In his essay on disjuncture and difference in the global economy, Arjun Appadurai (1996:33) develops five dimensions of global flows: ethnoscapes, mediascapes, technoscapes, financescapes and ideoscapes. He suggests that the suffix ‘scape’ allows us to examine these global flows from different angles and perspectives that take into account historical, linguistic and political situatedness of different sorts of actors at multiple levels of analysis from the nation state to the individual. Migrants are included in his concept of ethnoscape—part of the shifting world of persons. Facilitated by improved transportation and global communication, as well as by political change, more people from more places are leaving their homelands to find opportunity elsewhere. There is virtually no place in the world that is untouched by this movement, whether internal or international, whether as a sending nation, a receiving nation, or both. Martin et al (2006:4) have suggested that if the world’s migrants were gathered as one “nation” it would be the sixth most populous. This astounding fact, in and of itself, is a call to anthropologists to place the global “nation” of migrants at the forefront of their research agenda.

In his paper, economist Philip Martin discusses three important ‘Rs’—recruitment, remittances, and return—that are important to an understanding of labor migration in the 21st century. I will address each of these in turn, drawing on data from recent research conducted on US immigrants in the Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area,1 as well as some observations drawn from past research in a country with a long history of emigration that is now a country of immigration—Portugal. The broader question is how the respective concerns of anthropology and economics can be brought closer together in a more interdisciplinary understanding
of migration processes and outcomes. This broad question embraces several more specific issues: the integration of a top-down approach with a bottom-up approach (macro and micro, if you will); the integration of policy with the motivations of people; and the utility of cross-cultural and cross-national comparison. Ultimately, Philip Martin challenges anthropologists to consider seriously what they can contribute to debates about the management of labor migration, as well as what explanations anthropologists might offer for why management (or broader migration policies) sometimes fails?

"We Asked For Workers and People Came": Guest Workers, Immigration Status, and Legalization

The recruitment of migrant labor often involves a guest worker program, whether of skilled or unskilled workers. Guest worker programs are constructed on the assumption that once a labor contract has expired, workers will return to their home country. But, as Martin points out, this is rarely the case. Indeed, historical experiences with the Bracero Program in the United States during and after World War II, and with the post World War II Gastarbeiter (guest worker) Program in West Germany have amply demonstrated that there is nothing more permanent than temporary workers (Martin et al. 2006).

Further evidence is provided by the fact that large numbers of skilled workers recruited to the United States under the H1B visa program during the 1990s have become legal permanent residents.

Why do many guest worker programs fail? Because people, unlike goods and capital, are embodied, and embedded in complex social relationships.
Further, they carry with them a set of aspirations about opportunity and a better future that gives a meaning to their move that extends far beyond the idea that it is just a job, albeit in a different place. Further, if management and regulation are the overt policies of countries like Germany and the United States, the unspoken policy is one of adjustment of status that facilitates the transition from worker to immigrant and, frequently, from undocumented to documented. The clandestine Portuguese migrants who arrived in France in the early 1960s without documentation knew (through the flow of information back to sending villages) that they could easily attain residence and work permits, and hence legalize their status (Brettell 1995, 2003). The same has been true for many Mexicans and Central Americans who have entered the US, although the facility of this transformation process is dependent upon the ebb and flow of the broader political and economic climate.

The adjustment of status process is quite apparent among the immigrants who were part of a study of recent immigrants to the Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area. This research involved interviews with slightly more than 600 immigrants across five different immigrant populations—Mexicans, Salvadorans, Vietnamese, Asian Indians, and Nigerians.4 The respondents for our interviews were not chosen randomly, but rather through convenience samples using multiple points of entry. Although we cannot necessarily generalize based on these data, they do reveal some provocative and suggestive patterns and comparisons in relation to adjustment of status.

We asked respondents about immigration status at initial entry, about changes in immigration status since arriving in the US, and about current status at the time of the interview. As would be expected the majority of Salvadorans (71%) and Mexicans (56%) entered as undocumented workers, although more Mexicans used other entry statuses, including almost 15 percent who entered initially on a tourist visa and 8 percent who entered with green cards. Also as expected, more than three-quarters of the Vietnamese (76%) entered as refugees. Forty-three percent of Indians entered initially on F-1 student visas, and another 22 percent with green cards. H-1B temporary worker visas (9%) and H4 (6%) dependents comprised another 15 percent. The Nigerians are like the Indians with 44 percent entering on student visas and 18 percent with green cards, including several who had participated in the diversity lottery. But 19 percent of Nigerians said that they initially entered the US on a tourist visa.
When asked about their current status, fully 85 percent of Vietnamese were naturalized citizens, as were 58 percent of Nigerians and 45 percent of Indians. This figure drops to less than a quarter for Salvadorans (22%) and Mexicans (21%). Significantly fewer Salvadorans (14%) than Mexicans (41%) were undocumented at the time of the interview because they have been able to take advantage of Temporary Protected Status (25%). All groups have taken advantage of legalizing (i.e. becoming a legal permanent resident) although fewer Mexicans (19%) in the research population were currently in this status than were Salvadorans (29%), Indians (25%), and Nigerians (27%). The number is low for Vietnamese (11%) because they have an extremely high rate of naturalization. The only other matter worth noting is the continued importance of the H1-B visa for Indians (15%).

Figures 2 through 5 illustrate even more powerfully the adjustment of status that has characterized US immigration policy for several decades. These graphs use the Kaplan-Meier Estimator to track a survival function by immigration status. In these graphs, time is plotted in years on the bottom axis and an estimated value for the survival function (that is, the probability of a single individual remaining in a given status after a specific number of years) is plotted on the left axis. The shape of the curve is what is important. In some curves, the probability will drop to nearly zero
within a small number of years, representing a situation in which the status change typically occurs quickly for most individuals. In other curves, the probability will remain high for a long period before changing. In some cases, the curve will begin by moving downwards fairly quickly but steadily taper off. This situation is common when the chance of a status change remains constant over time, and the tapering off is due to a steady decline in the number of individuals who remain in a given state over time. On graphs where there is more than one group the comparison is what is important. The group with a lower tendency to change status will have higher values over time than another.

The first graph compares the Mexicans and Salvadorans who have been in an A-1 undocumented status. Here the more precipitous decline of Salvadorans by comparison with Mexicans is noteworthy but, as mentioned above, this is largely explained by the special TPS status that has been available to Salvadorans.

The second graph plots the curve for those who have entered on H1B visas. Here attention should be focused on the Indians (the N for Nigerians is small) who over time have managed to adjust their status by securing green cards and hence moving from worker to immigrant. The third graph plots the change of status once individuals are green card holders—that is, the path to naturalization. Here it is the comparison across groups that is most interest-
Figure 4. Survival Curves for Legal Permanent Residents for Five Immigrant Populations.

Figure 5. Survival Curves for a Range of Immigration Statuses.
ing—with refugees and high human capital groups experiencing a more rapid decline than the lower human capital Mexicans and Salvadorans; and yet, Salvadorans move more rapidly in this direction than do the Mexicans.

The final graph compares statuses. Those who enter as refugees and on B-2 (tourist) visas adjust most rapidly, followed by those on F1 and H1B visas, and finally by those who began as undocumented workers—not necessarily surprising results. The important point is that adjustment of status is in place no matter what the original entry status and no matter what the immigrant group. The timing and rates are what vary.

This widespread adjustment of status process, a process by which a student, a refugee, a temporary worker, or a visitor becomes an immigrant, suggests that managing migration should be about more than managing flows; it should also be about managing integration. We should not be talking about one without talking about the other. This offers one example of where economic analysis can be complemented by social and cultural analysis, and where processes of economic incorporation must be tied to processes of social and political incorporation. Many European countries have integration policies which we may or may not agree with; the US has no equivalent policy and certainly there has been very little discussion of such a policy as part of the recent immigration reform debates in the US with the exception of some suggestion of the path to citizenship. But often this too is narrowly defined. This omission is curious given the fact that on the ground, in local places, it is the integration issue that fuels much of the anti-immigrant sentiment.

Anthropology, it is often suggested, is a discipline that studies big issues in local places. It is in local places (cities, suburbs, and towns) that the impact of immigration is being felt, and it is local places that have become responsible for federal failures in the management of immigration. It is in local places that decisions are being made about whether or not to support a day laborer center; about whether to give drivers licenses or basic health services to undocumented workers; about whether to penalize employers for hiring undocumented workers; about whether to ask local law enforcement to implement federal immigration law. It is in local places that people make the decisions about whether or not diversity is an asset, and, at least in the US context, about whether the “nation of laws” takes precedent over the “nation of immigrants.” It is also in local places that immigrants, whether legal or undocumented, claim public space and express cultural citizenship apart from any claims they may have to legal citizenship or legal belonging. It is in
local places that bilingual education programs are funded, library outreach programs developed, and international festivals promoted. In short, it is in local places that immigrants become integrated through their participation in the social, political, economic, and culture life of the community. Managing migration is as much a local issue as it is a national and global issue.

"Emigrar Para Voltar":

Return migration and remittance behaviors

In his essay, Martin stresses the significance of remittances and return in the study of migration, and particularly the impact of remittances on development. These are issues that are familiar to anthropologists because our discipline has long "placed" itself in those parts of the world from which migrants tend to depart. In these places, we have seen not only what impels migration, but also what kind of changes migration brings; and we have looked at these changes holistically. In my own work on Portugal I have explored the impact of migration on the housing market, on the marriage market, on fertility, and on local systems of stratification (Brettell 1986). Others have examined the impact on gender roles (Grimes 1998) or on local employment structures (Cohen 2004). More recently, largely within a transnational framework of analysis, scholars such as Karen Richman (forthcoming) and Nina Glick Schiller and Georges Fouron (2004) have been looking at the impact on local politics and national homeland politics. These authors, and others (Laguerre 1998; Ong 1999), explore the nature of transnational, diasporic, transborder, or flexible citizenship.

The volume of remittances that Portuguese immigrants who went to France during the 1960s sent back home was significant to that country’s balance of payments, and helped Salazarist Portugal avert collapse for ten years longer than might otherwise have been the case. These remittances financed the wars to hold on to the last vestiges of colonialism in Angola and Mozambique. Portuguese banks of that period opened branches in Paris to facilitate the transfer of remittances, and branches were also opened in smaller villages in the north of Portugal to handle these transfers at the other end. Today it is Vietnamese, Chinese, and Indian banks doing the same in the US, and some of them are advertising on the pages of US-based ethnic newspapers such as India Abroad and the India Tribune.
Managing remittances, Martin suggests, may help to reduce poverty in sending societies and hence diminish the incentives to migrate. This might be true in the long term, but in the short term remittances often encourage further migration because they enhance the differences between migrants who “have” and non-migrants who “have-not” or who fall behind because the economic stakes and, I might add, the local prestige system, change. This is part of what Douglas Massey et al (1993:452–453) refer to as the culture of migration. “As migration grows in prevalence within a community, it changes values and cultural perceptions in ways that increase the probability of future migration…Migration becomes deeply ingrained into the repertoire of people’s behaviors, and values associated with migration become part of the community’s values.”

Often the differences between the haves and have-nots revolve around how remittances are used. The early work of some anthropologists on this topic (for example, Rhoades 1978) demonstrated that remittances rarely contributed significantly to local development. In Portugal, at the height of emigration to northern Europe, remittances were largely directed to building casas franceses, homes in local places that had the amenities of a nice suburban house in France (Fig. 6). On occasion, but not often, they were used to open small business establishments. These “emigrant houses” (whatever they are locally labeled) continue to be built in a host of sending places—for example, in rural China (Chu 2006) and in Kerala in southern India (Kurien 2002). In his study of rural Oaxaca, Cohen (2004) has found that remittances were first used to cover the costs of living and to build or improve a home. Further, he found that saving remittances for investment in a business received “only mild support” (ibid:108), although there is some variation among local communities in the extent to which small business enterprises were started with remittance funds. Cohen concludes that “the outcomes of migration in the central valleys [of Oaxaca] appear to share more with a dependency model than with the more positive development model” (ibid:122). He holds out the possibility that this might change, but in general his data support the conclusion that it has indeed been hard for sending country governments to manage and direct remittances toward development projects.

Of equal importance, in broadening our understanding of the complex dimensions (beyond the economic) of remittances and remittance behavior is sociologist Peggy Levitt’s concept of social remittances (1998). She defines social remittances as the ideas, practices, identities and social capital that flow from receiving to sending country communities. Migrants transfer these social remit-
stances in person or via other forms of communication and they impact gender roles, family relations, class and racial identities as well as forms of religious, economic, and political participation. They have a fundamental impact on the lives of those left behind and are the local counterpart to the monetary flows that occur in the national and global arenas. Levitt’s analysis suggests that the social and cultural dimensions of change must be analyzed alongside the economic dimensions of change and that both are affected by what flows back with or through migrants who are abroad. Migrants are change agents, but not always in ways that are hoped for by those who want to link migration with development as part of the larger project of managing migration.

Finally, I want to make a couple of observations about Martin’s third “R”: Return migration is a topic that I have been interested in for some time, largely because it was such an important dimension of migrations of people from Portugal to France, Germany, Luxembourg, and the UK during the 1960s and the first part of the 1970s. I would venture to say that at the time that I was looking at this problem, few others deemed it to be an important phenomenon and hence not one worthy of serious scholarly consideration. Luis Guarnizo (1997) has offered one explanation for the lack of interest in return, linking it to the conceptual distinction between individuals classified as settled (that is, immigrant) and those classified as temporary (that is, migrant). “In effect,” he argues, “being cataloged as either settled or temporary greatly influences whether a given group receives more or less attention as a subject worth studying—with returnees receiving much less attention than so-called definitive immigrants.”

Certainly the interest in return has increased as the concept of transnationalism has become more pervasive in migration studies. Further, actual return has come to be more precisely distinguished from what I have called the ideology of return (Brettell 2003), and what Guarnizo (1997) calls the “mirage” of return. Martin explores return in relation to policies that encourage educated brain drain immigrants to come home to work and invest, as well as policies that permit dual nationality. But return migration is a much more complex and multifaceted phenomenon. As Markowitz and Stefansson (2004:4) suggest, “there is no singular process of return:
the processes of homecoming are characterized by considerable complexity and ambivalence that provide rich examples of cultural creativity and inventiveness." The topic of return migration has finally "arrived" and is worthy of serious and, more importantly, interdisciplinary investigation.

Let me conclude with two final observations. When I published my book of essays Anthropology and Migration (2003) part of my purpose was to bring the Portuguese case forward into broader discussions of global migrations. It offers, as I have suggested here, a good example of early trends in clandestine immigration, in return migration, in remittance behavior, and in guest worker programs. Comparisons across time and space are absolutely essential not only for good scholarship, but also for sound policy formulation. Second, as Pierre Bourdieu (1977) has argued, social and cultural life emerges from the dynamic interaction between structures and people’s actions. In our analysis of the management of migration we need to be mindful of this interaction—policies shape people's lives, but people's actions also shape policies.

Notes

1The project, Immigrants, Rights and Incorporation in a Suburban Metropolis, was supported by the National Science Foundation (BCS 003938), through the Anthropology Program. Other investigators involved with the project are James F. Hollifield, Dennis Cordell, and Manuel Garcia y Griego. Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation.

2The quotation is from the Swiss playwright Max Frisch; quoted in Martin et al 2006:93.

3This should certainly give us pause as we debate the revival of the guestworker program idea as part of President Bush’s proposal for immigration reform.

4According to the 2000 US Census, there were 456,962 foreign-born Mexicans, 36,767 foreign-born Vietnamese, 30,561 foreign-born Indians, and 26,654 foreign-born Salvadorans in the Dallas-Fort Worth CMSA (Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area). The Nigerians are the largest African immigrant population in the area, numbering 7,370 in the entire CMSA.

5This method of estimation has the advantage of taking into account the presence of censored data of the type found in our survey. First, people enter the time series at different points and second they may not have become naturalized citizens by the time of the survey, although they might in the future. The K-M estimator produces a survival curve, which shows the values for the survival function over time. The data are not perfect for
this kind of analysis and therefore these graphs should largely be viewed as suggestive of status adjustment trends. For many cases there are few events for a given ethnic group in that status, and for several statuses there are few events in general. The author would like to thank Andrew Hardin for his assistance in the analysis of the immigration status data.

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