Beyond *la* Frontera

The History of Mexico–U.S. Migration

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CONTENTS

FOREWORD

Weaponized Fences and Novel Borderings

The Beginning of a New History?

Saskia Sassen
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One of the outstanding features of this volume is the exceptional breadth of spaces and the times through which it constructs the Mexico–U.S. histor migrations. A theme that is explicitly or implicitly present is the border—either a actor or as an absence that makes itself felt as a specter. When I read these chapt cannot help but see the many different worlds that are called forth by this partic border and indeed give "the border" an ever-shifting meaning.

Today, in most of the world, a national state border is a mix of regimes with iable contents and locations. Different flows—of capital, information, professio undocumented workers—each constitute bordering through a particular sequ of interventions, with diverse institutional and geographic locations. The actual graphic border is part of the cross-border flow of goods if they come by ground tr port, but not of capital, except if actual cash is being transported. Each border-cor intervention can be conceived of as one point in a chain of locations. In the cas traded goods the chain of locations might involve a preborder inspection or cer cation site. In the case of capital flows the chain will involve banks and stock mar located deep inside national territory and electronic networks that function above level of national borders. In brief, institutional points of border control interven can form long chains moving deep inside the country. The geographic borderline is one point in that chain.

One image we might use to capture this notion of multiple locations is that sites for the enforcement of border regimes range from banks to bodies. When a b executes the most elementary money transfer to another country, the bank is one o sites for border-regime enforcement. A certified good represents a case where the ob itself crossing the border is one of the sites for enforcement: the emblematic case certified agricultural product. But it also encompasses the case of the tourist carryi tourist visa and the immigrant carrying the requisite certification. Indeed, in the of immigration, it is the body of the immigrant herself that is both the carrier of m

southern racial hierarchy. First, there are some early signs that Hispanic newcomers are self-identifying and being externally identified by natives in ways that elude the U.S. South's two dominant racial categories of "white" and "black." As Vásquez, Seales, and Marquardt (2008) note, these are potential signs of a "subversion of a long-standing biracial order" in the traditional South (29). Nonetheless, there are also early signs that Hispanic newcomers are self-identifying and being externally identified by natives in ways that might simply reconstitute the southern binary racial order over time—yet this time according to a new "black/nonblack" divide in which most Hispanics may come to be included as nonblacks (Gans 1999; Kasinitz et al. 2008; Lee and Bean 2007; Marrow 2009, 2011; Yancey 2003).

Second, some very real and disturbing tensions have emerged between blacks and Hispanics in both urban and rural areas of African Americans' regional homeland (LeDuff 2000; Marrow 2011; Mohl 2002; McClain 2006, 2007; Schmid 2003; Swarns 2006a, 2006b; Stuesse 2009; Torres, Popke, and Hapke 2006), although, of course, not all black–Hispanic relations are conflict ridden nor are all white–Hispanic relations smooth. Here I have chosen to focus on Hispanics' perceptions of discrimination by blacks because they illustrate how immigration has altered the contours of discrimination in this symbolic region, expanding them outward from a historical orientation around racial differences in skin color that have served to separate whites from blacks to include new differences around citizenship and civic and cultural belonging that now serve to separate both whites and blacks from newcomers, too (De Genova 2006; Kim 1999). In the contemporary multiracial South, discrimination takes on multiple meanings and dimensions, and it is not something that Hispanic newcomers in eastern North Carolina felt is solely racial or originates solely from whites.

Nonetheless, anti-immigrant sentiment has increased throughout the South since 2003–2004 (Ansley and Shefner 2009; Lippard and Gallagher 2011; Marrow 2011; Odem and Lacy 2009), and new efforts to build coalitions among blacks, Hispanics, immigrants, and progressive whites have emerged in response—both to combat rising nativism and racism among whites and to temper simmering conflict between blacks and Hispanics. Perhaps these trends will lead Hispanics, including Mexican migrants, to perceive greater discrimination from whites in the future, particularly if they also perceive blacks to begin exhibiting more solidarity and empathy rather than exclusion in the context of their everyday interactions (and not just in elite coalition-building projects) than they did in 2003–2004.

CHAPTER 7

Indigenous Mexican Migrants

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INTRODUCTION[1]

In the United States, when the terms "multiethnic," "multicultural," and "multiracial" are used to refer to Mexican migrants, they usually refer exclusively to relationships between Mexicans and *other* national origin groups. Yet Mexican society is itself multiethnic and multiracial. From an indigenous rights perspective, the Mexican nation includes many distinct *peoples*. To take the least ambiguous indicator of ethnic difference, more than one in ten Mexicans comes from a family in which an indigenous language is spoken (Serrano Carreto et al., 2003). Increasingly, indigenous Mexican community activists in the United States are now *trilingual*. For some who immigrated as children or teenagers, Spanish is neither their first nor their second language. Yet in the United States, most scholars, health clinics, civil rights groups, cultural workers, labor organizers, and funding agencies treat Mexicans as ethnically homogeneous. This unspoken assumption provokes both invisibility and visibility; whereas many indigenous migrants submerge their cultures and identities, others "come out" in defense of respect for racial equality and cultural difference.

The Mexican migrant population in the United States increasingly reflects the ethnic diversity of Mexican society, but our conceptual frameworks have yet to catch up. This essay explores a series of puzzles about collective identity formation that emerge once one recognizes ethnic difference among Mexican migrants. The first issue is that both Mexican migrant and Mexican indigenous collective identities complicate widely

1. This chapter is a substantially revised and updated version of Fox (2006). Some sections draw from Fox and Rivera-Salgado (2004) and Fox (2004). This work was inspired by long-term conversations with Gaspar Rivera-Salgado, Rufino Domínguez Santos, Romualdo Juan Gutiérrez Cortés, Odilia Romero, and Leoncio Vásquez of the Binational Front of Indigenous Organizations (FIOB, formerly known as the Oaxacan Indigenous Binational Front). For discussions of the FIOB, see, among others, Bacon (2006), Domínguez Santos (2004a, 2004b), Hernández Díaz (2002), Martínez Saldaña (2004), Ramírez Romero (2003), Rivera-Salgado (1999, 2002), and Velasco (2002, 2005a, 2005b), as well as http://www.fiob.org (including *El Tequio* magazine). Thanks also for conversations with Xóchitl Chavez, Sylvia Escárcega, Martha García Ortega, María Dolores París Pombo, and Lynn Stephen.

held ideas about race, ethnicity, and national identity. Although these three concepts are often used interchangeably when discussing Mexicans in the United States, race, ethnicity, and national identity are not synonyms. Yet if these three concepts are analytically distinct, then where and when does one leave off and the other begin? Second, when migrant and indigenous identities *overlap*, as in the case of indigenous Mexican migrants, then the conceptual puzzles about how to distinguish among racial, ethnic, and national identities are sharpened. A comparative and binational approach suggests that it is useful to look at the specific experiences and identities of indigenous Mexican migrants in the United States through lenses that draw both from frameworks that focus on processes of racialization and from those that emphasize the social construction of collective identities based on ethnicity, region, or religion. In other words, this approach unfolds at the intersection of ethnic and area studies frameworks.

The point of departure for analyzing collective identity formation here is that both in the United States and in Mexico, indigenous migrants are subordinated both as migrants and as indigenous people. Economically, they work in the bottom rungs of ethnically segmented labor markets. In the social sphere, they also face entrenched racist attitudes and discrimination from other Mexicans in both countries, as well as from the dominant U.S. society. Systematic language discrimination by public authorities aggravates human rights violations in both countries (e.g., Padgett and Mascarenas 2009). Like many other Mexican migrants, in the civic–political arena, most indigenous migrants are excluded from full citizenship rights in both countries. At the same time, also like other migrants, indigenous Mexicans bring with them a wide range of experiences with collective action for community development, social justice, and political democratization, and these repertoires influence their decisions about who to work with and how to build their own organizations in the United States.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Until the 1980s, most Mexican migrants did share a common social and cultural heritage, coming primarily from *mestizo* rural communities in the central-western states. Many identified with a *ranchero* culture, located in an intermediate position in Mexico's social hierarchy, in between urban and indigenous societies (Farr 2006). This "historic" sending region has profoundly shaped both scholarly and popular understandings of Mexican migration in the United States. Yet over the past two decades, the Mexican migrant population has diversified dramatically—ethnically, socially and geographically—in terms of both where they come from and where they settle in the United States.

Most of the first indigenous Mexican migrants to the United States were from the central-western state of Michoacán, of Purhépecha origin, as well as Mixtecs and Zapotecs from Oaxaca in the south. Indigenous Mexican migration to the United States dates back at least to the early twentieth century. Indeed, the father of Oaxacan-born cross-border revolutionary and later political exile Ricardo Flores Magón was indigenous. In the 1920s, pioneering scholar of Mexicans in the United States Manuel Gamio documented migrants of "Mesoamerican" origin, although without further ethnic specification (1971, cited in García Leyva, 2003). Weber also recalls the role of Primo Tapia and other Purhépechas who joined the Industrial Workers of the World while

in the United States before returning to lead *agrarista* struggles in the 1920s (2008). Indeed, Weber reassesses her own research to take into account the previously "unseen" Purhépecha identities embedded in her oral histories with immigrants who came to the United States in the 1920s (2008). Subsequently, as in the case of Mexican migration to the United States more generally, the bracero contract worker program (1942–1964) played a key role in launching the indigenous community social networks that sustained later migration (e.g., Cohen 2004). Although southern Mexico accounted for a small proportion of bracero recruitment, testimonial evidence indicates that the first Mixteco migrants to the United States were recruited after having migrated to northern Mexico (Domínguez Santos 2008; Gil Martínez de Escobar 2006, 66).

Until recently, however, most indigenous migrants worked in large cities or as farm workers *within* Mexico, as in the case of the longstanding seasonal migration from the Chiapas highlands to work in plantation agriculture.[2] The massive rural outmigration process that drove Mexico's urbanization in the mid-twentieth century was substantially indigenous in origin and generated a rich anthropological literature in the 1970s and 1980s (Sánchez Gómez 2005, 2007). In the 1960s, for example, Zapotecs from Oaxaca' northern Sierra began moving to Mexico City in large numbers, where they formed hometown associations and developed mutual aid practices and shared broader collective identities based on region of origin that are remarkably reminiscent of contemporary migrants to the United States (Hirabayashi 1993, 1997).

In Oaxaca, Mixtecos began leaving their villages to become seasonal plantation laborers early in the twentieth century, with substantial numbers migrating on foot within Oaxaca and to Veracruz in the 1930s, with others going as far as Chiapas (e.g., Guidi 1999). Mixteco farmworkers began migrating to the Valley of Culiacan in Sinaloa in the 1940s. Mixteco participation in Sinaloa's farmworker unionization campaigns was widespread, first under the banner of the left-wing Central Independiente de Obreros Agrícolas y Campesinos (López Monjardin 1991; Posadas Segura 2005). These struggles included the hometown-based *Organización del Pueblo Explotado y Oprimido*, a group whose activists later brought that organizing tradition to California's Central Valley and became a founding member of one of the first binational indigenous migrant organizations.[3] Other Mixtecos migrated to Mexico City, beginning as early as the 1930s. In 1981, subway workers from San Miguel Tlacotepec launched one of their first hometown associations, *Comité Cívico Popular*.[4]

Oaxacan migration to Baja California began with the first generation of Mixteco seasonal migrants in the 1950s and 1960s. There they were able to make contacts with mestizo migrants from central Mexico who were more familiar with how to reach the United States. Indeed, indigenous migrants to Baja then referred to those who helped them across the border as "*camaradas*" rather than "*coyotes*," implying a perception of interethnic solidarity. By the 1980s, Baja's agroexport economy grew significantly

2. In 2000, Mexico's farmworker population was estimated at more than 3 million, approximately two thirds of whom were landless and one third were subsubsistence smallholders (Salinas Alvarez 2006, 49).

3. This entire paragraph draws from Domínguez Santos (2004b), who was among the founders of the Organización del Pueblo Explotado y Oprimido.

4. The recent study by Cornelius et al. (2009) focuses exclusively on migration from the same municipality.

and entire families from Oaxaca began settling down, leading to a wave of land occupations for housing rights. During this period a new cohort of Oaxacan-identified migrants were born in Baja: as some put it, "Nací aquí en la colonia, pero soy de Oaxaca!" [I was born here in the neighborhood, but I'm from Oaxaca!] (Camargo Martínez 2004, 84).

Moving north from Baja California, indigenous migrants began to increase their share of the overall cross-border migrant population in the early 1980s, following what is sometimes known as the *Ruta Mixteca*.[5] In the 1990s, both circular and settled migration grew most notably in both urban and rural California and increasingly in Texas, New York, New Jersey, Florida, North Carolina, Georgia, Oregon, and Washington. Although migrants often settle together with their *paisanos*, that does not mean that all or most migrants from a given village end up in the same place or that members of the same ethnic group settle in the same region. For example, Purhépecha migrants have settled in North Carolina, the Midwest, and California (Anderson 2004; Leco Tomás 2009; Martínez 2002). At the "translocal" level, many communities of origin form satellite, or "daughter" communities that are widely dispersed through the United States (e.g., Stephen 2007). For example, in the case of San Juan Mixpetec, Oaxaca, Besserer documented remittances from 151 distinct locations in 7 Mexican and 15 U.S. states (2004).

Estimates of the overall size of the indigenous migrant population vary widely. One research strategy takes advantage of the U.S. Census' distinction between racial and ethnic self-identification. Those who choose to self-identify as both American Indian in terms of race *and* Hispanic/Latino in terms of their ethnicity can be considered Latin American indigenous migrants—primarily Mexican, but also Guatemalan. If one combines these two categories in the case of the 2000 Census, the population of indigenous migrants in the United States totals 407,000 (Huizar and Cerda 2004). Greater precision regarding self-identified peoplehood is not possible because the official Census follow-up question asks about "tribe"—not a meaningful concept for Latin American–origin indigenous peoples. More than half of these self-reported indigenous migrants are in the west, with California reporting 154,000, followed by 22,000 in Arizona, 15,000 in Colorado, and 12,000 in New Mexico. Moving eastward, Texas reported almost 50,000, followed by New York with 30,000, Illinois with almost 13,000, and Florida with 11,000. In California, organized indigenous migrants had campaigned to encourage their communities to self-identify on the 2000 Census. Although governmental and civil society efforts in the 1990s did reduce the undercount, the 2000 Census still missed substantial numbers of indigenous migrants (Kissam and Jacobs 2004). Nevertheless, the 2000 findings serve as a clear-cut "floor" that documents both the growing numbers and the relative geographic distribution of indigenous migrants

5. The first wave of research on Oaxacan migration to California includes Kearney (1988, 1995, 2000), Nagengast and Kearney (1990), Edinger (1985), Guidi (1992), Zabin et al. (1993), Zabin (1992a, 1992b, 1997), Wright (2005), Besserer (1999a, 1999b), and Escárcega and Varese (2004). Although the early research focused specifically on Mixtecos in rural California, Zapotecs migrated to urban areas, both in Mexico and in California. On Zapotec migration, see Aquino Morechi (2010), Cohen (2004), Gutiérrez Nájera (2007), López and Runsten (2004), Hirabayashi (1993, 1997), Hulshof (1991), Klaver (1997), Melero Malpica (2008), Robles (2004), and Stephen (2007).

(Huizar and Cerda 2004). Census outreach in collaboration with indigenous migrant community leaders continued in 2010.

In addition to the increased dispersal of indigenous migrants throughout the United States, they also now come from an increasingly diverse array of Mexico's indigenous ethnic groups, now even including Mayans. Indeed, whereas the scholarly literature on indigenous migration has long been focused primarily on Oaxaca, in recent years the ethnographic research on Mayan migration from the Yucatan has expanded significantly.[6] More recently, young Mayans from Chiapas have also been increasing their migration to the United States.[7] Indeed, researchers in Chiapas have pointed out that migration has grown sharply despite the substantial land redistribution that followed the Zapatista uprising—apparently too little, too late (Villafuerte Solís and García Aguilar 2006).

One of the most significant efforts to document patterns of indigenous migration to the United States involves the Department of Labor's National Agricultural Worker Survey (Gabbard et al. 2008). They represent a growing share of the farm labor force across the country, although many indigenous migrants also go straight to urban service jobs, as in the case of Zapotecs in Los Angeles (Lopez and Runsten 2004).

The authors of the National Agricultural Worker Survey explored different ways of asking language and race questions to improve accuracy given the ambiguities inherent in indigenous self-identification. The survey found that the proportion of Mexican-origin farm workers from southern Mexico grew from 9 percent of in 1990–2002 to 27 percent in 2005–2007, most notably in the San Joaquin Valley and Central Coast of California, San Diego (Martínez, Runsten, and Ricardez 2005), south Florida (Schmidt and Crummett 2004), and the Willamette Valley of Oregon (Stephen 2007), later reaching the state of Washington (Holmes 2006), North Carolina, and the Delmarva peninsula (Kissam et al. 2001). For the years 2005–2007, 8 percent of farm workers reported that they grew up in homes where adults spoke indigenous languages, and half of them report that their primary language was indigenous. Questions about racial identification showed an increase from 3 percent in 1990–1992 to 13 percent in 2005–2007. Combining the language and race indicators increased the reported indigenous share of U.S. farm workers to 15 percent in 2005–2007 (Gabbard et al. 2008, 18–20).

An innovative, large-scale survey of indigenous village migrant networks among California farmworkers reveals patterns of geographic distribution of communities of both origin and settlement (Mines, Nichols, and Runsten 2010). The primary sending regions are western and southern Oaxaca, as well as the adjoining eastern region of Guerrero. Overall, 73 percent of the sending communities are Oaxacan, 15 percent are in Guerrero, and the remaining 12 percent come from Puebla, Chiapas, Veracruz, and Michoacán. More than 80 percent of the sending communities are small villages of under three thousand inhabitants. This study also documented ethnic segmentation of labor markets, with a major presence of indigenous farm workers in the

6. See Adler (2004), Burke (2004), Cornelius, FitzGerald, and Lewin (2006), Pérez Rendon (2005), and Whiteside (2006).

7. See Rus and Rus (2008), Williams, Steigenga, and Vásquez (2009), and Aquino Moreschi (2009).

most arduous farm labor tasks (e.g., picking raisins and strawberries). The study also included research in sending regions, which found that although youth in communities with more established networks were thinking twice about crossing the border because of the cost and the danger, "in some of the poorer, newer networks the people continue to feel obligated to go north due to a lack of options."[8]

COMPARATIVE AND BINATIONAL APPROACHES TO RACIAL, ETHNIC, AND NATIONAL IDENTITIES

The concepts of race, ethnicity, and national identity all refer to ways of understanding and expressing collective identity and all refer in some way to shared ancestry, yet each one highlights a different dimension of the identity that is shared. For migrants to the United States, Mexicanness is simultaneously national, racial, and ethnic, but which is which, when, and why? These three concepts clearly overlap, but are also presumably somehow distinct—the challenge is to identify those distinctions with greater precision. Bringing together intellectual frameworks and lessons from practice from both the United States and Latin America can help to address this conceptual challenge.

In the arena of Mexico's dominant national political culture, both indigenous peoples and cross-border migrants have long been seen as less than full citizens, especially by political elites. This powerful historical legacy only began to change substantially within Mexico in the mid-1990s. For migrants, Mexico's President Vicente Fox dramatically changed the official discourse, describing them as "heroes" rather than as traitors or *pochos*. He even claimed all U.S. citizens of Mexican descent as members of the national diaspora, blurring longstanding distinctions between Mexicans and Mexican Americans (Durand 2004).

In practice, full democratic political rights in Mexico are still widely denied both to migrants and to indigenous peoples. Although indigenous Mexicans can access "full Mexicanness" to the degree that they give up their languages and commitments to ethnic autonomy, migrants are still widely seen by many as watering down their *Mexicanidad* through exposure to U.S. and to Mexican American culture. This is one reason why the long-promised right to vote abroad for migrants was stuck in political limbo until 2005—Mexican citizens in the United States are still seen by influential elite political actors as too vulnerable to manipulation by U.S. interests to be trusted with the right to vote (Castañeda 2006; Martínez Saldaña and Ross Pineda 2002). For both migrants and indigenous peoples, less than full command of the Spanish language is another powerful mechanism for exclusion from equal membership in Mexico's national polity and imaginary. Consider the common analogous phrases: those Mexicans who "don't even speak English" (in the United States) and those Indians who "*ni siquiera hablan español*" ("they don't even speak Spanish"—a common Mexican reference to "monolingual" indigenous people). In other words, both ethnic difference and cross-border mobility remain in tension with the dominant approach to Mexican national identity.

8. Personal e-mail communication with Rick Mines, coordinator of the Indigenous Farmworker Survey, February 17, 2009. See www.indigenousfarmworkers.org.

In the 1990s, for most first-generation Mexican migrants, national origin persisted as a primary collective identity, more than U.S.-based constructs of *Latinidad* or *Hispanidad*.[9] Especially in regions with a large critical mass of first-generation migrants, it is possible for Mexican migrants to reject, modify, or postpone acceptance of more nationally rooted U.S. ethnic identities, such as Chicano or Mexican American. Despite the pull of national identity, Mexicans migrants also find themselves inserted into a U.S. social hierarchy that assigns them to a racial category. In other words, migrants' subjectively *national* Mexicanness is widely treated as a *racial* identity in the United States. The concept of racialization is increasingly being applied to understand Latino experiences in the United States. A fuller understanding of the dynamics through which racialization processes affect Mexicans would require more systematic cross-regional comparison within the United States.[10] A cross-border perspective deepens our understanding of the process because for many indigenous migrants, racialization begins in Mexico and among other Mexicans in the United States.

In the case of Mexican migrants, the racialization is closely linked to their locations in the labor market, which in turn are linked to labor process and language use and only loosely connected to phenotype. "Mexican work" has long been widely understood in U.S. popular discourse as the kind that even low-income Americans won't do, at least for the wages offered.[11] In addition, however, racial and ethnic difference *among* Mexican migrant workers also interacts closely with the changing division of labor. In the California fields, after approximately 1 million undocumented farm workers regularized their status following the 1986 amnesty, they gained the labor mobility and the bottom rungs in the labor market opened up, repeating long-term cycles of "ethnic succession." At the same time, some employers and contractors pursued recruitment strategies that encouraged ethnic differences in their labor force (Krissman 1996, 2002).

Holmes' detailed ethnographic study of Triqui strawberry pickers in Washington state finds a close correlation among the division of labor, ethnicity, and the level of danger, strain, stress, and humiliation involved in their specific jobs (2006, 2007). In the process, they are frequently reprimanded and subjected to racial slurs: "*perros* [dogs], *burros* (burros), *Oaxacos* (a derogatory term for 'Oaxacan'), or *indios estúpidos* [stupid Indians]" (Holmes 2006, 1782).

One of the clearest indicators of the racialization of the division of labor is that it is understood as somehow natural that indigenous workers should be limited to the most strenuous jobs. As Holmes found,

9. Among foreign-born Latinos in the United States, 68 percent identify primarily with their country of origin, rather than as Latinos or Hispanics (Pew Hispanic Center 2002, 7), although this pattern is likely to have changed following the wave of mass mobilization for immigrant rights in 2006 (Fox and Bada 2009).

10. See notable recent work on Mexicans in Chicago, including De Genova (2005), De Genova and Ramos-Zayas (2003), and Arredondo's analysis of the relationship between national and racial identities among Mexicans in the 1930s (2008). On the historical processes of racialization of Mexicans in California, see Almaguer (1994), Menchaca (2001), and Pitti (2003), among others. On the distinctive contemporary dynamics of racialization of Mexican migrants in New York City, see Smith (2006). See also Glenn's cross-regional comparative approach (2002).

11. The use of the term "Mexican work" dates back at least to the 1920s (Arredondo 2008). See also Striffler's ethnographic study of "Mexican work" in an Arkansas poultry plant (2002, 312).

> when asked why very few Triqui people were harvesting apples, the field job known to pay the most, the Tanaka Farm's apple crop supervisor explained in detail that "they are too short to reach the apples, and, besides, they don't like ladders anyway." He continued that Triqui people are perfect for picking berries because they are "lower to the ground." When asked why Triqui people have only berry-picking jobs, a mestiza Mexican social worker in Washington state explained that "*a los Oaxaqueños les gusta trabajar agachado* [Oaxacans like to work bent over]," whereas, she told me, "*Mexicanos* [mestizo Mexicans] get too many pains if they work in the fields." (2006, 1787)

Imposed racialized economic and social hierarchies can be counterposed with collective identities that migrants themselves generate.[12] When one looks at the interaction among race, ethnicity, and national identity among those Mexican migrants who engage in sustained collective action as Mexicans, it turns out that most emphasize their primary identification with *other* collective identities. For example, in the case of New York's Asociación Tepeyac, this identity is strongly faith-based (e.g., Galvez 2009). Most often, however, these additional identities are *territorial* and *subnational*, based on their communities, regions, or states of origin in Mexico, as can be seen in the widely observed growth of migrant hometown associations and their home state federations. In other words, migrants' shared Mexicanness, whether understood primarily in national, ethnic, or racial terms, is necessary but not sufficient to explain how and why they turn collective identities into collective action. The shared identities that inspire collective action show that they pursue a wide range of ways of *being* Mexican (just like Mexicans in Mexico). One could go further and argue that these widespread patterns of Mexican migrant collective identity formation and collective action, based on cross-border, translocal, regional, and ethnic identities, constitute a form of *resistance* to racialization, reminiscent of the mutual aid societies in the early twentieth century. Before further exploration of the specific forms that indigenous migrant identities and actions take, however, it is worth reflecting on how different intellectual and political traditions in the Americas frame indigenousness.

Indigenous peoples are usually conceptualized in the United States as constituting a race, whereas in Latin America they tend to be seen as ethnic groups.[13] This poses a puzzle, raising questions about how the concepts of race and ethnicity are defined and applied. Where does ethnicity leave off and race begin? Given that they often overlap, both conceptually and in practice, can they be disentangled? Are indigenous peoples distinct from other Mexicans racially, ethnically, or both? To ask the question a different way, is Mexican society multiracial, multiethnic, or both? The answer to both is both.

Few indigenous peoples in Mexico identify as *nationalities*—in contrast to some other Latin American countries (e.g., Ecuador)—and in contrast to the United States. Although U.S.-style reservations are widely viewed as anathema in Mexico, they do

12. Analysis of collective identity formation among indigenous migrants in Baja California differ over the degree to which this process is induced externally or generated internally (Martínez Novo, 2006 and Velasco Ortiz 2004a, 2004b, 2007).

13. For example, the Mexican Census does not collect data on race and defines indigenousness primarily in terms of language use. See Serrano Carreto et al. (2003). An Afro-Mexican organization, *Mexico Negro*, has called for the census to take race into account (Graves 2004).

rest on a limited degree of territorial sovereignty, self-governance, and at least nominal legal recognition of peoplehood that does not currently exist in Mexico. As of a constitutional reform in 1991, the Mexican government officially recognized that indigenous peoples are ethnically distinct and that Mexico is a multi*cultural* society. In 2001, following the Zapatistas' remarkable address to Congress, Article 2 of the Constitution was further reformed to recognize modest expressions of autonomy (although indigenous rights advocates did not consider this a step forward). At the same time, for native peoples in both countries, patriotism has long been a powerful force. In Mexico, across the political spectrum, indigenous peoples' organizations claim the national flag and the nationalist legacy of the Mexican revolution as their own, as highlighted by the Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional's (EZLN's) official reverence for both sets of symbols, not to mention the names of the EZLN and the National Indigenous Congress.

In Mexico, the concept of race is widely associated with the postrevolutionary state's revindication of *mestizo* identity, embodied in the idea of the *Raza Cósmica*. This powerful discursive strategy challenged the Europhilic white skin privilege associated with the prerevolutionary regime, but at the same time promoted an ethnically homogenized view of Mexican collective identity. In this view, Mexicanness required full cultural assimilation for indigenous peoples, and total Spanish immersion was required for anyone who wanted access to formal education, at least until the late 1970s—including boarding schools not so different from those infamous in North America. In other words, this view promoted racial equality in theory while denying ethnic equality in practice. The regime's proposed bargain was class-based "inclusion" as Mexican peasants in exchange for giving up their autonomy, both in terms of their rights to sustain indigenous identities and in terms of freedom of association more generally.[14]

In Latin America, indigenous identity is less strictly bound to lineage and perceived phenotype than in the United States, not unlike the more flexible way in which blackness is understood in the region. In Latin America, indigenous peoples have long been defined primarily by such criteria as community membership, language use, and what are presented as ancestral collective traditions. Some of these traditions may, upon closer inspection, turn out be colonial and neocolonial mechanisms of authoritarian control by local elite brokers, backed up by the government, as Rus showed in the case of ritualized alcohol consumption in highland Chiapas (1994). In contrast to the United States, indigeneity in Latin America is rarely defined in tribal terms—except, for example, by outsiders to refer to some lowland Amazonian populations that have had little Western contact and to refer to some Mexican indigenous groups close to the U.S. border.[15] Yet as Wade's work implies, the processes of the social construction of race in Latin America are not *so* contingent as to elide all differences between racial and ethnic identity (1997).

Shifting back to U.S.-based intellectual traditions, classic approaches to Chicano identity also have difficulty with the concept of a multiethnic Mexico. Those that recognize the indigenous side of *mestizaje* tend to homogenize indigenous identity

14. On the relationship between national and ethnic identities in Mexico, see Gutiérrez (1999).

15. In Mexico the Yaqui, for example, or the O'Odham peoples, who live on both sides of the border, use the term tribe.

through the implicitly nationalist lens of Aztec/Nahua/Mexica ethnoracial roots. For many other Mexican indigenous peoples, however, the Aztecs were foreigners and often oppressors. Even today, Nahuas—although numerically the largest single ethnolinguistic group among Mexico's indigenous peoples—represent at most one quarter of the one in ten Mexicans who meet the government's linguistically based definition of ethnic identity. For reasons not well understood, Nahuas represent a substantially smaller fraction of the indigenous migrant population in the United States, which is still disproportionately composed of Zapotecs, Mixtecs, and Purhépechas.

In the dominant U.S. view, in contrast to Mexico, even partial indigenous heritage is enough to confer minority racial status, although formal (and state-structured) tribal membership is contingent on narrower definitions of lineage (often highly gendered). Most tribes use a definition of blood quantum for determining membership, sometimes with different rules for men and women members who marry nonmembers. When tribal membership is contested, race can trump shared culture and history—as in the debate about excluding mixed indigenous/black peoples from tribal membership in Oklahoma.[16] More recently, narrow economic interests can also divide tribes. In California, the official leaders of some "gaming tribes" expelled numerous traditionalist members to increase the income from gambling for those who remain (in official discourse they are "disenrolled").[17]

Historically, U.S.-born Native Americans were denied U.S. citizenship until 1924, ostensibly because of their tribal membership (Hull 1985, 13). This marked the first time that they could vote in national elections. Indigenous migrants were treated differently, however. As part of the more general policy that excluded nonwhite immigrants from the right to become naturalized U.S. citizens, this racial political exclusion was extended to Mexican migrants who appeared to be indigenous. Indigenous Mexicans were only allowed to become U.S. citizens after the 1940 Nationality Act allowed nonwhite immigrants to naturalize (Hull 1985 and Padilla 1973, cited in Menchaca 2001, 282–85).

In contrast to the "blood quantum" approach in the United States, Latin American indigenous identity has long been seen in Latin America as socially and culturally contingent. For decades, indigenous people who move to the cities and appear to leave behind collective cultural practices, language use, and community membership have long been seen as having changed their ethnic identity. Nevertheless, they are often still openly racialized by dominant systems of oppression, although the processes and mechanisms vary greatly from country to country, ranging from *cholos* in Andean cities to urban Indians in Mexico City.[18] Indeed, many urban Indians in Mexico—like indigenous migrants in the United States—continue to maintain ties with their communities of origin. Hirabayashi documents patterns of migrant hometown organization and socially constructed, politicized regional identities that are remarkably similar to experiences of indigenous migrants to the United States (1993). Gil Martínez de

16. See Glaberson (2001). For broader context, see Garroutte (2003), among others.

17. See De Armond (2003). Because of the official structures of tribal governance created by the U.S. federal government, these disenrolled members have little legal recourse (interview, Prof. Renya Ramirez, UC Santa Cruz, Fresno, CA, July 10, 2004).

18. On urban Indians in Mexico, see Yanes, Molina, and González (2004). On urban indigenous migrants in Latin America more generally, see Altamirano and Hirabayashi (1997).

Escobar documents migrants' construction of multisited forms of governance through which local civic power and representation are shared between the community of origin and communities of residence that are located both in the United States and in Mexican cities (2006). Yet although migrants in the United States often make more money than migrants who work elsewhere in Mexico and are therefore able to make larger financial contributions to community development investments back home, it is more difficult for them to visit home personally and to provide community service when called upon, even for those with immigration documents. Consider, for example, the experience of Leoncio Vásquez, trilingual interpreter and senior staffer of the Fresno-based Binational Center for the Development of Oaxacan Indigenous Communities. When called upon to provide service to his community of origin, as secretary to the municipal agent, he took a leave of absence from his job and relocated for his one-year term.[19] Shortly after beginning his service in Oaxaca, however, he was recalled back to Fresno for two weeks of jury duty—an unusually clear case of the challenges involved in the construction of practices of "civic binationality"—the process of becoming a full participant in the civic life of both societies."[20]

COLLECTIVE IDENTITY FORMATION AMONG INDIGENOUS MEXICAN MIGRANTS

Until relatively recently, the primary basis of indigenous collective identity in Mexico was highly localized. Most Mexican indigenous people identified primarily with their home community, to varying degrees with their home region, and only rarely with their broader ethnolinguistic group. Membership has long been internally regulated by each community's traditional norms, and the rights of membership are usually contingent on compliance with high levels of mandatory material contributions and public service (*tequio*). In response to migration, some communities are making membership requirements more flexible, whereas others hold firm and literally expel those who do not comply through a process that some members call "civic death" (Mutersbaugh 2002; Robles 2004; Gil Martinez de Escobar 2006).

The longstanding central role of community in defining ethnicity is summed up in the ambiguity inherent in the dual meaning of the term "*pueblo*," which in Mexico is used to refer both to community (as in village) and to (a) people. This dual meaning of pueblo was crucial to allowing both the government and the indigenous movement negotiators to agree on the text of the Mexico's 1996 San Andrés Accords on Indigenous Rights and Culture, which remains a key reference point for the ongoing political struggle for full recognition of Mexico's indigenous peoples. The government was willing to accept the possibility of indigenous autonomy if it was limited to the community level, but not if "pueblo" referred to an ethnic group that claimed rights as a people.

The process of the social construction of broader ethnic and pan-ethnic Mexican indigenous identity is where the racialization approach, emphasizing shared experiences of racially based oppression, is most clearly relevant. Nagengast and Kearney

19. Personal e-mail communication, April 1, 2009.

20. For further discussion of civic binationality, see Fox (2007) and Fox and Bada (2008, 2009).

(1990) pioneered the analysis of how the shared Oaxacan migrant experience of ethnoracial discrimination, both in northwestern Mexico and in California, drove the process of "scaling up" previously localized to broader Mixtec, Zapotec, and pan-ethnic Oaxacan indigenous identities. These experiences of racialization bring class and culturally based oppression together in forms that some would consider classically subaltern. This shared experience helps to overcome perceived conflicts of interest inherited from longstanding intervillage rivalries back home (these widespread conflicts were and are very convenient for regional and state elites). For indigenous farm workers, language and cultural differences with their bosses are key bases of ethnic discrimination, but they are also oppressed based on physical characteristics associated with specifically racial differences. For example, height became a widespread basis for contemptuous treatment, as summed up in the widespread derogatory diminuitive "*oaxaquito.*" This specific term, by homogenizing Oaxaca's ethnic differences, also racializes. As a result, in the indigenous migrant context, the term "Oaxacan" takes on a meaning beyond its territorial significance, coming to serve as shorthand for a pan-ethnic indigenous identity.

The relevance of this approach to identity formation, which associates the transition from localized to broader indigenous identities with migration, racial oppression, and resistance, is confirmed by the actual trajectory of the Indigenous Front of Binational Organizations (FIOB). The organization was first called the "Mixteco–Zapoteco Binational Front" and then changed its name to "Oaxacan Indigenous Binational Front" to reflect the inclusion of other Oaxacan ethnic groups. This inclusionary approach eventually attracted non-Oaxacan indigenous migrants to the organization, especially in Baja California and California, provoking an internal debate over whether to drop the regional term "Oaxacan" from its name. The FIOB's Baja members are migrants as well, although they did not cross the border. In March 2005, delegates representing several thousand FIOB members in Oaxaca, California, and Baja California agreed to change the name, while keeping the acronym, to the "Indigenous Front of Binational Organizations" (still FIOB). Their newly elected Binational Commission included members of four distinct Mexican indigenous groups, including a Purhépecha transportation engineer from the Baja-based contingent (Cano 2005). To rephrase this in the spirit of this essay's effort to reframe Mexican migration as a multiethnic process, these representatives included speakers of *five different Mexican languages.*

It is not only national rural-to-urban and transborder migrations that have raised questions about the degree to which indigenousness depends on once-rigid notions of localized community membership, shared language, and ancestral territory. The most well-known case of indigenous mobilization in Mexico emerged from a process of *rural-to-rural* migration. The original core region of the Zapatista rebellion—the *Cañadas*—is inhabited primarily by migrants from other Chiapas regions and their families, going back at most two generations (Leyva Solano and Ascencio Franco 1996). Liberation theology ideas that drew heavily on the Exodus are central to their cultural and political history. Before leaving the highlands to settle in the Cañadas and the lowland forest, these communities also had extensive prior experience with seasonal migration for wage labor, where they joined an ethnic mix as plantation farm workers. It is not a coincidence that their sense of indigenous identity is profoundly multiethnic, with ethnically distinct base organizations united under a multiethnic

indigenous political leadership (primarily Tzetzal, Tzotzil, Chol, and Tojolobal). More recently, they adopted an explicitly racial solidarity discourse, in which leaders speak of the shared interests, despite differing ideologies, of people who are the "*color de la tierra*" ["the color of the soil"] (EZLN 2001). This definition of shared interests is made more complex by their other shared identities, as when Zapatista Comandante Felipe also appealed to Mexican factory workers as "*hermanos de nosotros*" ["our brothers"] (García Leyva, 2003, 15).

In this sense the EZLN and FIOB can both be seen as multiethnic organizations that first emerged in communities of settled migrants. In the first case the original migration had gone south and in the second case the migration went north, but in both cases their experiences and understandings of indigenousness can only be explained with reference to their (albeit very different) migration processes. In addition to both emerging from migrant communities, in both cases, early on a small number of political activists also played key roles by encouraging the scaling up of previously localized collective identities with rights-based ideologies.

The political trajectories of the two organizations came together briefly in the late 1990s, most notably when the FIOB organized polling stations in the U.S., as part of the Mexican national civic referendum that called both for recognition of indigenous rights in Mexico and for the right for migrants to vote in Mexican elections (Rivera-Salgado 2002; Martínez Saldaña 2004). Although they share the goal of self-determination and autonomy, their strategies differ dramatically. Whereas the EZLN does not participate in elections, the FIOB actively participates in local and state-level electoral politics, in coalition with the Party of the Democratic Revolution. Whereas the EZLN has created its own dual-power municipal governance structure, the FIOB works within Oaxaca's unusual system of customary law to encourage broader participation and accountability within existing municipalities. In California, the FIOB also actively encourages voter participation and campaigns for immigration reform.

In summary, the FIOB works to create autonomous spaces and representation "within the system," both in the United States and in Mexico, whereas the EZLN remains firmly planted outside the system, conditioning their incorporation on more radical institutional change. Their political relationship with the diaspora is also sharply different. For the FIOB, sustaining balance in the binational relationship has been a challenge. Yet whereas the FIOB emerges from the cross-border migration process and has generated a worldview and structures of representation that take migration into account, the EZLN has yet to construct a broad political strategy for engaging Zapatista migrant youth from afar. Their approach varies by region, depending on the presence of prior traditions of internal migration (as in the cases of Los Altos and the Northern Zone). According to the most in-depth study of this process,

> The migration of Zapatista rank and file has been addressed exclusively within their communities, not by the EZLN as a movement. Zapatista communities have had total autonomy to create their own agreements... to cope with the departure of their young people. According to one of the members of the Junta "Hacia la Esperanza" [Zapatista local governing council]..."Each community has its agreements, and we can't get involved." The Junta is aware that it would be difficult to try to apply a uniform approach to deal with emigration, since each Zapatista community has their own way of organizing and solving their problems, as well as because in many

communities, Zapatistas live together with non-Zapatistas. The Zapatista governing councils are interested in communities coming to their own agreements, to avoid "breaking the community spirit." (Aquino Moreschi 2010: 192). The diversity of stances taken by organized sending communities Chiapas and Oaxaca underscores the local, family-based intimacy of migration decisions, as well as the difficulty of developing a broader, more politicized approach to encouraging "long-distance militancy" in unfamiliar terrain.

INDIGENOUS MIGRANTS, PEOPLEHOOD, AND TERRITORY

In Latin America, as in other regions of the world, classic definitions of indigenous rights, especially those involving demands for autonomy and self-determination, are closely linked to the concept of *territory*, which includes but is broader than (agrarian) land rights. Land rights are limited to individuals, families, groups, or communities, whereas *territories* are associated with the broader concept of peoplehood—and therefore are a foundation of ethnic identity.[21] The ethnohistorical basis for claims to both land and territory is clearly distinct from demands for rights that are based on, for example, redressing *racial* injustice, which are not as dependent on proving that specific territories are ancestral homelands. In most of Latin America, ethnohistorically based land claims have proven more "winnable," perhaps because of their more limited spillover effects.[22]

In this context, the extensive spread of longer-term, longer-distance out-migration throughout Mexico's indigenous regions raises serious questions about the nature of the link between ethnic identity and the territorial basis of peoplehood because many of the *pueblo* in question no longer live in their homeland, sometimes for generations. Indeed, neither the FIOB nor much of the EZLN base their claims to rights on territorially based ancestral domain. Instead, both use broader multi- and pan-ethnic discourses to make claims based on racial discrimination, class oppression, and human rights.

In their redefinition of the relationship between peoplehood and territory, Oaxacan indigenous migrants have gone further and have socially constructed the cross-border public space known as "Oaxacalifornia." This transnationalized sphere emerged from the Mixtec and Zapotec migration processes of the 1980s, from Oaxaca to Baja California, and then to California (later reaching Oregon and Washington as well; see Stephen 2007). In Oaxacalifornia, migrants bring together their lives in the United States with their communities of origin, sustaining deterritorialized communities from which new forms of social, civic, and cultural engagement emerged.[23]

21. For a theoretical discussion of "peoplehood," see R. Smith (2003).

22. On "multicultural citizenship reforms" in the region, which differentially affect peoples of African and indigenous descent, see Hooker (2005).

23. "Oaxacalifornia" itself is an unusual example of a term coined by a scholar, Michael Kearney, and widely appropriated by the communities themselves, as indicated by even a casual review of the pages of the binational *El Oaxaqueño* newspaper.

In this context, Oaxacan migrants deploy the term *paisano* in what could be called a kind of "situational territorial identity" with a distinctively indigenous character. As the FIOB's former Oaxaca coordinator put it,

> the word *paisano* can be interpreted on different levels... it depends on the context in which it is used. If we are in a specific community, you say *paisano* to mean being part of that community... it's a mark of distinction for the person, showing their honorability... This term has been part of the peoples' culture... With the need to migrate to other places, we find ourselves meeting people who, after talking a bit, we find out are from the some region, in a place filled with people from other states. There the concept is used to distinguish ourselves, and to bring us together more. Then the word reflects our identity as brothers.[24]

Here we see how collective identity "scales up" from home community to shared region of origin in the course of the migration process. At the same time, its territorial meaning turns out to be inseparable from its pan-ethnic character, serving both to bring indigenous Oaxacans together and to distinguish them from Mexicans from other states. Regional identity melds with pan-ethnic identity.

In this context, one analytical puzzle that emerges is why, despite the challenges posed by migration, some communities within some ethnic groups create their own membership organizations and public spaces more than others. Consider the Nahua migrant experience. Although they are Mexico's largest single group of indigenous language speakers—and some have been migrating for perhaps a century—Nahua migrants have not sustained visible membership organizations in the United States. Yet this does not mean that they are not organized or capable of cross-border collective action. On the contrary, it turns out that Nahua migrants supported a pioneering and successful 1991 campaign in defense of their communities of origin against a hydroelectric dam planned for the Alto Balsas region of northern Guerrero (García Ortega 2002; Good 1992). Coinciding with the Quincentenary, their sense of peoplehood as Nahuas was defined by this sense of shared *regional* identity, which was itself forged by the shared threat of inundation and dispossession. At the time, migrant supporters of the resistance to the dam demonstrated their full sense of shared ethnic and regional identity. This experience shares with the Chiapas rebellion and the creation of Oaxacalifornia the close link between collective (pan)-ethnic identity and socially constructed regional identities.

To frame this process of redefining the territorial basis of identity and membership, it is worth exploring some of the concepts that anthropologists and sociologists have used to describe cross-border migrant identities that become the basis for collective action. The nascent process through which migrants are creating their own public spaces and cross-border membership organizations is built on the foundation of what are increasingly referred to as "transnational communities," a concept that refers to groups of migrants whose daily lives, work, and social relationships extend across national borders. Transnational communities are grounded by the combination of their sustained cross-border relationships with the sustained reproduction of their cultural legacy in the United States. Some generate their own public spheres, as in the notable

24. Interview, Romualdo Juan Gutiérrez Cortés, Huajapan de León, Oaxaca, May 2000.

example of at least ten different annual Oaxacan Guelaguetza dance and music festivals held in the United States, each one organized by a different set of membership organizations. The Zapotec term Guelaguetza refers to the courtesy of mutual exchange. This festival, originally in honor of the corn god, was partly appropriated by the church and then by the state government. In the process, it became a *pan-ethnic* celebration and a major point of Oaxacan pride, both at home and in the diaspora.

These California festivals are the embodiment of *Oaxacalifornia* as an autonomous, pan-ethnic public sphere that is both uniquely Mexican and differently Mexican. They are held in parks, high school auditoriums, and college campuses, and the largest has been held in the Los Angeles Sports Arena, the former home of the Los Angeles Lakers basketball team. In each festival, hundreds volunteer their time so that thousands can come together, and parents can share their culture with their children. Indeed, few had had the opportunity to see such a festival when they were living in Oaxaca. With so much activity, California's multigenerational Oaxacan migrant dance groups are in high demand, and they represent yet another network of membership organizations. Each of the annual festivals reveals an x-ray of the social networks and organizational styles of different strands of the web of Oaxacan civil society in California. For example, some are strictly cultural, others work with local Latino politicians and organizations, some collaborate with the PRI-controlled Oaxacan state government, and others, such as the FIOB, fiercely guard their political independence.

To describe cases where migrant collective action has transformed the public sphere in the United States, some analysts use the concept of "cultural citizenship." This term "names a range of social practices which, taken together, claim and establish a distinct social space for Latinos in this country" [the United States] and serves as "a vehicle to better understand community formation . . . It involves the right to retain difference, while also attaining membership in society."[25] This process may or may not be linked to membership in a territorially based community, either in the home country or in the United States. Instead, it may be driven by other kinds of shared collective identities, such as racialized and gendered class identities as Latina or Latino workers. The idea of cultural citizenship is complementary to but quite distinct from the notion of transnational community, which both focuses on a specific kind of collective identity and emphasizes sustained cross-border community membership.

A third way of conceptualizing migrants as social actors sees them as constructing a *de facto* form of what one could call "*translocal community citizenship.*" This term refers to the process through which indigenous migrants are becoming active members both of their communities of settlement and of their communities of origin. Besserer's work has detailed indigenous migrants' construction of multisited forms of participation, representation, and governance (1999a, 1999b, 2004). Like the idea of transnational community, translocal community citizenship refers to the cross-border extension of the boundaries of an existing social sphere. The idea of translocal community citizenship therefore involves much more explicit boundaries of membership in the public affairs of a community that is geographically dispersed, or "deterritorialized." Yet when indigenous village governance is reconfigured to incorporate the

25. See Flores with Benmayor (1997, 1). See also Rocco (2004).

representation of the community in diaspora, membership becomes reterritorialized (Gil Martínez de Escobar 2006). Besserer also points out that these emerging forms of multisited shared community governance are quite distinct from hometown associations. Whereas membership in hometown associations is voluntary, often constituting a form of cross-border grassroots philanthropy, transnational citizenship involves the obligatory duties that sustain the right to community membership.[26] The challenges inherent in sustaining this process of long-distance membership have produced a wide range of community responses and proposals (Kearney and Besserer 2004).

Like cultural citizenship, the term "community citizenship" refers to a socially constructed sense of membership, often built through collective action, but it differs in at least three ways. First, community citizenship incorporates the term *that is actually used by the social actors themselves* to name their own experience of membership. In indigenous communities throughout rural Mexico, a member in good standing—one who fulfills specific obligations and therefore can exercise specific rights—is called a "citizen" of that community (often but not always male).[27] Note that this use of the term citizen for full membership in local indigenous communities appears to *predate* the widespread usage of the term by national and international civil society organizations. In contrast, it is not clear whether the idea of cultural citizenship has been appropriated by those it refers to. Second, the idea of translocal community specifies the public space within which membership is exercised, whereas cultural citizenship is deliberately open-ended as to the *arena* of inclusion (local, regional, or national? territorial or sectoral?). Third, the concept of cultural citizenship focuses, quite appropriately given its goals, on the contested process of negotiating new terms of incorporation *into U.S. society*, in contrast to the emphasis embedded in the idea of translocal community citizenship on the challenge of sustaining binational membership in a cross-border community.

The concept of translocal community citizenship has its own limits as well. It does not capture the broader, rights-based perspective that transcends membership in specific territorially based (or reterritorialized) communities, such as the migrant movement for Mexican voting rights abroad or the FIOB's emphasis on indigenous and human rights. These collective identities are shared beyond specific communities. The idea of translocal is also limited insofar as it does not capture the frequently *multilevel* process of engagement between migrant membership organizations and the Mexican state at national and state as well as local levels.

These different concepts for describing migrants as social actors are all complementary and reflect important dimensions of that process; each one refers to social processes of migrant identity and organization that may overlap but are distinct, both in theory and in practice. At the same time, they do not capture the full range of migrant collective identities. The broader idea of "*migrant civil society*" provides

26. For discussion of the strengths and limitations of the related concept of "transnational citizenship," see Fox (2005). On hometown associations; cross-border power relations, see Fox and Bada (2008).

27. On gender and Oaxaca indigenous community membership, both in migration and in communities of origin, see Maldonado and Artía (2004), Stephen (2007), Velasco (2002, 2004), and Velásquez (2004). For one of the few studies of masculinity among indigenous migrants, see Hernández Sánchez (2006).

an umbrella concept for describing diverse patterns of collective action (Fox 2007). Migrant civil society refers to *migrant-led membership organizations and public institutions*, which includes four very tangible arenas of collective action—membership organizations, nongovernmental organizations, communications media, and autonomous public spaces. Some elements of migrant civil society could be seen as representing a U.S. "branch" of Mexican civil society, others reflect the Mexican branch of U.S. civil society, and still others embody arenas of overlap between the two, as in the case of the FIOB itself. Although Mexican migrant organizations are increasingly engaged both with U.S. civic and political life and with Mexico, the FIOB is still one of the very few mass organizations that represent members both in the United States and in Mexico.

CONCLUSIONS

The collective practices that are beginning to constitute a specifically indigenous arena within Mexican migrant civil society show us a new side of what otherwise is an unrelentingly devastating process for Mexico's indigenous communities—their abrupt insertion into globalized capitalism through international migration in search of wage labor. Their migratory experience has both broadened and transformed previously localized identities into ethnic, pan-ethnic, and racial identities, while also questioning widely held homogenous understandings of Mexican national identity. At the same time, "long-distance membership" in their home communities, as well as the construction of new kinds of organizations not based on ties to the land, raises unanswered questions about the classic close association among land, territory, and indigenous identity. The Mexican indigenous migrant experience also raises questions about how to think about the racialization process, which has been largely seen through U.S. lenses. The now substantial literature on Oaxacan migrants shows that, for many indigenous Mexicans, "racialization begins at home"—that is, in Mexico and among other Mexicans in the United States.

Mexican migrants and indigenous peoples both pursue self-representation through multiple strategies, coalitions, and repertoires. They also share the experience of having long been widely perceived by others as faceless masses—both in Mexico and in the United States. Until recently, they have been recognized as either victims or threats, but not as collective actors. Both migrants and indigenous Mexicans are now in the midst of a long-term process of building their capacities for self-representation in their respective domains. Indigenous Mexican migrants are no exception. Do their organizations represent the indigenous wing of a broader cross-border migrant movement that would otherwise leave them out? Do they represent the migrant wing of the broader national indigenous movement that would otherwise leave them out? Yes, and yes, but most of all they represent themselves, both indigenous and migrants.

CHAPTER 8

Mexican Migration and the Law

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More people of Mexican birth lived in the United States in 2008 than the total number of immigrants in any other country in the world. Equally striking, more than half are living in the United States illegally (Pew Hispanic Center 2009b, 1). How have U.S. and Mexican law shaped and reacted to this massive migration?

One misconception about immigration from the United States to Mexico is that the Mexican government has always encouraged its citizens to leave as an economic and political escape valve. The following pages uncover the largely forgotten efforts of the Mexican government to manage emigration and migrants over the past century. Mexican policy has been regularly undermined by much more consequential U.S. policies. Ineffective early attempts by the Mexican government to control emigration flows have given way to new forms of institutionalized ties between the Mexican government and Mexicans abroad.

I then show how U.S. law regulates immigration from Mexico. American commentators and politicians frequently ask why Mexicans don't simply "get into line" to immigrate through official channels.[1] In practice, many Mexicans do get into line. The 5.7 million Mexicans legally living in the United States in 2008 represented 21 percent of all legal immigrants, far outnumbering any other immigrant nationality of origin (Pew Hispanic Center 2009b, 2). Yet for the many Mexicans who lack specialized skills or ties to close family members in the United States, the supply of immigrant visas is dramatically lower than the high U.S. demand for their labor. For them, the line to become a legal immigrant never moves forward. Efforts to prevent unauthorized Mexicans from entering and working in the United States have proved largely ineffective, although those efforts have unleashed a set of unintended and often harmful social consequences. I conclude by outlining the bilateral challenges of a comprehensive immigration reform.

1. See, for example, http://blog.thehill.com/2007/05/21/illegal-immigrants-need-to-get-in-line-with-everyone-else-rep-john-culberson.