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International Migration In The Americas: Emerging Issues

A conference organized by the
Centre for Research on Latin America and the Caribbean
(CERLAC- York University)
September 19-20, 2003 - Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Report prepared by
Paola Bohórquez and Susan Spronk

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Abstract

This report summarizes the discussion of a conference held at York University September 19-20, 2003. The event brought together scholars (faculty and graduate students) and selected activists and members of NGOs to discuss policy and research agendas related to international migration, with a particular focus on the Americas. The principal themes that emerged were: 1) the way that identities such as gender and race shape and are shaped by international migration; 2) the impact of international migration on political, social, and economic development, especially in the sending countries; and 3) the role of the state in the regulation and criminalization of international migration.

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INTRODUCTION

This conference brought together scholars (faculty and graduate students) and selected activists and members of NGOs to discuss policy and research agendas related to international migration, with a particular focus on the Americas. Participants came from countries in the Caribbean basin (Central America and the Caribbean, Mexico and the United States) and Canada.

A dramatic conceptual shift has taken place in the study of international migration. While earlier work generally viewed the process as a unidirectional flow in which uprooted immigrants set down new roots in the 'host' country and migration constituted a movement across well-defined international borders, newer work stresses the shifting and contested nature of boundaries and belonging. In place of the old assumptions regarding the assimilation of migrants into a 'receiving society,' the revisionist approach presupposes a multiplicity of migrant networks and communities that span national boundaries. Thus in newer work, migration is thought to produce 'Diasporas' and 'transnational communities and social spaces,' populated by people whose movements and sense of belonging are neither final, unidirectional or unitary but rather multiple, cyclical, and often circular.

The three principal themes which arose continuously over the course of the conference were: 1) the way that identities such as gender and race shape and are shaped by international migration; 2) the impact of international migration on political, social, and economic development, especially in the sending countries; and 3) the role of the state in the regulation and criminalization of international migration.

This report is organized into two sections. Section I provides a general thematic overview of the conference, focusing on recurring themes without the intention of attributing particular observations to any one or all participants. Section I concludes with reflections on the ways by which civil society and researchers throughout the Americas can contribute to setting an agenda for future research and policy-related work relevant to NGOs and government ministries and agencies. Section II provides summaries of each presentation and panel discussion, linking particular observations with their presenters. It is our hope that this format will provide readers with a comprehensive summary of the conference while supplying the particulars of each presentation for the purposes of future reference and contact.

SECTION I:
THEMATIC SUMMARY

As information, capital, and people have become more mobile, states and cultures have become increasingly enmeshed in networks of dependencies and influences, in contrast to the sovereign states and exclusive national differences which marked the linear colonialism of the previous era. Globalization is an age of border crossing, literally and metaphorically, an age of the hybridization of identity and transnationality. Surprisingly, however, recent debates on globalization have paid scant attention to the phenomenon of international migration. This relative lack of attention reflects the fact that the global flow of capital has dwarfed the global flow of people in the last three decades. However, the study of migration offers a unique opportunity to investigate the cultural and economic contradictions of globalization. Globalization has often been depicted as a homogenizing force, both economically and culturally, as the entire planet becomes subsumed by North American consumerism. By contrast, participants at this conference discussed the myriad of ways in which international migration has facilitated both homogenization and fragmentation, and the strengthening and weakening of communities, both in North and South.

Race and Gender: How They Shape and are Shaped by Migration

The processes of globalization have brought about, if not the decline, at least the redefinition of national identities, giving way to increased ruptures, rearrangements, and interconnections along the axes of race and gender. Various presenta-

tions emphasized how the studies that homogenize groups on the basis of their common national identities fail to account for racial and gendered cleavages that often reproduce themselves in the Diaspora. In the case of Guyana for instance, racial tensions between the Afro-Guyanese and the Indo-Guyanese have polarized both communities in a conflict that recreates itself in the Diaspora and which has often expressed itself in the form of gendered violence against women of the 'opposite' racial group.

National and racial identity. Nevertheless, the generalization of racial markers to the detriment of distinct national differences has also been problematic as in the case of the Caribbean Diaspora, whose Indo-Caribbean population has been systematically identified as Afro-Caribbean. Consequently, the Indo-Caribbean population has had its historical and cultural specificity erased. Interestingly enough, however, the comparison of the living arrangements of these two groups show crucial distinctions in the way that different gender roles and family structures have shaped the different patterns of Afro-Caribbean and Indo-Caribbean migration to Canada, such that Caribbeans migrating to Canada should not be studied as a homogenous group.

Gender. The negotiation of gender roles was also emphasized as one of the outcomes of the experience of migration. First and second generations of immigrants experience the processes of acculturation largely in terms of their gender identity which becomes a crucial space for a constant negotiation of cultural values, as noted by researchers who study the relationships between immigrant mothers and their daughters. In other cases, power relations between men and women may change dramatically in the receiving country, as was shown in the case of Mexican

women living in the US. The possibility of employment outside the home and legal protection from spousal abuse has produced crucial shifts in gendered structures of power in the Mexican-American community.

It was also noted that the process of neo-liberal globalization presents particular challenges and opportunities for women. While neoliberal state restructuring has hit women the hardest as social services have been down-loaded to the private sphere, both in North and South, recent reconfigurations of capitalism have also provided new opportunities for some women. The need for migrant labour in the North has provided women from the South gainful employment. Women who participate in temporary work programs have sometimes challenged and sometimes reinforced gendered divisions of labour and ideologies surrounding class and status - at both the individual/family level and broader structural levels.

Discussions during the conference underscored the importance of contextualizing these racial and gendered categories, which are always in flux. For instance, categories such as Black and Blackness may make sense only in a multicultural setting when they refer to an ethnic categorization, but they may also become rigid stereotypes when their ideological content is not recognized. As it was mentioned by one of the presenters, some people from Africa, the Caribbean or Latin America noted that they did not know they were black until they arrived in Canada, when they found themselves living a Black existence for the first time. To prevent facile essentialisms then, it is necessary to contextualize the categories of race and gender in their social and historical particularity.

The Impact of Migration on Social, Political, and Economic Development

The causes of migration are complex, and are not easily discerned from mono-causal analyses. In most cases, poverty and/or violence are the factors that force people to leave their countries of origin. However, migration tends to beget more migration, as international social networks are established. Thus, international migration and globalization are inextricably linked. Participants in the conference sought to advance theoretical perspectives on globalization and transnationalism through statistical, ethnographic, and textual analysis, challenging the notion that globalization has been a homogenizing process, culturally, socially or economically.

Dependence of the North on the South. One of the main questions that framed discussion during the conference was whether international migration is widening or closing the gap between the North and South. Again, there are no easy answers to this question, since conference participants discussed the various ways that migration both reinforces and challenges global hierarchies.

Statistically speaking, migration rates have remained fairly constant over time, redistributing on around 2.3% of the world population per year. While the international migration rate has remained constant, the worldwide stock of migrants has grown. UN data suggests that the worldwide stock of migrants has more than doubled in the past 25 years, to reach a historical peak of 175 million people in the year 2000. There have also been important shifts in the patterns of migration between the post-war era and the current period. In the post-war era, most of the developed countries received migrants from other developed countries. This pat-

tern changed in the early 1970s, with around 70% of migrants to the US and Canada originating from less developed countries. Migration to the Latin American and the Caribbean (LAC) countries from outside has declined over time. Migration from one LAC country to another also continues, but is declining. By contrast, movement from the LAC countries to the US and Canada grew enormously in the 1970s and increased significantly again in the 1980s. In Latin America, the amount of foreign-born citizens has dropped from 2.4% to 1.7% between 1965 and 1990. As of 1990, 17% and 14% of the Canadian and American populations were foreign-born, respectively.

The increasingly visible presence of migrants from less developed countries in Canada and the US has generated political controversy out of proportion to their modest numbers. In these countries, public debate on immigration has become increasingly polarized. On one side, there are those who claim that migration must be restricted on the grounds that immigrants steal local jobs and drain valuable state resources. Challenging this view, participants in this conference emphasized the contributions that migrants make to local economies. For example, according to data from the National Immigration Forum, during 1997 the migrant population in the US contributed US$80 billion more to that country's economy than they received in benefits from the US government at the local, state, and national levels.

To the participants in this conference, migration is both necessary and desirable. It is necessary because given the low fertility rates of advanced industrialized nations, without migration there would be population decline. For example, statistics suggest that Canada needs immigrants now and will continue to face a growing demand for immigrants in the next several decades. In fact, according to the Organization of Economic Development and Cooperation and the Canadian government itself, Canada will need about 500,000 immigrants annually in the next 10 years to maintain current population levels. With aging populations, developed countries such as Canada seek educated and wealthy immigrants as a way to replenish the shrinking Canadian labour force. Migration is desirable because it has the potential to redistribute the world's population from poor to more prosperous areas. The thornier political issue, however, involves what kind of migration is seen as advantageous, for only certain parts of the world's population are considered to be suitable candidates.

Bifurcated migration system. To some extent, international migration offers an opportunity to redistribute economically marginalized populations. As of yet, this potential has not been realized, because wealthier states grant entry mainly to those individuals and families they see as desirable. Indeed, the northern desire for wealthy, educated migrants has led to the creation of a 'bifurcated' migration system that affords highly skilled workers more mobility than lesser skilled workers. Even 'free trade' agreements such as NAFTA, which seek to increase the flow of highly skilled workers, reinforce the pre-existing relations and position of countries in the region; business executives and high-tech workers from the Canada have been granted more entry visas to enter the US than their Mexican counterparts. This bifurcation of the migration system thus tends to exacerbate the hierarchy among nations. While researchers have traditionally depicted this problem as a 'brain drain.' what is of much larger concern is the fact that migration flows consist primarily of unskilled workers. The 'brain drain' model is thus lacking an analysis of the real problem requiring attention: pov-

erty. It is thus impossible to explore the phenomenon of migration without paying attention to the broader social and economic context in which migration is set.

In the past twenty years, neoliberal globalization has intensified the pressures for migration within the global South. Neoliberal policies have removed state supports for vulnerable populations. They have also privatized basic services and state-owned enterprises, leading to greater impoverishment and unemployment in many less developed countries. For example, while Mexico-US labour migration has a lengthy history dating back to the second half of the 19th century, its current phase is characterized by unprecedented levels of intensity and dynamism, marked by the shift to the neo-liberal, export-oriented model of development. As noted above, international migration has not allowed for the global redistribution of economically marginalized people. Generally speaking, it is not the poorest of the poor who have the resources and connections necessary to make the expensive and arduous journey to a new country. Thus, international migration can have a polarizing effect as the young, able, and resourceful are the only ones who can leave their communities. On the one hand, migration represents lost potential earnings to that community. On the other hand, remittances mitigate this negative impact of migration.

Remittances. Remittances, the earnings sent by migrants to their countries of origin, have been used as a means of supporting families back home for decades. The growth of remittances in recent decades has been spectacular. As migration flows continue, the flow of remittances has been growing. Certain estimates posit that the global flow of remittances has increased from 45 to almost 80 billion US dollars between 1992 and 2000. The remittance

phenomenon has attracted considerable attention among Mexican scholars, in particular, due to the importance of remittances to the Mexican economy. According to the latest estimates by the World Bank, Mexico practically equates India as the world's largest receptor of remittances, with a staggering total amount of nearly 10 billion US dollars in 2001, although Mexico only has one-tenth the population of India. Remittances represent the third highest source of foreign exchange in the Mexican economy.

The impact of remittances on development has traditionally attracted little interest because it was assumed that remittances were used for consumption, not productive investment. However, participants at this conference emphasized that remittances are usually spent first on housing and then education, which certainly has a positive impact on the social and economic development of the region. It is questionable, however, whether remittances are a panacea for socially equitable development, especially when they are channeled to individuals and families rather than communities. Rather, remittances may further exacerbate inequality both within and among countries in the Americas. First, the value of the remittances sent by different groups mirrors pre-existing hierarchies among different Latin American countries. Poorer, newer migrant populations, such as Nicaraguan and Haitians living in the US, tend to send less than the older, larger, and more established immigrant communities, such as the Mexican. Second, when remittances are channeled to individual families rather than communities, they can exacerbate class inequality as receiving families increase their land holdings and improve their properties.

There are two main reasons, however, why the impact of remittances on devel-

opment deserves the attention of scholars, international development agencies, and states. First, the value of remittances exceeds Official Development Assistance inflows. Second, groups of migrants are starting to organize collectively into Hometown Associations, which have a potential to make a larger developmental impact in the region.

Hometown Associations. Hometown Associations (HTAs) are organized groups of migrants who channel a portion of their resources for investment, largely to fund local infrastructure projects. While the resources of most HTAs are quite limited, collectively they are having an important impact on their communities. Research on Latin American migrants living in the US indicates that around 5% of migrants are involved in Home Town Associations, which tend to send donations to rural areas. While the transfers of money tend to be quite small (e.g. around US$1500), these sums dwarf many municipal budgets in the poorest areas of Latin America.

HTAs are at various stages of development. Some communities are just beginning to organize themselves, while others have formed local and national federations. Most are originally organized for social purposes, to preserve cultural values and ties. As they evolve, however, they often begin to raise funds for charitable purposes. Funds raised by HTAs often used for local infrastructure or social projects such as roads, bridges, parks, schools, and health clinics.

However, not all HTA-funded projects can be considered to have a positive impact on development. In some cases, these funds are spent on more cosmetic projects, such as buying a religious statue that travels between communities, or installing a fountain in front of the town hall. The receiving community is not always adequately consulted in the design and implementation of the project, since decisions are primarily made by the members of the HTA association who no longer live in the community. Without local input on the design and execution of the project there can be a lack of feeling of "community ownership," which raises questions as to the sustainability of such projects in the long run. For example, one HTA built a baseball stadium in their home community in Mexico only to discover that those who loved baseball lived in the United States. The community ended up having to hire baseball players from the neighbouring community so that the facility did not stand empty.

Political development. The parallel processes of democratization taking place in most countries of Latin America, and the increasing economic influence of migrants due to remittances have also led to an interesting political development in the Latin American region: citizens who live abroad have been granted voting rights in several states. The question of voting rights for citizens who live outside of their countries of origin puts into question traditional concepts of citizenship and the nation-state. While debates rage on whether citizens living in other countries should be allowed to have a say in the fate of the nation, the extension of voting rights to citizens living outside national borders is a wonderful example of the growing political power of transnational communities

The Role of the State in the Regulation and Criminalization of International Migration

Migration in the Americas has occurred with or without state intervention, although governments have played a large role in both the encouragement and pro-

hibition of in- and out-migration. Sending states reap benefits from out-migration from revenues from remittances and in easing the political pressure to provide employment in the face of population growth and income inequality. Yet large-scale migration creates new problems, undermining bilateral relations between countries; and it brings about pressure from the international community to restrict the flow of migrants. Ambivalence of governments in patrolling the borders particularly emerges from this dilemma, one that migrants themselves often capitalize on, using creative ways to reach their destination. The same dilemma, although of a different nature, is felt by receiving countries. Conference participants discussed a range of issues related to the role of the state and the attempts of both sending and receiving states to restrict certain types of migration and to encourage others.

Illegal migration. Illegal migration emerges as one of the most visible political issues related to international migration in the past decades. Panelists explored a wide range of issues that question the policy preoccupation of receiving countries with preventing 'illegal entry.' Various presentations emphasized the problematic character of the notions of legal and illegal status, the rights of migrants, and conflicting tendencies between labour markets and nation-states in terms of their implicit or explicit discouragement or support of migratory flows.

Since the 1990s, northern states have aimed to further restrict their borders to prevent undesired migration. This tightening of borders has had an immediate affect on refugee flows, which hit a peak in the 1990s, but have since dropped, as fewer countries have been willing to grant asylum. Of course, declining numbers of refugees has meant a corresponding rise in

the numbers of internally displaced people and in turn, illegal migration. After all, restrictions on migration do not automatically stem migration, but rather force people to choose more dangerous options to escape poverty and violence in their countries of origin. Many risk their lives in the hopes of building a new life. This situation has forced many migrants to seek refuge in other states illegally, which raises a host of problems.

Both within Canada and the United States, those workers with less-than-full-status are denied full citizenship rights, including rights to social services, workers' rights, and political rights. Several presentations emphasized how the binary opposition between full-status and non-status proves insufficient given the need to examine a variety of transitional legal statuses that account for crucial differences in the way in which rights are exercised. Temporary workers, refugee applicants, and landed immigrants constitute examples of 'less than full status,' a condition that determines not only differential access to rights and services but also disparity in legal obligations vis-à-vis the state. An examination of the gradation of legal statuses necessarily implies a revaluation of what it means to be an 'illegal' or 'undocumented' immigrant, and therefore, a new assessment of the extent to which these transitional statuses may be criminalized.

The difference between human smuggling and human trafficking brings attention to the crucial distinction between violation of the state laws and violation of migrants' rights. Migrant exporting schemes are seldom perceived by migrants as criminal actions, not only because they refer to voluntary migration but also because receiving countries often promote illegal migration, although not explicitly. There are powerful interests that benefit from illegal migration. Although there is a lack

of data on the phenomenon, it is well known that certain industries such as the hotel, restaurant, and manufacturing industries depend on illegal migrants as a source of cheap and docile labour. This situation is not unique to the northern countries. For example, undocumented Haitian migrants also represent an important source of cheap labour for construction industry in the Dominican Republic. Undocumented Nicaraguan coffee workers do much of the harvest in Costa Rica. Also profiting from illegal migration are the *coyotes* or human smugglers, who facilitate peoples' transit between countries. When border controls relax, as they did briefly between El Salvador and Spain in 1998-9, human smuggling represented a veritable growth industry, as people rushed to profit from the movement of people. Illegal migration is seen by those involved as a "victimless crime," because it supposedly benefits all parties involved, including the state, which implicitly condones this practice by failing to control it.

Slave importing operations, on the other hand, constitute both a crime against state laws and a violation of human rights. But even the concept of trafficking is not politically neutral. Since the late nineteenth century, trafficking has been a main concern in international conventions. Although its definition has been subject to various changes, it has often been used to criminalize poor migrant women from the South, as a form of control of their labour and mobility. The legal instruments and policies defined by international organizations to control the global sex trade and prostitution very often become means of enforcing migration laws that mask inequalities of gender, race, and nationality, thus serving the political and economic interests of the receiving countries. Although the international regulation of trafficking could be a useful device to extend and protect the human rights of migrants

- especially women - across national borders, the current preoccupation with the theme of national security accentuates the policing character of these regulations.

As noted by several panelists, after the events on September 11th, it has become increasingly difficult to pursue the human rights agenda in international migration policy-making. As security issues and the "war on terrorism" have taken over, the theme of migration is seen predominantly from the perspective of law enforcement, security measures, and repressive control. In this difficult context, migrants become an easy target both as subjects to criminal charges and as victims of human rights violations, while the structural conditions that produce particular flows of migrant workers remain unexplored.

Legal migration. In some cases, the state has moved to control migration by signing bilateral agreements that facilitate the flow of labour between countries. One of the subjects of debate during the conference was whether such programs represent a solution to the problems of inequality or reinforce and reproduce global hierarchies. Programs such as the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program between the Canada and Mexico, and the Jamaican Hotel Workers Programme, between the US and Jamaica, raise another set of tensions and contradictions related to migration and inequality between North and South.

The Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program, established in 1974, allows Mexican migrants to work on Canadian farms for up to eight months of the year. Similarly, the Jamaican Hotel Workers Programme arranges the temporary migration of Jamaicans so that they can work in the US hospitality industry, primarily as cooks and maids. On one hand, these programs can be seen as exploitative, since they im-

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port workers from poorer countries to do the jobs that northern workers will not do. Workers within these sectors receive poor wages relative to the average wage rates in the US and Canada, since they have low-rates of unionization (in fact, it is illegal for farm workers to organize in Canada). Workers in these industries have few means to demand the improvement of their wages and benefits, since they are temporary employees and are generally not integrated into the society. As temporary workers, it is even difficult for them to exercise the rights that are afforded to them under national labour legislation. The workers have an incentive to remain disciplined and obedient, if they want to be asked back the next year by their employer. If they cause any trouble, they are often sent home with the participation of their home Labour Ministry.

On the other hand, programs such as the Jamaican Hotel Workers Programme and the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program offer exceptional opportunities for workers to earn more money than would be possible in their countries of origin. Wage rates are much higher in the north and workers gain valuable foreign currency. The programs are explicitly seen by the sending states as a kind of workers' welfare program. In the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program, only those who are the heads of their families, have low levels of education and low levels of income are selected, because they are more likely to send money to their families back home. In fact, because of their participation in such programs, many of these workers are able to send their children to school, buy plots of land, and expand their homes.

The discussion during the conference made clear that such programs certainly have positive developmental impacts, benefiting the migrant workers, but that

such arrangements do not rectify global hierarchies amongst workers, since seasonal workers do not to have the same ability to organize collectively to demand better wages and working conditions. Nonetheless, the contrasting example of labour migration between Haiti and the Dominican Republic, which remains unregulated, suggests that it is better to have state regulation of the migration process so that migrant workers can access the national-level protections that may exist, however rudimentary they may be.

Conclusion: Moving the Agenda Forward

While the conference did not produce a complete set of recommendations, various participants put forward suggestions that outline a new research agenda for the study of international migration. The following summary thus organizes and presents, without attributing comments to individuals or suggesting that consensus was either sought or achieved, some of the suggestions that were raised over the course of the proceedings.

Immigrant Settlement and Integration

Few countries make systematic efforts to integrate immigrants and refugees into their social and political fabric and fewer still can claim success, even so-called 'multicultural' societies such as Canada. When such failure coexists with incomplete economic incorporation, immigrants and refugees are marginalized. When marginalization becomes entrenched, it leads the host community to view immigrants as net 'consumers' of public assets, rather than creators of new assets, and as social and political liabilities, rather than as contributors to society. Integration is a two-way process in which both the newcomers and the receiving societies are changed. The

participants of this conference contributed to our understanding of the interactive effects of international migration on receiving communities and immigrants themselves, focusing on labour-market access, social mobility, civic participation and social cohesion. More research is needed to better understand the process of incorporation, and devise ways to effectively address this civic engagement challenge.

Migrant Identities

Many of the papers noted that immigrants sustain multi-stranded social relations, a situation that allows for their classification as 'transnational citizens.' The fact that migrants are more often than not 'permanently temporary' implies also that their identities may change as they move back and forth between their locations of origin and locations of destination. On the other hand, as foreigners move into a community, cultural boundaries can and often do become more strongly defined. Culture, race, ethnicity, and/or language are factors that can attenuate such differences.

Migrants' Remittances

Various patterns were shown in the use of remittances. Although closely related, a distinction was made between the impact on the local economy, the impact on the households, and the impact on the position of the migrants themselves upon their return to their country of origin. In some cases remittances had little effect on the development of the area, as remittances are sometimes used for "cosmetic" improvements to the community, or they exacerbate social polarization within a community as some families receive remittances and not others. HTAs therefore have considerable development potential, although their role in transferring funds also needs to be examined critically. More research is needed to assess the developmental impact of remittances with respect to which groups are benefiting from these remittances and which ones are deprived.

Towards an Institutional Framework to Facilitate the Global Flow of Humanity

Transnational problems of major relevance to the system-wide functioning of the world such as international migration transcend the responsibility of the single monolithic nation-state. Thus far, however, the response of individual states in developing an institutional framework to facilitate international migration has been limited at best. Conference participants noted the contradictions inherent in state responses to controlling migration: bilateral agreements that facilitate the movement of labour from poor to rich areas tend to reinforce the global hierarchy of nations. There are also powerful interests that benefit from the perseverance of illegal migration, such as employers who depend on migrants as a cheap and vulnerable labour force. Nonetheless, it is important for the state to play a role in regulating migration flows of both forced and voluntary migrants. Only the state has to power to protect, ensure, and ultimately enforce the safety of and respect for the human rights of migrants. Civil society also needs to play a role in the negotiation of international migration frameworks, because in an increasingly globalizing economy, the state has no longer the same exclusive and classical roles in terms of development and power; non-state actors have gradually a more important say in these processes. In other words, finding solutions to the problems caused by international migration depends not only on the state, but on the civil society as well.

The Need for New Categories of Analysis

The need for a new language and new categories of analysis to account for the transformations in the field of transnational migration was also emphasized. In the first place it was indicated how the traditional model of home country - host country fails to account for the numerous transnational practices that do not involve the national territory of origin. In this respect, the very category of transnational migration needs to be reevaluated in order to incorporate the various trans-border practices that exceed the home/host model. Also, the notion of home needs to be translated in agreement with more complex representations of place of origin, attachment, and longing for return.

In the second place, more sophisticated distinctions between ethnic/racial groups, classes, and gender divisions are needed to counteract the exclusive focus on national identities. As was shown in various presentations, these categories make it possible to account for crucial differences in patterns of migration, possibilities of returning home, local attachments, and whether migrants make long-term investments in the receiving countries.

Finally, more research is needed to make visible the structural demand for illegal labour. Indeed, the rhetoric of universalistic rights coverage tends to conceal the existence of migrants with less than full status. Hence, the fact that some economic sectors and labour markets strongly depend on non-status workers is not recognized. In the Canadian context, there is a systematic lack of recognition of the ways in which businesses and corporations profit from the exploitation of undocumented workers. Research in this area is urgently needed to understand the political and economic factors that pro-

mote illegal migration, in order to promote public debate on these issues.

SECTION II:
INDIVIDUAL PRESENTATIONS AND PANEL DISCUSSIONS

Panel I: Economic Integration, Development and Migration

Chair: Deborah Barndt (York University)

Panelists:
- Alan Simmons (York University): "Migration and Human Capital in the Americas: A Critique and Reframing of the Brain Gain/Drain Model"
- Raúl Delgado Wise (Universidad Autónoma de Zacatecas): "Critical Dimensions of Mexico-US Migration under the Aegis of Neoliberal Globalism"
- Manuel Orozco (Inter-American Dialogue): "Globalization and Migration: the Effects of Migration in Integrating Latin America in the Global Economy"

Migration and Human Capital in the Americas: A Critique and Reframing of the Brain Gain/Drain Model

Alan Simmons opened the conference by providing a macro-level overview of the trends and patterns in international migration in the Americas, and their global context. Simmons argued that the main feature of global international migration is the emerging clash between migration pressure and rising immigration controls. The pressure for emigration has intensified since the 1980s as countries have shifted towards the neoliberal model of development, marked by export-orientation and increasing unemployment.

He noted, however, that these unfavorable socio-economic conditions did not necessarily lead to a massive exodus from the region, for over the same period the main receiving nations in the region sought to control their immigration more tightly. A bi-furcated regional migration system has developed in this process, which favors the movement of highly skilled migrants, and permits inflows of refugees and kin of previous migrants.

Simmons described the shifts in the patterns of migration from the post-war to the current era. In the post-war period, most of the developed countries received migrants from other developed countries. This pattern changed in the early 1970s, with around 70% of migrants to the US and Canada originating from less developed countries (LDCs). Migration to the Latin American and the Caribbean (LAC) countries from outside has declined over time, while migration from one LAC country to another continues, but is slowing. Major flows within the region, such as those from Mexico, are unskilled. Simmons stressed that the developed countries depend on migration for labour market growth. Simmons closed by arguing that the familiar brain drain/gain model needs to be rethought, because it is too narrow and lends itself to insufficient policy prescriptions. A more comprehensive systemic perspective needs to account for the fact that migrants from many countries are not highly skilled, and thus the real problem is the absolute lack of skilled human resources in the LDCs, which needs to be addressed.

Critical Dimensions of Mexico-US Migration under the Aegis of Neoliberal Globalism

Raúl Delgado Wise argued that we need to understand US-Mexico migration flows

in terms of the strategic role that Mexican labour has been given in US industrial restructuring, both within and beyond its borders. Delgado offered a trenchant critique of the export-orientation of the Mexican economy. Paradoxically, while Mexico has supposedly made much progress in the manufacture of secondary exports in the past two decades, the rise in exports has done nothing to mitigate the country's severe external deficit. On the contrary, the trade policies induced through neoliberal prescriptions have translated into an ever-increasing volume of imports. He argued that rather than merely exporting manufactured goods, Mexico essentially exports its cheap labour force, even without it having to leave the country. Contrary to those who claim that the shift to export-orientation has been an economic 'miracle,' the high rates of Mexican-US migration reveal the under-developed nature of the Mexican economy and the profoundly asymmetrical character of the trading relations established with US capitalism.

The flow of temporary migrants accounts for around one million journeys per year. Some 370,000 Mexicans establish their permanent residence in the US each year. The number of people born in Mexico who live in the US totals 8.5 million, of which slightly more than a third are undocumented workers. As a result of this migration, there has been a significant increase in the flow of remittances sent from the US to Mexico, which have increased 3.5-fold over the past decade to US $9.8 billion by 2002. It is estimated that these international migrants contribute more to the receiving economy than they receive in benefits and public services. Delgado Wise closed by arguing that there is increasing hope because of the resistance from civil society to the process of neoliberal economic integration. Today's migrant community is less

isolated, dispersed, and disorganized than the past. Social networks to demand citizenship rights and open borders have been established and there is an evolution towards a bi-national and trans-territorial collective agent.

Globalization and Migration: the Effects of Migration in Integrating Latin America in the Global Economy

Manuel Orozco provided an overview of the economic impact of transnational migration in the US and Latin America. He noted that there are many dimensions to the migration phenomenon, which must be accounted for when we consider its economic impact. The most obvious and important resource transfers are workers' remittances. The value of remittances depends on how integrated the migrants are in their new community. For example, migrants from Mexico send on average US$378 per month, while those from Nicaragua send US$146 per month. Migrants who return home for visits also represent major tourist dollars in countries such as the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, and Nicaragua. They also spend millions of dollars on telecommunication services every year. Hometown associations (HTAs), which are created by remittance senders to coordinate support of relatives who remain back home and their towns, also have a positive impact on social development in the sending countries. Although the amount of money raised by HTAs is relatively small (perhaps 1% of the value of remittances in the case of Salvadorans), they are important because these donations go primarily to rural areas for infrastructural development, such as paving roads or building parks in the hometown.

Orozco noted that the state and society have generally failed to understand the

effects of international migration. Studies of how it connects with development are lacking. Transnational migration has done little to mitigate the problem of poverty. While new class formation is taking place in the receiving countries, the social conditions of migrants and their families have not changed dramatically, which raises questions regarding the redistributive aspect of globalization. He argued that strategies need to be set in motion to create new state policies that are relevant to Diasporic communities, which reduce transaction costs at different levels. For example, Cubans who send money home from the US spend at least 16% of their remittances on financial services. Another possibility is the creation of public-private partnerships between the state and HTAs. HTAs can have a dramatic effect on local development, especially in poor communities, where a resource transfer of US$10,000 might represent seven times the budget of the local municipality.

Panel I: Discussion

The discussion period focused on whether there is a need for new paradigms to understand the economic dimensions of the transnational migration. Orozco and Simmons addressed the question of which methodology is most appropriate to understand the economic effects of migration flows. Simmons noted that he is trying to build a model that can capture both the positive and negative economic impact of migration on development in the sending communities. While migrants send large sums of money back to their communities, the fact that workers have left also represents an economic loss to those communities, since only part of the value comes back in the form of remittances and/or donations. He noted that there is potential for the creation of an international solidarity movement around remit-

tances. Orozco commented we do not necessarily need new paradigms to understand globalization and migration, but should work towards building an interdisciplinary approach to understand the effects of increased travel, communication, and the sending of remittances stemming from increased migratory flows.

The panelists also noted that policies are needed to improve the economy and raise the capacity of civil society in order to relieve the pressures for migration. The passive labour market policies of Latin American countries were compared with those of South Korea, where the state has helped to create and retain a highly skilled workforce through heavy investment in education, and research and development in the science and technology sectors. States therefore need to invest more in education to help mitigate the migration problem, since remittances are first spent on housing and then on education. Simmons noted that the current trend towards the privatization of education under neo-liberal policies dictated by the World Bank will only increase the pressure for migration, as families will not be able to afford to send their children to school without remittances. The solutions to the problems that cause migration thus rest both on the state and on civil society.

Panel II: Immigration Policy: Impacts and Responses

Chair: Harald Bauder (University of Guelph)

Panelists:
- Christina Gabriel (and Laura Macdonald) (Carleton University): "Engendering Borders: Patterns of Inclusion and Exclusion in an Emerging North American Migration Regime"

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- Patricia Landolt (University of Toronto): "Transnational Migration and Local Development: El Salvador's Refugee Communities and the Neoliberal State"
- Rubén Silié (FLACSO-Dominican Republic): "Haitians in the Dominican Republic"
- Deborah Thomas (Duke University): "Seasonal Labour, Global Visions: Jamaican Women and the US Hospitality Industry"

Engendering Borders: Patterns of Inclusion and Exclusion in an Emerging North American Migration Regime

The paper presented by **Christina Gabriel** (co-written with **Laura Macdonald**) argues that there needs to be an informed public debate on the way in which labour mobility should be regulated under trade agreements. She noted that labour mobility is a big issue for each of the three signatories of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) - albeit in different ways. NAFTA has entrenched the pre-existing power relations amongst the three countries. This is reflected, in part, through the regulation of labour movement across borders. Although NAFTA was supposed to create a level playing field, Canadians are treated much differently than Mexicans when going to the US. For example, the US imposed both a quota on the number Mexican professional using NAFTA provisions, and also a visa requirement.

She also presented an assessment of NAFTA's mobility provisions that focus on the 'high-skilled." Drawing on feminist scholarship she critiqued the tendency within some of the globalization literature that focuses on the hyper-mobility of 'highly skilled' workers. She argued that the gendered dichotomy between high skilled and low skilled workers within the provisions of trade agreements needs to be examined further. Women's work is often classified as 'low-skill,' because of the role that women play in social reproduction. The Canadian public debate on the labour mobility in the post-NAFTA period focused on the fear of 'brain drain' – the fear that Canada would lose its 'highly-skilled' informational technology workers to the US. Unpublished data demonstrates, however, that nurses are the third professional category to seek employment within the US. Nurses play an interesting role in the high/low skill dichotomy. Although nursing requires considerable professional training, it is associated with 'women's work' and therefore not usually recognized as 'highly skilled.' Gabriel argued that rather than focusing exclusively on IT workers, we ought to talk about the 'care deficit' we face in Canada, which has been created by the poor conditions workers face in the health care field. In sum, the gendered assumptions that 'hyper-mobile,' highly skilled workers are a class in and of themselves tends to ignore the fact that women are place-bound to a greater extent than men, given that women do not move abroad in rates commensurate with their positions within managerial ladders.

Transnational Migration and Local Development: El Salvador's Refugee Communities and the Neoliberal State

Patricia Landolt explored the connections between the academic community and conceptions of the practice of development by comparing two divergent bodies of scholarship on refugees from El Salvador to the US and Canada. She found that while the American scholarship tends to focus on hometown associations (HTAs), Canadian scholarship focuses

more on repatriation of land and the accompaniment of returning refugees. She noted that American international development agencies have been enchanted by HTAs because of a growing disenchantment with one-size-fits all policies for Latin American development which have led to increasing violence and inequality. The American scholarly community has followed these developments, indicated by the growing literature on the links between international development organizations and HTAs, and by how they help to build 'social capital' in the communities that send and receive refugees. She argued that some of this literature on HTAs and international organizations tends to celebrate uncritically these transnational social practices because they are 'beyond the state.' Her work aims instead to determine what kinds of hierarchies are affirmed and what new hierarchies may be created in the building of transnational communities.

She found that local development looks different in these two transnational communities, based upon the different meanings of development in the two communities. The American organizations tend to design their programs based on a charity model of giving, while the Canadian organizations focus more on solidarity. The beneficiaries of these projects differ as a result. In the US, for example, Salvadorans tend to establish HTAs out of a sense of alienation from American society. The HTAs tend to support improvement projects, such as building a new fountain in the hometown. Canadian organizations that have created partnering programs focus more on infrastructural development in consultation with the benefiting communities. In these projects, the process is as important as the end result. In the US, by contrast, the focus is more on obtaining money from multilateral lending agencies such as the International Development Bank, which channel funds through

the HTAs. Repatriated groups tend to receive little funds in this process. Landolt closed by arguing that we need to critically assess not only the roles of international organization and development banks, but also academics and their uncritical promotion of HTAs.

Haitians in the Dominican Republic

Rubén Silié discussed the problems and challenges faced by new Haitian migrants to the Dominican Republic, contrasting past and current conceptions of migrants. During the last century, Haitian migration was temporary and seasonal, originating in collective work contracts involving a certain number of participants, determined by the governments of the Dominican Republic and Haiti on a yearly basis. In this initial migration, the Dominican government would estimate the number or workers needed for the sugar harvest and the Haitian government would enlist peasants to be hired. Upon their arrival in the Dominican Republic, the peasants would be escorted by the military and distributed to the various state or private sugar mills. This early migration was not characterized by the uncertainties of finding a place in the market; each worker had a contract guaranteed within the sugar industry, which was official although irregularly implemented.

The change in the economic model of the Dominican Republic from an economy based on agricultural exports to one based on the service industry increased the mobility of the Dominican work force and gave way to an out-migration that left vacancies for foreign manual labour. Within this new climate, the market for migrant labour has diversified to include construction, domestic service, transportation, tourism, etc. Unlike the previous era, this new migration of Haitians to the Domini-

can Republic is unregulated by the state. Official authorities have lost count of incoming migrants, meaning that research on this process is important. So far, Silié and his team of researchers who are studying this phenomenon have noted a number of changes to the character of Haitian-Dominican migration. For example, Haitian migration is undergoing a process of "feminization," as more women are migrating than previously. Women differ from their male counterparts in that they enter the country with the intention of staying for longer periods of time and already have work guaranteed by social networks that assist them in their migratory process. In general, the new immigrants tend to be younger (17 to 40 years of age), more educated and so more affluent. Silié closed by noting that the changing face of migration will lead to new pressures for regulation of what is now an unregulated process.

Seasonal Labour, Global Visions: Jamaican Women and the US Hospitality Industry

Deborah Thomas analyzed how neoliberal integration and structural adjustment impact on women workers in contradictory ways. Current privatization drives and structural adjustment programs have a negative impact on women's lives by repatriating the provision of social services to the home and thus making the work of social reproduction more difficult. However, recent reconfigurations of capitalism have also allowed some women to enter global markets in new and sometimes lucrative ways. One example is the Jamaican Hotel Workers Programme (now called the US Hospitality Program) that was initiated by the Ministry of Labour in 1989. The number of Jamaicans working in these hotels increased tenfold from 230 in 1994 to almost 2,500 in 1999, with women comprising seventy percent of that total. Women hotel workers, who comprised about 34% of all Jamaican workers employed in the United States in 1999, accounted for almost 50% of the total remittances from all overseas workers. Moreover, while both the US Farm and Hotel Workers Programmes recorded increases in remittances compared to 1998, farm workers' contributions increased by 6.6% while those of hotel workers increased by 76.1%.

Thomas noted that women's participation in the Program is changing the way that women view themselves and how they are viewed in their communities. One woman interviewed said that she felt that women garnered more respect from their partners when they work in the US than when they were working in Jamaica, because they earn US dollars. Despite the financial benefits derived from their participation in the Program, those women who lived with their partners sometimes also worried that their increased economic autonomy - in conjunction with their extended absences from home - might threaten the integrity of their households. While conventional patterns of child fostering ensure that children are cared for while their mothers were abroad, the emotional effects of parental migration remain undocumented. Thomas also noted a trend in the declining participation of some women in community development projects upon return to Jamaica. However, other women saw their participation as a means to achieve their ends in Jamaica. In sum, by analyzing the issues evoked by the Hotel Workers Programme relationally - that is, by attempting to understand a new form of labour migration from various articulating viewpoints (the women who participate, their employers, their family members and communities in Jamaica, workers, and other entrepreneurs in their adopted communities in the US) - we are

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able to get a more complex picture of the structural dimensions that shape these women's experiences. We also gain an understanding of the interactions that might engender the success or failure of particular policy responses or advocacy campaigns.

Panel II: Discussion

The discussion that concluded Panel II focused on the power relations within communities and their effects on development, the way that gender and racial ideologies organize and shape migration, and the changing perceptions of migrants in different contexts. One audience member made a comparison of the Salvadoran case with Mexico. In her research, she has found that the kind of development project that the community engages in depends a lot on the personal orientation of the village priest. Landolt responded that her project aims to specify the indicators for whether a community will chose to build a birth control center or a fountain in the villages square. She is also interested in exploring whether the recipient community feels that it owns a project or whether the transnational migrants who sent the money through an HTA own the project. Feelings of community ownership are important if the project is to be sustainable in the long run. In this regard, she also noted that the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) grants more autonomy than American-dominated agencies such as the World Bank, which makes a difference in the success of particular projects.

Another participant inquired how the racialized/gendered ideologies held by the employers who depend on migrant labour shape the recruitment strategies of the state. Thomas responded that there have been changes over time in the types of workers that are recruited for different industries. She noted that men have also been involved in the hospitality industry, especially on cruise ships, and that men are also attracted to the hospitality industry because the wages tend to be better than in the agricultural sector. The current Hotel Workers' Program is dominated by women, however, which is having a positive impact on the sending communities because as a whole, female-headed households tend to spend more of their income on education than male-headed households, who spend more on transportation and entertainment. Also, when the women return home they are able to spend a lot of time with their families, and generally do not seek employment back home in Jamaica, except for the occasional odd job. In the case of the Haitian workers who migrate to the Dominican Republic, Silié noted that the state has not officially sanctioned this migration and that it remains unregulated. It has been difficult to create a policy to regulate this migration because the dependence of Dominican employers on Haitian labour remains a taboo subject. Although the state has not officially recognized or sanctioned this migration, Silié noted that the situation for the Haitian migrants is improving. While Haitian migrants who came to work in the sugar plantations were subject to the intense racism of Dominican society, the new migrants who work in the construction industry tend to have a more similar social background, which has facilitated their integration. These new migrants are no longer *campesinos*, but rather tend to be better educated, urban-folk, most of whom speak Spanish.

The conversation then turned to the possibility of progressive policies being negotiated into trade agreements as a means to address the structural inequalities of the global economy. An audience member noted that the industries that depend on

these migrant labourers are not unionized, such as the hotel industry, which raises questions about what kinds of gains these workers are making. The same participant also noted that the migration between Haiti and the Dominican Republic is not currently regulated, and asked what kinds of initiatives could be brought forward which would promote the interests of the Haitian migrants. Silié noted that FLACSO has been engaged in a project for the last few years that is trying to get the Dominican government to participate in international conferences on migration, one way to get them to abide the agreements that have already been signed. Legislation to protect migrants exists, but what is lacking is enforcement. He remains optimistic that there will come a time when the two governments will reach a formal agreement on migration.

Panel III: Borders and Trafficking

Chair: Cynthia Wright (University of Toronto)

Panelists:
- Luin Goldring (York University) and Carolina Berinstein (Access Alliance Multicultural Community Health Centre): "More and Less Status: Critical Perspectives on Legal Status and Rights in Canada"
- David Kyle (University of California-Davis): "The End of Illegal Immigration as We Knew It: The Case of Ecuador"
- Amalia Cabezas (University of California-Riverside): "Ni de qui ni de allá: Dominican Women and Transnational Sexual Labour"
- Kamala Kempadoo (York University): "Trafficking Myths and Other Stories: International Debates, Local Issues"

More and Less Status: Critical Perspectives on Legal Status and Rights in Canada

Luin Goldring and **Carolina Berinstein** addressed the way that legal status shapes migrants' access to political, social, and economic rights. Goldring began by drawing contrasts between the Canadian and American cases, to illuminate the fact that we need a different language to describe the problems faced by migrants to Canada. She argued that the binary opposition between full status and non-status may accurately describe the situation for workers in the US, but in Canada it is crucial to discuss the gradations of status, for there is a range of legal and illegal, documented and undocumented statuses in Canada. Migrants within the different gradations have difficulty exercising their rights to social services, which has been made worse by the recent cutbacks in social expending. Goldring argued that while there is some research that has documented the experience of non-status workers, more quantitative research is needed on the situation of less-than-full status migrants in Canada. Unlike the US, we know very little about the structural demands for immigrant labour (not only temporary workers) and which economic sectors in Canada depend on non-status workers. We also need more data on refugee claims that are rejected, which pushes many migrants into the less-than-full status category.

Berinstein provided concrete examples from her experience as a front-line worker in an immigrant service agency that illustrate the barriers faced by new migrants in Canada, and how less-than-full status affects migrants' access to social services and healthcare. Some agencies require that new migrants need to prove that they are illegal or less-than-full status (i.e. not a

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landed immigrant) to get access to some services, which restricts access for those who are afraid of being reported to the Canadian government for immigration violations. Also, all children who are born in Canada are entitled to Canadian citizenship and therefore the benefits of citizenship such as provincial health insurance. So far, however, the Ministry of Health in Ontario has refused to make a public statement to this effect and many people are unaware of this right. Berinstein stressed how the many barriers that restrict access to services challenge the rhetoric that we all have universalistic rights access in Canada.

The End of Illegal Immigration as We Knew It: The Case of Ecuador

David Kyle focused on a case study of transnational Ecuadorian migration to Spain to address the larger question of why so many non-criminals break immigration laws. People in Ecuador have organized what he ironically dubbed a 'grassroots development project' based on the exportation of people. These 'migration merchants' profit from migration either legally or illegally but in contrast to transnational organized crime, these are rather local organizations which provide contacts and information about who to meet along the way - including 'coyotes' in Mexico - and in general, about the process of illegal entry. Kyle argued that it is necessary to distinguish between "*migrant exporting schemes*" (often referred to as *migrant smuggling* - which refers to migrants breaking the laws of states - and "slave importing operations," (also referred to in the literature as "human trafficking"). In the case of the importing operations, migrants often see their rights violated and end up in virtual slavery. The former refers to limited package of services offered outside of the region and across the border, a ser-

vice that is highly profitable, safe, and regular; but it concludes once the immigrant has crossed the border. In the latter, the money making begins after the immigrant has crossed the border; it resembles drug trade operations in that it becomes an ongoing criminal enterprise in the destination country.

Migration from Ecuador to Spain started in 1998-99 because at that time Ecuadorians did not need a visa to enter Spain. This process was facilitated by the fact that Spain needed workers for domestic and agricultural labour. In 1998, the population of Ecuadorians in Spain rose from 5000 to the largest group in Madrid and the second largest in all of Spain. This process was facilitated by the highly commodified migration service but also because Spain is perceived as having 'fluid' and unevenly applied immigration and labour laws. Under these conditions, illegal immigration is not considered a 'real crime,' a perception that is reinforced by the recognition that often both, the states of origin and destination promote illegal migration.

He closed by arguing that illegal migration is then, the paradigmatic example of a 'victimless crime.'

Trafficking Myths and Other Stories: International Debates, Local Issues

The key argument of **Kamala Kempadoo**'s presentation was an historical investigation of the notion of 'trafficking,' which for over a century, has been embedded in specific discourses that deal primarily with the regulation of migrant labour. Kempadoo argued that the notion of trafficking often masks structural, gendered, racialized, and national inequalities, as well as the political and economic interests of the countries in the global north.

Alarm over the 'white slave trade,' which was attached to the increasing mobility of white working class women, led to the signing of a League of Nations convention on the trafficking of women and later, to the 1949 United Nations Convention which rendered illegal the trafficking persons for the purposes of prostitution. The concept of trafficking reemerged in the late 1970's, grounded in feminist concerns about the reconstruction of the South East Asian region in the aftermath of the Vietnam War. In 1996 the UN Special Commission on Violence Against Women led a world-wide research project after which trafficking became defined as "all acts involved in the recruitment and/or transportation of a woman within and across national borders for work or services by means of violence or threat of violence, abuse of authority, bondage, deception or other forms of coercion." Since 2000, there have been a number of new developments. The notion of trafficking, which was originally centered on prostitution and the global sex trade, has now shifted to denote organized criminal activities. Simultaneously, migration has become a key issue for governments in the North, which need legal instruments to control migrant smugglers.

Kempadoo argued that this new definition of trafficking has a number of implications. First, the concern about violence against women, which was central to the earlier definition, has been completely overshadowed by state concerns with law enforcement and immigration control. Second, the new discourse is not expected by experts to significantly reduce trafficking but rather just to change what is defined as trafficking. Third, while it is clear that there is a huge profit that creates and sustains human trafficking and that the current global economy produces particular flows of migrant workers, in this discourse it is overwhelmingly international

criminal gangs who are identified as the profit seekers and the main beneficiaries of trafficking. In this discourse, the roles of corporations and elites who profit from the exploitation of undocumented labour are left unexamined. The "Victims of Trafficking Violence Protection Act," which was introduced by the US in 2000 replicates the UN focus but it also added a system of minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking that the US applies to evaluate the rest of the world. It is a cause for concern that the US exempted itself from any monitoring and that the standards were constructed in a completely unilateral fashion.

Panel III: Discussion

The discussion section reflected upon how the neoliberal state regulates migrant labour, both within the nation state and in the international arena, and how the neoliberal state has different forms in different contexts. One participant asked about the level of coherence in the practices and procedures among the central state, the micro-state, and the macro-state with respect to migrants to Canada. Goldring emphasized the differences between states in terms of how they manage immigrants and citizens and the transitional statuses between the two. She argued that the Canadian state gives the appearance of order emphasizing the proper channels that people can follow to enter Canada in a legal way. The flipside of this situation, however, is the way in which it obscures the informal, irregular, and illegal entrances. It also tends to obscure the difficulties people face in their movement from non-status to full status. Kyle faced a challenge from an audience member regarding his conception of the state as a predatory state. Kyle noted how migrants' perceptions of the Ecuadorian state as a corrupt state influence their decisions to

migrate. He explained that while in certain Latin American states there has been a certain expansion of the welfare state, the benefits of the development project never trickled down. As such, there are still general feelings of deprivation and many people migrate because they do not see a way out of this situation.

Kempadoo addressed the issue of how states seek to control women's labour through international agreements on human trafficking. Kempadoo emphasized that the discourse on trafficking takes away women's agency because it tends to assume that women did not take the decision to go north to perform sex work. On the other hand, it is true that some women are deceived and end up performing sex work against their will. To deal with this contradiction, Kempadoo argued that the decriminalization of prostitution is a crucial step, as advocated by many organizations of sex workers, especially in India, Brazil, and Ecuador. These measures are extremely important, especially for women from the South, who are subjected to abuse and violence because of their double criminal status: as prostitutes, illegal immigrants or "victims" of trafficking.

Panel IV: Diasporas and cultural identity

Chair: Andrea Davis (York University)

Panelists:
- Alissa Trotz (University of Toronto): "Mapping the Nation: Conceptual Notes on Guyanese Identities"
- Catherine Nolin (University of Northern British Columbia): "'I Yearn To Return': Spatializing Social Relations Across Transnational Ruptures"

- Morgan Poteet (York University): "Citizenship in De-territorialized Nation-States"
- Cecil Foster (University of Guelph): "Categories of Blackness: Construction of an Identity for Immigrants in a Liberal Democracy that is Multicultural"

Mapping the Nation: Conceptual Notes on Guyanese Identities

Alissa Trotz discussed the racial polarization and violence between the Afro-Guyanese and Indo-Guyanese communities, both within Guyana and abroad. She discussed her experience at a conflict resolution conference held in Washington in 2002 which aimed for a constructive discussion of historical and contemporary factors generating racialised conflict, but which itself ended up becoming a forum for conflicts to emerge among the participants themselves. Trotz argued that Guyanese identity outside of the home country is still being defined as both difference from - Guyanese Diaspora as family in relation to other communities - and difference within - Guyanese Diaspora as racialized family. Trotz was struck by the fact that majority of the participants at this conflict resolution session consisted mainly of overseas Guyanese, most of whom did not visit Guyana on a regular basis and many have not returned to Guyana since migrating. Trotz suggested that the strong and polarized attachments reproduced by the participants at the conference could be explained in part by the historical conflict that emerged between the two communities in the 1950s. That conflictive relationship is still being reproduced through the extensive transnational linkages binding the Guyanese community.

The author's current research on the Guyanese community demonstrates that there are extensive social, cultural and economic linkages amongst Guyanese across the Canada-US border, especially between Toronto and New York. There are between 75 and 85 overseas groups in the Toronto area, branches of various Guyanese associations in Toronto and US cities concerned with sports, religion, hometown, civic issues, politics, etc. Individuals also travel frequently between Toronto and New York, to make a living, to participate in events, to visit family, and to shop. She argued that these patterns are easily obscured by studies that treat transnationalism as something pertaining to the relations across the borders of the home one migrates from and the place one migrates to. Although there is arguably a good reason for this focus, there is a danger of identifying this pattern as the only mode in which transnational practices take place. The Guyanese case is a prime example of how transnational practices may not fit the traditional model of home country-host country transnationalism. Trotz argues that a sense of 'Guyaneseness' is materializing via an array of transborder spatial practices that do not directly involve the landmass named Guyana They are capable of reproducing both new forms of identity as well as reiterating older form. This process has racialised patterns of affiliation that are continuous, locatable, and intelligible within a long history of Caribbean migration.

I Yearn to Return: Spatializing Social Relations across Transnational Ruptures

Through the optic of transnationalism, **Catherine Nolin**'s presentation focused on how political violence and new refugee spaces in Canada work together to create particular kinds of social spaces consti-

tuted by a mix of ruptures, connections, yearning to return, denial of the past, identity re-negotiation, and recognition. Nolin argued that political violence in Guatemala is a core feature of Guatemalan transnationalism, which is, in turn, shaped by government policies and social action. In a study of refugees who came to Canada between 1979 and 1999, she found that the experience of violence worked against the development of close primary social relations amongst the refugees at any single scale. She found all too predictably, hostilities and fear towards others (including other Guatemalans) are reproduced in new spaces of asylum and settlement in Canada. When talking about their home and individual identities, interview participants who had migrated to Canada indicated that their new social positions as refugees and (im)migrants often disable or impede them from overcoming the confines of Canadian refugee and (im)migrant spaces. The population of Guatemalans in Canada is a diverse population from different social backgrounds and they are scattered throughout the region, which impedes the development of 'ethnic solidarity' or strong social networks from which to draw for social and occupational support. The majority feels imprisoned by the transnational rupture and face a major class shift - admittedly a positive shift for some - though negatively perceived by most. In many ways, marginality in Canada encourages strong familial bonds in both countries and restricts the development of local ties.

By examining the consequences of political violence for Guatemalans in Canada and those left behind, Nolin argues that for refugees in particular, *psychological transnationalism*, or the desire and yearning for connections in both the home and adopted countries, underlies the narratives of Guatemalan refugee identity, while *concrete transnationalism*, or processes that fa-

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cilitate remittance-sending, on-going communication, and return - recognized as central to immigrant transnationalism - only develop in later stages of place making, if at all.

Citizenship in De-territorialized Nation-States

Morgan Poteet provided a critical investigation of transnationalism, identity, and citizenship, discussing how these concepts are experienced and formed in practice by Latin American youth in Toronto. He argued that recent academic efforts to simplify contemporary transnationalism have obscured its potential meanings. For Poteet, transnationalism is a new element of citizenship, best viewed through institutional social practices that take shape in local settings, but draw their legitimacy from global discourses of identity, culture, and the environment. Therefore, Poteet argued that citizenship can be viewed as an interaction between discourse and social practice, each one producing and reproducing the other.

Poteet used this conceptual apparatus to investigate the meanings and practice of citizenship among Latin American youth living in Toronto. He interviewed youth to solicit their responses to the issue of living as immigrant youth in Toronto. Some topics discussed included racial profiling in that city, conflict in schools and at home, and young people's responses to those conflicts. Poteet found that there were many divisions among the youth with respect to how they present themselves as individuals, which did not necessarily have to do with national differences. Poteet concluded by arguing that more research is needed to disentangle the relationships between these youth and their self-understandings of different dimensions of identity and citizenship.

Categories of Blackness: Construction of an Identity for Immigrants in a Liberal Democracy that is Multicultural

Cecil Foster's presentation addressed the problems of racial categorization in Canada. He noted that a sustained inflow of immigrants is necessary to maintain current population levels. Since most of these migrants will be coming from non-traditional sources, immigration has crucial implications on how we conceptualize Canada, what it means to be Canadian and whether or not Canada as a state should maintain rule by the majority. As Kymlicka and others have pointed out, Canada has been conceived historically as a white country, and this whiteness has been conceptualized in opposition to a universal Black and Blackness, which included Africa, most of southern and eastern Europe, Asia, and the indigenous peoples elsewhere in the world. The creation of a so-called ethnic category of Black, even in a multicultural setting, is an indication of ambivalence over how certain types of immigrants should be positioned vis-à-vis the state. The category of people called 'Black' is a racialized determination, presented as an ethnic categorization under the disguise of multiculturalism.

Foster argued that there is a growing realization that 'Black' does not have an unequivocal meaning. For instance, people from the African continent, the Caribbean, and Latin America note that they did not know they were Black until they arrived in Canada. This is particularly true of many high-skill immigrants, those with high social capital and status in their homeland, who find themselves living a Black existence in Canada for the first time. Indeed, they did not know until they were told and positioned in the social hierarchy that they were/are Black. Foster stressed that Blackness and Black are constructed categories, the product of an ide-

ology that for the last 3,000 years or so have helped those in power in western civilization to determine who belongs to the state and how people should be positioned in the nation. Very often Black and Blackness have very little to do with the somatic features, or the colour of the skin since they refer to issues of utility, effectiveness, and the belonging of citizenship.

Panel IV: Discussion

The discussion that concluded the fourth panel focused on the categories of analysis that provide more dynamic conceptions of community, "home" and the relationship between the local and global. Trotz noted that the Guyanese Diaspora provides a rich case that allows us to explore the notion of homeland in a less rigid manner, because it is riddled with tensions. She elucidated the different sets of tension particular to the Guyanese Diaspora: between those who have stayed and those who have left; between Afro and Indo-Guyanese; and tensions associated to the perception of Guyana as an imaginary versus a geographical place. Trotz argued that for the Guyanese Diaspora the place of origin is less a place than a mode of desire around which imageries of nostalgia, yearning and the possibility of returning are organized.

The discussion then turned to the connections between the local and global. A participant noted that the global is often conceptualized as superficial and the local as deep, and inquired about the possibility of "trans-local spaces" as a way to overcome this false dichotomy. Nolin argued that it is important to preserve the category of place of origin or homeland. It allows for the exploration of extra-territorial state politics, policies, and practices, especially under the new circumstances where numerous states are re-examining their po-

litical and economic relations to their citizens outside of the national territory. But the category of trans-local spaces is crucial for transnational studies, since it describes relations that go beyond the home-host paradigm; that is, transnational practices that do not involve necessarily the place of origin. On the other hand, and as it has been demonstrated in many cases, many immigrants maintain what they perceive as "shallow" face-to-face relations in the host country while preserving "deep" connections and strong ties with people in the home-country. In this sense, the idea that the global is superficial and the local deep has to be re-examined.

Panelists also highlighted the necessity of investigating how identities are formed and acted out on multiple scales. For example, Poteet noted that in some contexts, Latin Americans are uncomfortable being identified as such in certain social contexts because of the notion that Latinos are hypersexual. The way that these representations are constituted (and perceived) is very complex.

Panel V: Transnational Organizations and Spaces

Chair: Cynthia Wright (University of Toronto)

Panelists:
- Tanya Basok (University of Windsor): "Diasporas, Cultural Divides, and Social Encounters: Mexican Workers and Their Rights"
- Daniel Schugurensky (OISE/University of Toronto), Victor Armony (Université du Québec à Montréal), Martha Barriga (OISE/University of Toronto): "The Political and Civic Engagement of

Latin Americans in Canada: The Cases of Toronto and Montreal"

- Fabienne Venet (*Sin Fronteras*): "The Regional Network of Civil Organizations for Migrations: An Experience of Civil Society in Migration Policy-Making"
- Leticia Calderón Chelius (Instituto Mora): "Organizing Voters Transnationally: The Latin American Experience"

Diasporas, Cultural Divides, and Social Encounters: Mexican Workers and Their Rights

Tanya Basok presented her research on the diasporization of Mexican seasonal workers in Leamington, southern Ontario. She argued that the treatment of seasonal workers contrasts sharply with the treatment of immigrants who are expected to settle permanently in Canada. Hardly any effort is made to provide migrant workers with English training, orientation, counseling or any other settlement-related services that they may require. The seasonal migration of Mexican workers to Canada is regulated by a bi-lateral program initiated by the Canadian and Mexican governments in 1974, which was initiated to solve the labour shortage faced by Canadian growers. The program serves as a welfare-assistance program for Mexican workers. To be eligible, a worker needs to be the head of a family with children, and to have a low level of education and income. The Ministry of Labour in Mexico City selects participants, although Canadian growers can request workers. If workers are disciplined, obedient, and hard working, the same grower may request them year after year. Some of these workers have been coming to Canada for over 20 years. Although other provinces are joining this program, 90% come to Ontario. About 7,000 workers come to Ontario each year to work on tree, fruit, and vegetable farms.

Although workers may spend up to eight months of the year in the community, they are fairly isolated socially, because of the language barrier, and physically, as they live on the farms where they work. These workers make an important contribution to the local economy, using services, frequenting bars, using local banks, and buying second hand items at garage sales and other stores. It is very difficult for these workers to attend English language classes because they work long hours and the employer regulates their schedules. As a result, it is difficult for them to learn about Canadian life or their rights as employees in Canada. The labour movement has set up a resource facility called Casa Blanca, where workers can get help filling out forms for Canadian Pensions and Workers' Compensation in the event of injury, and other support. She closed by noting that the integration of Mexican migrant workers into the Canadian labour community could well secure better working and living conditions for the seasonal workers.

The Political and Civic Engagement of Latin Americans in Canada: The Cases of Toronto and Montreal

Victor Armony, Daniel Schugurensky, and **Martha Barriga** reported on the initial findings of their collaborative research project, which explores the ways in which immigrants from Latin America, whether presently Canadian citizens or not, become involved in civic and political activities in Canada, and the challenges and issues that are raised during their transition to living in a new country. The study is part of a larger research project on citizenship learning life histories.

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Two hundred individuals (100 from Toronto and 100 from Montreal) will participate in the study. So far, 47 people have been interviewed. A particular focus of the study is the learning dimension of civic engagement, and its implications for citizenship education. The Montreal-Toronto analysis allows us to compare the political engagement of immigrants in two distinct local political cultures.

One of the key issues that the project aims to investigate is the question of self-identity, which is crucial to define group membership, feelings of entitlement, and feelings of inclusion in or exclusion from mainstream culture. The Latin American community is relatively small and new. Ethnic labels confer different meanings, such as pride or shame. Of the participants surveyed thus far, most identified themselves as 'Latin American' when asked about their ethnicity, while the second most common response was that the individual did not identify with any particular geographic region.

Three main categories regarding the reasons behind the immigrants' decision to leave their country or origin were identified: political, personal, and economic. Political reasons were the most frequently mentioned. Most of those who cited personal reasons had relatives in Canada prior to their immigration. Those who referred to economic reasons alluded to the search for a better life for them and their children.

Several respondents saw Canada either as a second choice, or as the easiest or most convenient option. In other words, Canada did not present a particular appeal to them, nor did they have a clear picture of Canadian society and the Canadian "character".

In general terms, the preliminary data suggest that Latin American immigrants do not perceive a clear Canadian identity. This lack of a strong national identity can mean that immigrants find it difficult to develop a sense of belonging, but it can also be seen as an enabling factor for civic learning. While there is no unifying Canadian-Latin American identity, most respondents feel that one should be constructed or given voice. The conditions for civic learning appear to be rather favorable, at least at the subjective level. At the same time, several weaknesses were identified, including the community's low levels of unity, organization, leadership and participation.

The Regional Network of Civil Organizations for Migrations: An Experience of Civil Society Migration Policy-Making

The presentation by **Fabienne Venet** described an important civil society initiative that aims to advance a human rights agenda in international migration policy-making. The initial instigation for the network was a meeting of Mexican- and US-based NGOs in occasion of the regional conference on migration that took place in Puebla, Mexico in 1996. Initially, an ad hoc network of NGOs developed alongside the official proceedings, because they were denied formal representation at the conference. The network aimed to discuss shared concerns relating to migration policy and its effect on the lives of people and communities in the Americas, human rights, and development. One main concern was to promote an integrated approach on immigration issues in the CRM discussions. The annual meetings and interim exchange visits among the network have created a community of activists who understand migration as a complex, multi-national phenomenon, and

that the human rights and welfare of those involved can only be addressed by multi-national approaches. In 1999, a formal regional network of North and Central American NGOs was formed. Today it also includes the Dominican Republic. During the first years of its formation, the network was received positively by the governments, which helped it to grow and strengthen its capacity. Over time, it has gained a greater capacity for monitoring and legislative analysis. It has successfully been able to work with governments to place the human rights agenda firmly on the agenda. For example, several of the NGOs in the network have gained access to migrants in detention centers and measures have been taken to improve the conditions in detention centres in several countries.

Although the network has had many successes, it faces many challenges as an organization of disparate NGOs with diverse agendas. Southern NGOs tend to focus on in transit issues, while northern NGOs tend to focus on an immigration agenda - securing social and political rights for migrants. As a network, there is work to do to understand better the workings of the governmental conference on migration, coordinate better their activities, and develop more concrete projects with governments. Venet concluded by noting how the events of September 11th have put at risk the gains the network has made thus far. Security and the "war on terrorism" have come to dominate the terms of the multi-national debate on migration, eclipsing all other issues which the network has pushed for in the past few years, such as gender equity, development, and developing better mechanisms of cooperation between civil society and governments.

Organizing Voters Transnationally: The Latin American Experience

Leticia Calderón Chelius discussed the issue of extending political rights to citizens who live abroad, comparing how this has been dealt with in various Latin American countries. She began by noting that the issue of voting from abroad invokes many theoretical issues relating to the ways that notions of citizenship and sovereignty are being transformed in an increasingly globalized world. For the first time, many Latin American countries are reacting to demands for political participation from citizens who live outside their borders, reflecting the growing power and political organization of Diasporic communities. Calderón Chelius noted that the responses of various countries have been diverse. In some countries, granting the right to vote to citizens who live abroad has provoked controversy and heated debate; in others its approval has been a natural result of the process of transition to democracy. Currently, there is legislation that extends voting rights to citizens from Argentina, Colombia, Brazil, Honduras, and Peru. In Chile, the Dominican Republic and Mexico citizens living abroad formally have the right to vote, but there is no legislation to regulate the terms of their participation.

Arguments are commonly made that migrants living abroad should have the right to vote because they are sending a lot of money back to their communities. Calderón Chelius, however, argued that this is a limited argument because it returns us to the time when the franchise was linked to property rather than citizenship. Governmental resistance to this process stems from fears of the power-holding elite that voters who live abroad might affect the results of an election. Calderón Chelius stressed that migrants are still citizens of their communities and therefore should

not be treated differently simply because they live outside of their countries of origin.

Panel V: Discussion

The discussion section reflected on the issues of identity and perceptions of the nation-state and citizenship. Regarding identity, one participant asked whether second or third generation citizens living in the US or Canada are perceived to be `second-class' citizens because they may be 'tainted' by their immersion in American culture. Calderón Chelius did not think that this was an issue, because this aspect of citizenship is regulated by the nationality laws rather than those relating to voting rights. A second participant suggested that it would be interesting to compare the experiences of Latin Americans who settle in rural and urban communities to see if their self-perceptions regarding ethnicity are different. Armony noted that their project is designed to focus on urban-dwellers to test whether the immigrant experience is different in Ontario and Quebec, and more specifically, Toronto and Montreal. He noted further that only other Latin Americans were interviewing participants because people tend to respond differently to questions about ethnicity depending on the ethnicity of the person who is questioning them.

The discussion then turned to the problem of identity, the nation-state, and whether the Canadian ideal of 'multicultural' society is possible or even desirable. An audience member suggested we rethink the concept of nation-state and what we mean by integration, asking for clarification of what Basok meant when she said that Mexican workers were not successfully integrated into the community. Basok responded that the nation-building project was idealistic in that it

aimed to achieve ethnic homogeneity, but ethnic diversity has persisted. She noted the need to negotiate citizenship rights among various powers - the state, employers, and civil society. She stressed that labour unions have played an important role in defending workers' rights and have helped counterbalance the concentrated power of the employers in the community of Leamington.

Panel VI: Family and Community Issues Related to Migration

Chair: Kerry Preibisch (University of Guelph)

Panelists:
- Katharine Andrade Eekoff (FLACSO-El Salvador): "Myths and Realities: the Economic Impact of International Labour Migration of Rural Households in El Salvador"
- Mirna Carranza and Jean Turner (University of Guelph): "Family Acculturation in a Global Economy: Salvadoran Mother-Daughter Relationships"
- Judith Adler Hellman (York University): "Returned Migrants and Life in the Sending Communities"
- Dwaine Plaza (Oregon State University): "Unpacking the Migration and Settlement Story for Indo and African-Caribbean Migrants in Canada"

Myths and Realities: The Economic Impact of International Labour Migration of Rural Households in El Salvador

Katharine Andrade Eekoff presented the main findings of her study on the impact of migration on rural households in El Salvador. There are approximately 1.2

million Salvadorans in the US and El Salvador receives $2 billion dollars a year in family remittances. Migration to the US has continued to increase over the last 5 to 10 years and 13% to 39% of households receive remittances depending upon the department or province. There are multiple discourses concerning the impact of this migration. On the one hand, it is argued that migration keeps poor rural economies afloat. On the other hand, it is also argued migration leads to family disintegration and households do not use remittances productively. The increased dependency on remittances has even been blamed for weakening work ethic amongst the young population.

Eekoff's study aims to challenge these stereotypes by using quantitative data from 696 rural households in El Salvador from 1999. Her study demonstrates that migrants from El Salvador are predominantly single young men or single young women who are not the head of the household. Members of households both with and without remittances continue to participate in local labour markets, but single-parent, female-headed households and households with fewer members of working age tend to be more 'dependent' on remittances. Contrary to the stereotypes, households with remittances invest more in education of children than those that do not have remittances. Moreover, there is a clear impact in improving welfare of household, as the fulfillment of basic needs tends to improve, as households with remittances can keep kids in school, and can afford health care. As well, remittances serve as an informal pension fund for the elderly in rural areas, who have no other access to income other than what their sons or daughters send from the U.S. Although there are clear improvements in well-being, these changes do not necessarily lead to development. Remittances alone cannot create

a vibrant socio-productive fabric. But as the households' socio-political and economical exchanges intensify and diversify, there might be changes in the local socio-productive fabric. Eekoff closed by arguing that the current dynamics of transnationalism have proven to be advantageous in El Salvador, not only in economic terms but also in social, cultural and political realms, both in the household and in the community levels.

Family Acculturation in a Global Economy: Salvadoran Mother-Daughter Relationships

The purpose of the study presented by **Mirna Carranza** and **Jean Turner** was to investigate the process of family acculturation as a familial process, focusing on the relationships between mothers and daughters in the Salvadoran migrant community. Their research aims to bridge the gap between what sociologists have argued about the process of group incorporation, and what psychologists have argued about the process of individual acculturation. They used systems theory and their emphasis on families to develop a model of family acculturation. Carranza and Turner conducted interviews with adolescents, adult daughters and their mothers living in the Waterloo region. The predominant themes emerging from their research relate to how and in what ways mothers and daughters negotiate roles and values within the family. They discovered that the daughters had maintained strong familial values. In this process, however, many conflicts emerge over issues like curfews, dating, housework, and so on. Some interviewees reported feelings of being 'stuck.' Despite some of these negative experiences, Carranza and Turner found near consensus amongst the daughters that staying together as a family was important for family survival. They also

found that the interviewees held their mothers in high esteem. As these young women enter the workforce, they gain confidence to stand up against racism and discrimination, which often leads to more internal conflict. They also found evidence of 'cultural bi-directionality,' within the mother-daughter relationships - a situation in which the daughter, who feels more connected to Canadian society, might take concrete steps to influence the mother to feel more connected to Canadian culture, and vice versa. In one case, a mother decided to attend high school, because she was curious as to what it might be like after hearing about her daughter's experiences.

Returned Migrants and Life in the Sending Communities

The lived experience of migrants both within and outside of their home communities was the focus of **Judith Adler Hellman**'s presentation. Based on a series of interviews, Hellman's presentation explored three lines of inquiry: how US-Mexican migration is affecting kinship relations, how remittances affect social class formation, and changing gender roles. Kinship networks are both reinforced and disrupted by the process of migration. On the one hand, social networks are actually intensified by international migration, for kinship networks are often the basis for crossing the borders, finding jobs, etc. On the other hand, migration is causing disruption of previous kinship relations. For example, some family members (especially grandmothers) are now expecting to be paid for taking care of children in the family, an activity that was formerly considered an unwaged, domestic contribution. Hellman's research also suggested that the impact of remittances on small villages is a mixed one. Remittances have permitted the purchase

and concentration of land by returned immigrants in the Mexican countryside, thereby creating a very different kind social structure. This situation is related to the general crisis going on in Mexican agriculture. With the dumping of US corn into the Mexican market, corn cultivation is no longer a viable economic activity. Increasingly, people use their land to cultivate corn as a leisure activity, as a nostalgic or gourmet project.

With respect to gender roles, Hellman noted a striking difference between the experiences of men and women as immigrants living in the US. Women generally felt more positive about their experience, noting the protection from spousal abuse, better access to social services, and the opportunity to work in waged employment outside of the home. They were generally more optimistic about the future for their children. Most notably, the women who Hellman interviewed reported feeling 'free' from the tyranny of their mothers-in-law. In Mexico's patrilocal society, a woman's domestic labour and work on the fields is supervised by her mother-in-law. In sum, Hellman stressed that the impact of impact of returned migration, remittances, etc. is very complex; sometimes they reinforce highly traditional forms of living, and other times they abolish or rearrange them in forms that cannot be easily surmised.

Unpacking the Migration and Settlement Story for Indo and African-Caribbean Migrants in Canada

Dwaine Plaza's research seeks to retrieve the lost history of Indo-Caribbean migrants to Canada. Much of the research done on Caribbean immigration to Canada has negated the significant heterogeneity within the group, for there has been a tendency to identify all Canadians of

Caribbean origin as African-Caribbean. Indo-Caribbean immigrants from Trinidad and Guyana, however, have had their unique migration settlement and acculturation history negated. Plaza's research compares the living arrangements, family structures, and material values of both Indo and African Caribbeans who have settled in Canada. It demonstrates considerable differences between the two groups. Data from the Canadian 1996 census indicate that Indo-Caribbean and Afro-Caribbean immigrants had very different family structures prior to migration. Prior to arriving in Canada, the Indo-Caribbean family was typically an extended household consisting of a couple joined by legal marriage with an older male as head. Women typically did not work and children lived with their parents after marriage. By contrast, the woman typically headed the Afro-Caribbean family, although a male may have been present in the household. The couple was typically not joined by legal marriage, and the male of the family was typically not the father of all the children. The woman was likely to have been employed full-time and a grandmother may have lived within the household. These different family structures lead to different living arrangements after migrations, for Afro-Caribbean households typically rent their residence while Indo-Caribbean are more likely to buy. This difference can be attributed to the fact that Indo-Caribbean families are more likely to be extended family households, and therefore they have more collective resources.

The two groups also show dramatic differences between their migration patterns. For instance, before 1962, Afro-Caribbean women were more likely to migrate to Canada than Afro-Caribbean men. Indo-Caribbean people were not migrating in the same numbers until 1975. But there are also similarities. For instance, they were already transnational families as most of these families had members already living in other countries.

Panel VI: Discussion

The discussion following the last panel focused on the themes of the transnational family and how migration has changed lifestyles. Plaza was asked to elaborate more on the issue of home ownership and the differences between Afro and Indo-Caribbeans in this respect. Plaza responded that the tendency for Indo-Caribbeans to buy their residences and for Afro-Caribbeans to rent is a phenomenon seen in the US, Canada, and the UK. He argued that the Afro-Caribbean population feels less welcome in the host country, and therefore is more likely to long to return and not establish permanent residence. Guyanese Indo-Caribbean people are more likely to feel that they do not have a country to return to, and as a result will be more likely to establish a home and roots in the host country.

Another participant asked for elaboration on the concept of the transnational family. Carranza answered that there is a large range of transnational relationships. Families have extensive transnational relationships that are not only about remittances, but also more importantly about sharing information and giving and receiving support. Second generation immigrants frequently nourish these relationships, so they are maintained through generations that do not reside in the same place. Plaza echoed these sentiments based on his research in the Caribbean communities. He argued that the sense of belonging to Canada becomes the most important variable that determines what types of links are going to be maintained with the family members in the sending communities. Communities that are demonized or dis-

criminated against definitely have more problems adjusting to the receiving country and accordingly, they will be more inclined to maintain very strong connections, for generations, with the families that stayed in the country of origin. Hellman emphasized the fact that the way in which the country of origin is perceived by the migrants (as stable, reliable, etc) has an important impact in their transnational relationships. Some communities, like the Italians, were supposed to have a return 'home,' but they end up staying and constituting huge transnational links. The experience for each national group is different, determined by particular historical patterns. Andrade noted that Salvadorans often perceive migration as disintegration, but new arrangements are being established as the notion of household is being redefined in a transnational context.