeland politics

Population movements across borders transplant migrants into a new, separate political environment. Presence on the soil of a democratic society entails at least some rights, even if those rights are contested and variable. Because the migrants' cause can be framed in terms that resonate broadly – whether appealing to beliefs in human rights or self-determination – they find domestic allies, whose intervention helps secure the space for autonomous social action. As social boundaries are relatively diffuse, migrants develop close ties to citizens, generating another set of allies with unquestioned political entitlements. Hence migrant political activists previously blocked from exercising direct influence at home find that their host society location and host society allies give them new found influence.

Leverage grows because the material and the political combine. The same logic that propels a transnational family economy supports the cross-state projects pursued by political activists: collecting funds in countries where wages are high in order to support political mobilization in countries where costs are low, exile activists use small contributions from low-wage migrant workers abroad to gain the resources that make a difference back home.

Migrant political activism comes in numerous types, ranging from the ideologically motivated undertakings of exile elites to the *ad hoc*, uncoordinated efforts of rank-and-file migrants seeking to help, and therefore also change, their home towns (Ostergaard-Nielsen, 2003). For many scholars, 'long-distance nationalism' (Anderson, 1998) best describes the cross-border politics in which migrants engage. Though appealing, the concept is used in too broad-brush a fashion, reducing migrant long-distance home country loyalties to a single form, when in fact, 'nation' is invoked or used by the actors involved in maintaining or activating migrants' long-

distance ties in a variety of different ways.

Historically, state-seeking nationalism targeted an existing multi-ethnic state, striving to create a state for a 'people' that did not yet have one; this pattern, applying to 19th-century Irish immigrants in the United States and elsewhere subsequently emerged among turn-of-the-20th-century immigrants originating in the Habsburg or Romanov empires, and among Tamil and Palestinian nationalists at the turn of the 21st century. Another possibility is regime-changing nationalism, in which the migrants seek not to break up an existing political entity, but rather to transform its government, structure, or leadership, possibly shifting it from left to right, as with the anti-Communist Cuban exiles in Miami, or from right to left, as with the Salvadoran refugees of the 1970s or 1980s.

Not all the long-distance national loyalties to which the immigrants respond take these aggressive forms: migrant long-distance nationalism can involve forms of solidarity with distant compatriots or states entirely compatible with receiving state engagements and tranquil relations with receiving society groups. In general, the most popular form of long-distance national solidarity is the one that does not cost anything, and which American sociologists have described as 'symbolic ethnicity' (Gans, 1979). The recurring ethnic parades and festivals found in America's immigrant cities illustrate this phenomenon: these events provide migrants and their descendants with a one-day opportunity to express concern for the place left behind, doing so publicly as legitimate members of the society in which they actually live (Ghorashi, 2004). Migrant philanthropy – as when migrants send money and supplies to relieve their compatriots traumatized by natural or social disasters – also exemplifies this more benign form of migrant long-distance nationalism, albeit in a slightly more demanding form. Home country loyalty can also turn migrants and their descendants into ethnic lobbyists, an outcome of great interest to the leaders of today's economically struggling sending states. Last, many (though not all) immigrants can potentially participate in normal, home country politics, an option facilitated by the last quarter century's wave of democratization, as exemplified by the numerous campaigns for expatriate voting rights.

Though migration can be a source of homeland leverage for those still interested in the place left behind, displacement to the territory of a different state, representing a new people, yields impacts that work in the opposite direction. Homeland political involvement tends to entail high costs and low benefits. While not the only reason to participate in politics, pursuit of material benefits – whether individual or collective – is one of the factors that

lead people to spend time and effort on political matters. Home states, however, 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 generate 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, disconnection from home country politics is the typical pattern.

Home country spillovers
A network-driven phenomenon, population movements across borders inherently and recurrently generate home country spillovers. While connections linking points of origin and destination cannot trigger migrations, once created they keep migrations flowing: information about opportunities found elsewhere leaks out beyond the initial circle; veteran migrants help newcomers, who then appear where the previous movers had settled; ongoing contacts tell the stay-at-homes that they would do better by moving elsewhere, while exporting forms of consumption and behavior learned in the society of destination and that often depart from local norms.

The home country spillovers produced by

migration also yield effects on the stay-at-homes. Having long pondered the possibility that migration might trigger development, some scholars and many policy-makers increasingly think that connections to the expatriates lost due to migration can be turned to sending countries' gain. Motivating this view is increased awareness of the size of the remittance stream; seen as an effective means of reducing poverty *and* as a form of self-help, remittances have become the 'new development mantra' (Kapur, 2005). Whether the monies harvested by migration yield positive or negative effects is, however, a question to which research provides no firm answer. Thus, while remittances may cushion migrants' families against a variety of setbacks, their protective value depends on the nature of the shock: they are unlikely to mitigate the impact of the great recession begun in 2008, as widespread layoffs among the migrants shriveled the flow of monies heading to the developed world. Considerable evidence suggests that children in families receiving remittances are more likely to continue with schooling, though the amounts of additional education obtained may be modest; since, as noted in a report on migration issued by the UN Development Program, 'remittances alone cannot remove the structural constraints to economic growth' (2009: 79), rewards to small or modest gains in education are likely to be highly uncertain. Any economic gains to remittances also need be balanced against the social and psychological costs that occur when migration splits families apart.

Exchanges between migrants and stay-at-homes can also yield the transmission of ideas, norms, expectations, skills and contacts acquired in the society of destination. Capitalizing on the interest in worker remittances, some scholars have advanced the concept of 'social' or 'political' remittances to characterize these flows (Levitt, 1998; Pérez-Armendáriz and Crow, 2009), in the process slighting the contrast between the egocentric networks linking the senders and receivers of worker remittances and the far less bounded properties of the spillovers resulting from migrants' exposure to new ideas or skills abroad. As expressed by a recent World Bank study, a hopeful view sees migrants serving as bridges, 'providing access to market, sources of investment, and expertise' while also helping to 'shape public debate, articulate reform plans and help implement reforms and new projects' (Kuznetsov and Sabel, 2006: 3). Though transforming brain drain into brain gain is the most alluring way of activating the diaspora, there is considerable interest in how the far more numerous low-skilled migrants might generate positive spillovers via their hometown associations.

The great bulk of migrant remittances result from the individual preferences of immigrants acting in parallel, but uncoordinated fashion. Given that flow's size, channeling just a small proportion in the form of 'collective remittances' could yield significant impact. Moreover, migrant philanthropy appears to be a grassroots phenomenon, an additional virtue in the eyes of development policy-makers, convinced that economic performance and broader participation go hand in glove (Burgess, 2005). No less interested in 'collective remittances', sending state officials realize that migrants are political actors, deploying resources that make it impossible for them to be ignored. Unlike taxpayers, moreover, migrants are willing to reach into their own pockets and provide money for free, reason for cash-strapped governments in developing societies to find ways of keeping the flow moving. How best to engage in 'remittance capture' (Gamlen, 2008) is a question with which sending states around the world are struggling, discarding old policies for new in the hope that some innovation will produce better results. No one has yet discovered how to steer family remittances in ways that might directly trigger development; hence, interest has focused on how home state governments might stimulate migrant giving. Mexico's 'Tres por uno' program, in which each dollar raised by hometown associations in the United States for investment back home is matched by a dollar from the Mexican federal, state and municipal government is perhaps the best known such effort.

Whether hometown associations can spur development in the migrants' communities depends largely on the quality and content of the linkages connecting the migrants to one another, to all those left behind, as well as to the other actors that have now engaged in the game. Not everyone can go from 'here' to 'there' and back with equal ease: stay-at-homes are largely precluded from on-site intervention with the migrant hometowners living abroad. Among the migrants, only a selective minority participates in associational matters (Escala Rabadan, 2004). As travel back to the hometown requires legal and economic resources that all too many migrants do not yet possess, the crucial interlocutors comprise a still smaller group. While advances in telecommunication may facilitate contact with close relatives, distance and geographical separation still matter, producing high transaction costs impeding effective contact between migrant activists and hometown communities (Torres and Kuznetsov, 2006). Meeting those challenges is compounded by the fact that the migrant leaders are volunteers heading up associations with limited organizational capacity (Paul and Gammage, 2004). Beyond the technical challenges of cross-border coordination are differences in priorities: the

migrants' agenda often clashes with those of the stay-at-homes, in part because the migrants no longer know the realities on the ground; in part, because migration has changed their wants and preferences (Smith, 2006). Ironically, therefore, migration gives migrants opportunities to effect change back home, but in ways that reflect, and largely reinforce, inequalities between sending and receiving societies (Itzigsohn and Villacres, 2008; Waldinger et al., 2007).

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. Yet, that is but the first step toward an empirical research agenda. As I have tried to show in this article, unpacking the different dimensions of the phenomenon – for example, everyday connectivity from concerted, political action across borders – is the next stage. Though political engagement is far more selective than remittance sending or communication, questions remain regarding the prevalence, persistence and variation by gender, social class, place of origin and type of migration of each form of cross-border involvement. Likewise, researchers have yet to develop systematic comparisons of the many forms – state-seeking, regime-changing, philanthropic, ethnic lobbying – taken by migrant long-distance politics. Similarly, there is much to be learned about home country spillovers. Although sending state responses is a topic of growing interest, comparative studies are few and far between; we also know too little about the ways in which connections to migrants affect the behavior and attitudes of their significant others, still living at home.

In the end, scholarship needs to understand the factors that promote *and* supplant cross-border involvements. That goal requires a departure, both from the views of the globalists who see immigrants living in two worlds as well as those of unselfconscious nationalists, standing with their backs at the borders. A better perspective emphasizes the collision between the processes that recurrently produce inter-national 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, we can then understand why the immigrants are so often in-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 place where they actually live.

Notes

1. Calculations from Pew Global Attitudes Project: Spring 2007 Survey, downloaded from http://pewglobal.org/category/data-sets/. Developing countries defined as all those countries classified by United Nations Development Project as 'high human development' or lower. Countries include: Argentina, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, China, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Ivory Coast, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Malaysia, Mali, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, Palestinian Territories, Peru, Russia, Senegal, Tanzania, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, Venezuela.
2. Data calculated from merged 2006 and 2008 Mexican samples of the Latin American Population Project; data downloaded from Question regarding frequency of contact asked in the 2008 survey only.

Annotated further reading

Choate M (2009) *Emigrant Nation: The Making of Italy Abroad*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Focusing on the mass migrations of the turn of the 20th century, this book by a historian shows how Italy sought to engage with Italians scattered throughout the world, doing so in ways uncannily similar to the policies pursued by emigration states 100 years later.

Dufoix S (2003) *Les Diasporas*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France. (English translation, *Diasporas*, University of California Press, 2008.) Identifying the different modalities whereby dispersed populations connect with a homeland, this succinct guide to understanding diaspora as both intellectual phenomenon and social process also highlights the intellectual links between the cognate fields of diaspora studies and transnationalism.

Fitzgerald D (2009) *A Nation of Emigrants: How Mexico Manages its Migration*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Written by a sociologist, this book combines archival and ethnographic research to show how the Mexican state and a variety of Mexican institutions responded

to the challenges of emigration so as to retain the attachment of Mexican nationals living in the territory of another state.

Glick Schiller N, Basch L and Szanton Blanc C (1995) From immigrant to transmigrant: Theorizing transnational migration. *Anthropological Quarterly* 68(1): 48–63.
   An easily accessible, succinct statement of the 'transnational perspective' in its original form, setting forth the key arguments, which are then illustrated with examples from the field.
Ostergaard-Nielsen E (2003) The politics of migrants' transnational political practices. *International Migration Review* 37(3): 760–786.
   An influential review of transnational political engagement, drawing on field research among Turks and Kurds in Europe, identifying different types of migrant political involvement and discussing the conditions under which each evolves.
Portes A, Guarnizo LE and Landolt P (1999) The study of transnationalism: Pitfalls and promise of an emergent research field. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 22(2): 217–237.
   An effort to redirect research on transnationalism, emphasizing the importance of survey research as a way to avoid sampling on the dependent variable.
Smith R (2005) *Mexican New York.* Berkeley: University of California Press.
   This superb ethnography focusing on the connections between a group of Mexican migrants in New York and their hometown in the Mexican state of Puebla highlights the impact of 'transnational life' on outcomes in both sending and receiving contexts.
Waldinger R and Fitzgerald D (2004) Transnationalism in question. *American Journal of Sociology* 109(5): 1177–1195.
   A critical response to the scholarship on transnationalism, emphasizing the collision between the processes the generate connections across state boundaries and those that cut ties at the water's edge.

References

Alba R and Nee V (2003) *Remaking the American Mainstream: Assimilation and Contemporary Immigration.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
Anderson B (1998) Long-distance nationalism. In: Anderson B (ed.) *The Spectre of Comparisons: Nationalism, Southeast Asia and the World.* London: Verso, 58–74.
Arias P (2009) *Del Arraigo a la Diáspora*: *Dilemas de la familia rural.* Mexico, DF: Miguel Angel Porrua.
Aron R (1966) *Peace and War: A Theory of International Relations.* Garden City, NY: Doubleday.
Benitez JL (2006) Transnational dimensions of the digital divide among Salvadoran immigrants in the Washington DC metropolitan area. *Global Networks* 6(2): 181–199.
Ben-Rafael E (2010) Diaspora. *Sociopedia.isa.* Available at: www.sagepub.net/isa/resources/pdf/Diaspora.pdf.
Bourne R (1916) Trans-national America. *The Atlantic Monthly* 118(1): 86–97.
Burgess K (2005) Migrant philanthropy and local governance. In: Merz B (ed.) *New Patterns for Mexico: Observations on Remittances, Philanthropic Giving, and Equitable Development.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
Choate M (2009) *Emigrant Nation: The Making of Italy Abroad.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
Dufoix S (2002) *Politiques d'exil: Hongrois, Polonais et Tche?coslovaques en France après 1945.* Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.
Dufoix S (2003) *Les Diasporas.* Paris: Presses Universitaires de France. (English translation, *Diasporas*, University of California Press, 2008.)
Escala-Rabadan L (2004) Migracíon y formas organizativos en los Estados Unidos: los clubes y federaciones de migrantes mexicanos en California. In: Lanly G, Basilia M and Valenzuela V (eds) *Clubes de Migrantes, Oriundos Mexicanos en Los Estados Unidos: La Política Transnacional de la Nueva Sociedad Civil Migrante.* Guadalajara: Universidad de Guadalajara, 425–454.
Esteves R and Khoudour-Castéras D (2009) A fantastic rain of gold: European migrants' remittances and balance of payments adjustment during the gold standard period. *Journal of Economic History* 69(4): 951–985.
Fairlie RW, London RA, Rosner R and Pastor M (2006) *Crossing the Divide: Immigrant Youth and Digital Disparity in California.* Santa Cruz: Center for Justice, Tolerance, and Community.
Faist T (2000) Transnationalization in international migration: Implications for the study of citizenship and culture. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 23: 189–222.
Fitzgerald D (2004) Beyond 'transnationalism': Mexican hometown politics at an American labour union. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 27(2): 228–247.
Fitzgerald D (2009) *A Nation of Emigrants: How Mexico Manages its Migration.* Berkeley: University of California Press.
Fox J (2005) Unpacking 'transnational citizenship'. *Annual Review of Political Sciences* 8: 171–201.
Gamlen A (2008) The emigration state and the modern geographical imagination. *Political Geography* 27(8): 840–856.
Gans H (1979) Symbolic ethnicity. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 2(1): 430–443.
Ghorashi H (2004) How dual is transnational identity? A debate on dual positioning of diaspora organizations. *Culture and Organization* 10(4): 329–340.
Glick Schiller N (2003) The centrality of ethnography in the study of transnational migration: Seeing the wetlands instead of the swamp. In: Foner N (ed.) *American Arrivals.* Santa Fe, NM: School of

American Research Press, 99–128.

Glick Schiller N, Basch L and Blanc-Szanton C (1995) *Towards a Transnational Perspective on Migration: Race, Class, Ethnicity, and Nationalism Reconsidered.* New York: New York Academy of Sciences.

Gupta A and Ferguson J (1992) Beyond 'culture': Space, identity, and the politics of difference. *Cultural Anthropology* 7(1): 6–23.

Hamel J-Y (2009) Information and communication technologies and migration. Human Development Research Paper 2009/39. Available at: hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2009/papers/HDRP_2009_39.pdf.

Hatton J and Williamson JG (2005) *Global Migration and the World Economy.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Hobsbawm EJ (1994) *The Age of Extremes: A History of the World, 1914–1991.* New York: Pantheon.

Itzigsohn J and Villacres D (2008) Migrant political transnationalism and the practice of democracy: Dominican external voting rights and Salvadoran home town associations. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 31(4): 664–686.

Jessup P (1956) *Transnational Law.* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Kapur D (2005) Remittances: The new development mantra? In: Maimbo SM and Ratha D (eds) *Remittances: Development Impact and Future Prospects.* Washington, DC: The World Bank, 331–361.

Kapur D and McHale K (2005) *Give Us Your Best and Brightest: The Global Hunt for Talent and its Impact on the Developing World.* Washington, DC: Center for Global Development.

Kearney M (1995) The local and the global: The anthropology of globalization and transnationalism. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 24: 547–565.

Kuznetsov Y and Sabel C (2006) International migration of talent, diaspora networks, and development: Overview of main issues. In: Kuznetsov Y (eds) *Diaspora Networks and the International Migration of Skills.* Washington, DC: World Bank, 3–20.

Levitt P (1998) Social remittances: Migration driven local-level forms of cultural diffusion. *International Migration Review* 32(4): 926–948.

Levitt P (2001a) Transnational migration: Taking stock and future directions. *Global Networks: A Journal of Transnational Affairs* 1(3): 195–216.

Levitt P (2001b) *The Transnational Villagers.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Levitt P and Glick Schiller N (2004) Transnational perspectives on migration: Conceptualizing simultaneity. *International Migration Review* 38(3): 1002–1039.

Levitt P and Jaworsky BN (2007) Transnational migration studies: Past developments and future trends. *Annual Review of Sociology* 33: 129–155.

Levitt P and Waters MC (eds) (2002) *The Changing Face of Home: The Transnational Lives of the Second Generation.* New York: Russell Sage.

MaMung E (1999) La dispersion comme resource. *Cultures et Conflits* Nos 33–34: 89–100. Available at: conflits.revues.org/index225.html.

Mattelart T (2009) Les Diasporas à l'heure des technolo-gies de l'information et de la communication: petit état des savoirs. *tic&société* 3: 1–2.

Moya J (1998) *Cousins and Strangers: Spanish Immigrants in Buenos Aires.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Nohlen D and Grotz F (2007) The legal framework and an overview of election regulation. In: IDEA (ed.) *Voting from Abroad: The International IDEA Handbook.* Sweden: International IDEA, 65–76.

Nye JS Jr and Keohane RO (1971) Transnational relations and world politics: An introduction. *International Organization* 25(3): 329–349.

Ostergaard-Nielsen E (2003) The politics of migrants' transnational political practices. *International Migration Review* 37(3): 760–786.

Paul A and Gammage S (2004) Hometown associations and development: The case of El Salvador. Destination D.C. Working Paper, No. 3. Women's Studies Department, George Washington University and Center for Women and Work, Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey.

Pérez-Armendáriz C and Crow D (2009) Do migrants remit democracy? International migration and political beliefs and behavior in Mexico. *Comparative Political Studies* 42(9): 1–28.

Perkins R and Neumayer E (2010) The ties that bind: The role of migrants in the uneven geography of international telephone traffic. Working paper, Department of Geography and Environment, London School of Economics and Political Science.

PNUD (Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarollo). (2005) *Informe sobre el Desarollo Humano 2005: Una mirada al Nuevo nosotros, el impacto de las migraciones.* San Salvador: PNUD.

Portes A (1997) Immigration theory for a new century. *International Migration Review* 31(4): 799–825.

Portes A, Guarnizo LE and Landolt P (1999) The study of transnationalism: Pitfalls and promise of an emergent research field. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 22(2): 217–237.

Portes A, Haller WJ and Guarnizo LE (2002) Transnational entrepreneurs: An alternative form of immigrant economic adaptation. *American Sociological Review* 67(2): 278–298.

Ratha D (2005) Workers remittances: An important and stable source of external development finance. In: Maimbo SM and Ratha D (eds) *Remittances: Development Impact and Future Prospects.* Washington, DC: The World Bank, 19–52.

Risse-Kappen T (1995) Bringing transnational relations back in: An introduction. InL Risse-Kappen T (ed.) *Bringing Transnational Relations Back in.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 3–36.

Rosenstone SJ and Hanson JM (1993) *Mobilization, Participation, and Democracy in America.* New York: Macmillan

Saunier P-Y (2009) Transnationalism. In: Iriye A and Saunier P-Y (eds) *The Palgrave Dictionary of Transnational History.* New York: Palgrave, 1047–1055.

Sinke S (2006) Marriage through the mail: North

American correspondence marriage from early print to the web. In: Elliot B, Gerber D and Sinke S (eds) *Letters Across Borders: The Epistolary Practices of International Migrants*. New York: Palgrave, 75–96.

Soehl T and Waldinger R (2010) Making the connection: Latino immigrants and their cross-border ties. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 33(9): 1489–1510.

Torres F and Kuznetsov Y (2006) Mexico: Leveraging migrants' capital to develop hometown communities. In: Kuznetsov Y (ed.) *Diaspora Networks and the International Migration of Skills*. Washington, DC: World Bank, 99–128.

United Nations Development Program. (2009) *Overcoming Barriers: Human Mobility and Development*. New York: United Nations.

Vertovec S (2001) Conceiving and researching transnationalism. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 22(2): 447–462.

Vertovec S (2004) Cheap calls: The social glue of migrant transnationalism. *Global Networks* 4(2): 219–224.

Waldinger R (2003) Foreigners transformed: International migration and the making of a divided people. *Diaspora* 12(2): 247–272.

Waldinger R and Fitzgerald D (2004) Transnationalism in question. *American Journal of Sociology* 109(5): 1177–1195.

Waldinger R, Popkin E and Magana HA (2007) Conflict and contestation in the cross-border community: Hometown associations re-assessed. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 31(1): 1–28.

Zamudio PG (2009) *Rancheros en Chicago*. Mexico City, DF: Porrua.

Roger Waldinger   is Distinguished Professor of Sociology, University of California Los Angeles. The author of *How the Other Half Works: Immigrants and the Social Organization of Labor* (University of California Press, 2003) and numerous other books and articles, he is now writing a new book, *Foreign Detachment: America's Immigrants and Their Homeland Connections*. [email: waldinge@soc.ucla.edu]

résumé   Dire « migrations internationales » veut dire « connexions trans-frontalières », puisque les liens intercommunautaires, allant des pays d'émigration aux pays d'immigration comportent un des traits les plus saillants du phénomène migratoire. Cet essai fait une critique de la sociologie contemporaine de ces connexions transfrontalières et de ses conséquences, un thème associé à la littérature sur le transnationalisme. L'essai présente l'historie intellectuelle de la perspective transnationale, dont il offre d'abord une évaluation critique, après quoi il fait l'esquisse d'une autre approche, qui cherche à identifier les mécanismes qui produisent et affaiblissent les liens transfrontaliers. Focalisant sur les expériences des Amériques, l'article cerne la littérature empirique, en développant une synthèse de la littérature sur les connexions transfrontalières, l'engagement avec la politique du pays d'origine, et les conséquences sociales et économiques des liens transfrontaliers. La dernière section offre des suggestions pour la recherche à venir.

mots-clés   diaspora ◆ immigration ◆ lines transfrontaliers ◆ pays d'émigration ◆ transationalisme

resumen   Decir migraciones internacionales es referirse a conexiones transfronterizas: de manera que los vínculos entre las redes intercomunitarias de los países emisores y receptores son un aspecto sobresaliente del fenómeno migratorio, evidentes hoy y en épocas anteriores. Este ensayo analiza la sociología de estas conexiones transfronterizas y sus consecuencias, un tema típicamente asociado con la literatura sobre el transnacionalismo. El ensayo reseña la historia intelectual de la perspectiva transnacional, ofreciendo una evaluación crítica de la misma y esbozando luego otro enfoque que trata de identificar los mecanismos que generan y atenúan las redes transfronterizas a través de diversas actividades. Enfatizando en las experiencias de las Américas, el artículo aborda la literatura empírica, sintetizando los resultados de investigación acerca de las conexiones transfronterizas, el involucramiento con la política en los países de origen, así como los impactos sociales y económicos de las redes transfronterizas en el origen. La última parte del artículo ofrece nuevas avenidas para las investigaciones futuras.

palabras claves   conexiones transfronterizas ◆ diáspora ◆ inmigración ◆ países emisores ◆ transnacionalismo