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Engagements Across National Borders, Then and Now

Cover Page Footnote

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ENGAGEMENTS ACROSS NATIONAL BORDERS, THEN AND NOW

Nancy Foner*

INTRODUCTION

A focus on challenges to nationally bounded citizenship paradigms is inevitably about the dramatic effects of immigration on American society. In 2005, more than thirty-five million residents of the United States were immigrants, or a remarkable twelve percent of the population.¹ It is not, of course, numbers alone that create the challenges. At the heart of debates about immigration's impact on citizenship paradigms is the fact that so many of the immigrants maintain strong and enduring economic, political, and social ties to their homelands—what social scientists call transnationalism.² A common popular concern is that transnational ties will detract from and hinder involvement in the United States. Such a situation—and indeed transnational ties themselves—frequently have been portrayed as something novel in American society, and earlier immigrants are remembered as more committed and eager to assimilate to American society.

But how new really is transnationalism? Or, to put it somewhat differently, how *much* is new about transnationalism today? Contemporary immigrants, as I will argue, are not the first newcomers to live what scholars call transnational lives. Indeed, transnational ties were alive and well among many of the millions of European immigrants (mainly from

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1. Steven A. Camarota, *Immigrants at Mid-Decade: A Snapshot of America's Foreign-Born Population in 2005*, Center for Immigr. Stud. Backgrounder, Dec. 2005, at 1, available at <http://www.cis.org/articles/2005/back1405.pdf>.

2. See, e.g., Linda Basch, Nina Glick Schiller & Cristina Szanton Blanc, *Nations Unbound: Transnational Projects, Postcolonial Predicaments, and Deterritorialized Nation-States* (1994); Peggy Levitt, *The Transnational Villagers* (2001); Luis Eduardo Guarnizo, *On the Political Participation of Transnational Migrants: Old Practices and New Trends*, in *E Pluribus Unum?: Contemporary and Historical Perspectives on Immigrant Political Incorporation* 213 (Gary Gerstle & John Mollenkopf eds., 2001); Peggy Levitt, Josh DeWind & Steven Vertovec, *International Perspectives on Transnational Migration: An Introduction*, 37 *Int'l Migration Rev.* 565 (2003); Alejandro Portes, *Conclusion: Towards a New World—The Origins and Effects of Transnational Activities*, 22 *Ethnic & Racial Stud.* 463 (1999); Nina Glick Schiller, *The Centrality of Ethnography in the Study of Transnational Migration: Seeing the Wetlands Instead of the Swamp*, in *American Arrivals: Anthropology Engages the New Immigration* 99 (Nancy Foner ed., 2003).

southern and eastern Europe) who came in the last great wave of immigration between approximately 1880 and 1920. To be sure, there are many new dynamics to immigrants' transnational connections today, but there are also significant continuities with the past. Transnationalism, as Alejandro Portes has aptly put it, represents a novel analytic perspective, not a novel phenomenon.³ As for the effects of transnationalism, one hundred years ago, like today, there were widespread concerns about the negative consequences of ties to the "old country." However, now—just as then—these concerns have been greatly exaggerated. Host-country incorporation and transnational practices can—and often do—go hand in hand.

I. TRANSNATIONAL TIES IN THE PAST

One hundred years ago, southern and eastern European immigrants, like today's newcomers, often established and maintained familial, economic, political, and cultural links to their home societies while they also developed ties and connections with their new land.⁴ What social scientists now call "transnational households," with members scattered across borders, were not unusual then.⁵ Early twentieth-century immigrants regularly sent money—and letters—to relatives left behind. There were organized kinds of aid, too. For example, Russian Jews sent millions of dollars to their "war-ravaged home communities" during and after the First World War through *landsmanshaftn* (home town associations).⁶ Italians often sent funds home to purchase land and build houses with the goal of returning.⁷ And many did return. Some were "birds of passage," going back and forth between Italy and the United States, which Italian migrants often referred to as "the workshop."⁸ Other Italians went home for good. According to official statistics, return rates were actually higher at the beginning of the twentieth century than at the end; in the first two decades of the twentieth century, thirty-six of every one hundred immigrants entering the United States left, whereas between 1971 and 1990, the number was twenty-four out of one hundred.⁹

Immigrants then, as now, followed news about, and often remained involved in, home-country politics through immigrant newspapers,

3. Alejandro Portes, *Conclusion: Theoretical Convergences and Empirical Evidence in the Study of Immigrant Transnationalism*, 37 *Int'l Migration Rev.* 874, 874-75 (2003).

4. See Nancy Foner, *In a New Land: A Comparative View of Immigration* 63-64 (2005); Ewa Morawska, *Immigrants, Transnationalism, and Ethnicization: A Comparison of This Great Wave and the Last*, in *E Pluribus Unum?: Contemporary and Historical Perspectives on Immigrant Political Incorporation*, *supra* note 2, at 175.

5. Foner, *supra* note 4, at 64.

6. *Id.* at 65.

7. *Id.*

8. Mark Wyman, *Round-Trip to America: The Immigrants Return to Europe, 1880-1930*, at 79 (1993).

9. Foner, *supra* note 4, at 65; see also Michael Jones-Correa, *Between Two Nations: The Political Predicament of Latinos in New York City* 96 (1998).

communications with relatives, and, in some cases, physical movement between their country of origin and the United States.¹⁰ There is also a long history of lobbying the American government about home-country issues.¹¹ Moreover, immigrants in America have long been tapped by homeland politicians and political parties as a source of financial support.

A century ago, homeland governments were also involved with their citizens living abroad,¹² the Italian case being especially noteworthy given Italy's active engagement with migrants in the United States and the fact that Italians made up more than a third of the eastern and southern European arrivals in the first two decades of the twentieth century.¹³ Among other things, the Italian government offered subsidies to many organizations in the United States that provided social services to Italian immigrants.¹⁴ In 1901, the Italian government passed a law empowering the nonprofit Banco di Napoli to open branches or contract with banks in the United States to enable migrants to send remittances reliably and cheaply.¹⁵ The Italian government clearly wanted to ensure the flow of remittances and savings homeward; it also was eager to retain the loyalty of emigrants in the United States as part of its own nation-building project.¹⁶ A 1913 law allowed Italian returnees who had taken foreign citizenship to regain Italian citizenship after living two years in Italy.¹⁷ Although it did not come to pass until the beginning of the twenty-first century, "there was even discussion of allowing [Italian citizens] abroad to have political representation in Italy."¹⁸

Transnational ties were generally not viewed in a positive light at the time of the last great immigrant wave. Return migration inflamed popular opinion. "[I]mmigrants were expected to stay once they arrived,"¹⁹ wrote historian Walter Nugent. "To leave again implied that the migrant came only for money; was too crass to appreciate America as a noble experiment in democracy; and spurned American good will and helping hands."²⁰ Another historian noted, "After 1907 . . . there was tremendous hostility . . . toward temporary or return migrants. . . . The inference

10. Foner, *supra* note 4, at 68.

11. *Id.*

12. *Id.* at 69.

13. See, e.g., Joel Perlmann, *Italians Then, Mexicans Now: Immigrant Origins and Second-Generation Progress, 1890 to 2000*, at 14-17 (2005).

14. See Wyman, *supra* note 8, at 93-94.

15. Foner, *supra* note 4, at 69.

16. *Id.*

17. Wyman, *supra* note 8, at 199.

18. Foner, *supra* note 4, at 69. In 2001, the Italian Parliament extended the constitutional right to vote to Italian citizens outside Italy. Antonella Biscaro, *The Italian Transnational Citizen Casts a Vote and Scores a Goal*, 6 *Metropolis World Bull.* 15, 15 (2006).

19. Walter Nugent, *Crossings: The Great Transatlantic Migration, 1870-1914*, at 158-59 (1992).

20. *Id.* at 159; see also Neil Larry Shumsky, "Let No Man Stop to Plunder!": *American Hostility to Return Migration, 1890-1924*, 11 *J. Am. Ethnic Hist.* 56 (1992).

frequently drawn was that [they] considered the United States good enough to plunder but not to adopt. The result was a high degree of antipathy.”²¹ Indeed, Randolph Bourne’s classic essay *Trans-national America*, published in 1916, responded to rising anti-immigrant sentiment, arguing that the nation should “accept . . . free and mobile passage of the immigrant between America and his native land . . . [.] To stigmatize the alien who works in America for a few years and returns to his own land, only perhaps to seek American fortune again, is to think in narrow nationalistic terms.”²²

Rates of return were implicated in another early twentieth century concern about the new southern and eastern European arrivals: that they were not making a serious effort to become citizens. Nativists who pushed for restrictive immigration laws argued that southern and eastern Europeans (“the lesser breeds”) were more content than the superior “Nordic” strain of peoples to remain aliens.²³ In 1911, the Dillingham Commission²⁴ asserted that whereas older northern and western Europeans came to help build a republican society, the new immigrants lacked experience “with democratic institutions[,] . . . had little intention of becoming citizens,” and came only for economic betterment.²⁵

In fact, naturalization rates among early twentieth century immigrants were low—and not all that different from today. In 1920, thirty-one percent of foreign-born men resident in the United States for ten to fourteen years had naturalized, as had forty-four percent who had lived in the United States for fifteen to nineteen years.²⁶ Eighty years later, in 2000, thirty-seven percent of the foreign-born who had lived in the United States for ten to fifteen years had become citizens, and the figure was fifty-four percent for those who had been here for fifteen to twenty years.²⁷ (In the past, Russian Jews had higher naturalization rates than Italians; today, immigrants from many Asian countries have above average naturalization

21. Nugent, *supra* note 19, at 159 (quoting Neil Shumsky).

22. Barry Goldberg, *Historical Reflections on Transnationalism, Race, and the American Immigrant Saga*, in *Towards a Transnational Perspective on Migration: Race, Class, Ethnicity and Nationalism Reconsidered* 201, 212 (Nina Glick Schiller, Linda Basch, & Cristina Blanc-Szanton eds., 1992) (quoting Randolph S. Bourne, *Trans-national America*, *Atlantic Monthly*, July 1916, at 86).

23. William S. Bernard, *Cultural Determinants of Naturalization*, 1 *Am. Soc. Rev.* 943 (1936).

24. The Dillingham Commission, established by Congress in 1907 to investigate the effects of immigration on the United States, issued its 42-volume report in 1911. See David M. Reimers, *Unwelcome Strangers: American Identity and the Turn Against Immigration* 17-18 (1998).

25. Reed Ueda, *Naturalization and Citizenship*, in *Immigration* 106, 138-39 (Richard A. Easterlin, David Ward, William S. Bernard & Reed Ueda eds., 1982).

26. Irene Bloemraad, *Citizenship Lessons from the Past: The Contours of Immigrant Naturalization in the Early 20th Century*, 87 *Soc. Sci. Q.* 927, 930 (2006).

27. Alejandro Portes & Rubén G. Rumbaut, *Immigrant America: A Portrait* 145 (3d ed. 2006).

rates, while many Latino immigrants have below average rates, with Mexican rates particularly low.)²⁸

It is useful to recall another parallel with the past, especially given complaints that immigrants today seek naturalization for “selfish” reasons—to secure government benefits, for example, or sponsor relatives—rather than because they want to participate in the nation’s political and civic institutions. Instrumental reasons have long been involved in naturalization decisions, with no obvious harm to the unity of the United States. Reed Ueda suggests that in the 1920s, many immigrants sought citizenship to “escape the restrictions and encumbrances of alien status” and to obtain the “rights, privileges, and protections guaranteed by the federal government.”²⁹ Restrictive immigration legislation passed in the early 1920s gave a boost to naturalization rates since naturalized citizens had the right to bring in their nonresident wives and unmarried children under eighteen without any quota limitations.³⁰ “For immigrants from the restricted area of southern and eastern Europe,” Ueda writes, “the right to family reunification . . . made naturalization highly desirable.”³¹

With hindsight, we know that anxieties about early twentieth century immigrants’ lack of commitment to America were greatly overstated. What now stands out—in popular memory as well as the scholarly literature—is the earlier immigrants’ attempts to get a foothold in American society through hard work and struggle, which then served as a launching pad for their children’s successful assimilation into the American mainstream. Despite the initial slowness of the southern and eastern European immigrants to naturalize and despite the continued ties that many maintained to their home countries, those who remained in the United States generally developed an allegiance to American society, became involved in a variety of U.S. institutions, and worked to build lives for themselves and their children in this country. This is very much like what happens today—and thus is yet another parallel between the immigrant experience then and now.

II. TRANSNATIONALISM: WHAT IS NEW

If there are many parallels with the past, there is also much that is new today about transnationalism and immigrants’ ties across national borders. Given advances in transportation and communication technologies, it is now possible for immigrants to maintain more frequent, immediate, and intimate contact with their countries of origin.³² At the turn of the twentieth century the trip back to Italy took about two weeks, and more than a month

28. *Id.* (describing naturalization rates of Asian and Latino immigrants).

29. Ueda, *supra* note 25, at 143.

30. Roger Daniels, *Guarding the Golden Door: American Immigration Policy and Immigrants Since 1882*, at 53 (2004).

31. Reed Ueda, *Postwar Immigrant America: A Social History* 128 (1994).

32. Foner, *supra* note 4, at 70.

elapsed between sending a letter home and receiving a reply. Because immigrants can now hop on a plane or make a telephone call to hear about news and people from home, they can be involved in everyday life in the home community in a fundamentally different way than in the past.³³ Plane fares have become relatively inexpensive. With prepaid phone cards, telephoning is cheap. And there are other new types of communication such as videotapes, e-mail, and videoconferencing.³⁴

In today's global economy the combination of modern telecommunications, information technologies, and instantaneous money transfers facilitates business operations that span national borders. Further, many of the large number of professional and prosperous immigrants in the United States are well situated to operate in a transnational field.³⁵ It has also been argued that "the spread of a global culture is reducing some of the distinctions between home and host societies that migrants must bridge in order to live in more than one country."³⁶

Moreover, greater tolerance for ethnic pluralism and ethnic diversity, and changed perspectives of immigration scholars themselves, have put transnational connections in a new, more positive light. If, in Ewa Morawska's phrase, earlier-wave immigrants were "closet transnationalists," they have come out into the open now that assimilation is demanded less strenuously.³⁷ Today, when there is an official commitment to cultural pluralism and cultural diversity, social and cultural differences that are sustained by ties back home are more visible and acceptable—and even celebrated in public settings. Antiimmigrant sentiment is certainly still with us, and immigrant loyalties still often questioned—as the heightened suspicions about Muslims after the September 11th attacks made plain—but rates of return are not, as in the past, a key part of immigration debates. In an era of significant international money flows and huge U.S. corporate operations abroad, there is also less concern that immigrants are looting the United States by sending remittances home. Indeed, transnationalism is good for American businesses. U.S. corporations unintentionally reinforce transnationalism by developing marketing incentives to promote migrants' monetary transfers, long-distance communications, and frequent visits to their countries of origin.³⁸

In the political sphere, there is also much that is new. Technological advances mean, for example, that politicians from home can travel easily to the United States to raise funds and garner support just as candidates for U.S. electoral positions can (and sometimes do) return to their countries of

33. *Id.*

34. *Id.* at 70-72.

35. *Id.* at 70.

36. Levitt, DeWind & Vertovec, *supra* note 2, at 569.

37. See Morawska, *supra* note 4, at 193.

38. See Luis Eduardo Guarnizo, *The Economics of Transnational Living*, 37 *Int'l Migration Rev.* 666, 680-82 (2003).

origin for the same reason.³⁹ Furthermore, today many nation-states which have become dependent on migrants' economic remittances and political clout have implemented policies aimed at preserving and strengthening emigrants' loyalties and participation.⁴⁰

Among these are dual nationality or citizenship provisions that cover a growing number of immigrants. Although the U.S. naturalization oath requires renunciation of other citizenships, increasingly U.S. law has "evolved in the direction of increased ambiguity or outright tolerance in favor of dual nationality"—what Michael Jones-Correa calls a "don't ask, don't tell policy."⁴¹ What is striking is the growing number of states of origin that permit their citizens to retain nationality despite naturalization elsewhere.⁴² By 2000, seventeen of the top twenty sending countries to the United States between 1994 and 1998 allowed some form of dual nationality or citizenship.⁴³ Above all else, these countries wish to ensure the flow of money and business investment homeward; extending dual nationality or citizenship provisions may also be a way of trying to secure the role of expatriates as advocates of the home country's interests in the U.S. political arena.

The spread of dual nationality and citizenship has created a new set of anxieties and concerns. It has been argued that dual nationality—and, more generally, many immigrants' continued engagement in home-country politics—blur loyalties and undermine immigrants' commitment to the United States. Some scholars and popular commentators question whether the rise in dual citizenship will dilute Americans' political identities and the meaning of American citizenship—"making citizenship akin to bigamy," in the words of journalist Georgie Anne Geyer, in *Americans No More*.⁴⁴ Samuel Huntington takes a dim view of people with dual nationality, whom he calls "ampersands" and sees as having dubious loyalty to the United States.⁴⁵ In a Center for Immigration Studies publication, Stanley Renshon warns that multiple citizenship in an era of cultural pluralism will retard the assimilation process and is more likely to encourage the maintenance of home country attachments than the development and consolidation of identification with the new country.⁴⁶

39. Foner, *supra* note 4, at 74-76.

40. *Id.*

41. Michael Jones-Correa, *Under Two Flags: Dual Nationality in Latin America and Its Consequences for Naturalization in the United States*, 35 *Int'l Migration Rev.* 997, 1012 (2001).

42. T. Alexander Aleinikoff, *Between Principles and Politics: U.S. Citizenship Policy*, in *From Migrants to Citizens: Membership in a Changing World* 119, 139-40 (T. Alexander Aleinikoff & Douglas Klusmeyer eds., 2000).

43. Stanley A. Renshon, *Dual Citizens in America: An Issue of Vast Proportions and Broad Significance*, Center for Immigr. Stud. Background, July 2000, at 5-7, available at <http://www.cis.org/articles/2000/back700.pdf>.

44. Georgie Anne Geyer, *Americans No More* 68 (1996).

45. Samuel P. Huntington, *Who Are We?: The Challenges to America's National Identity* 4 (2004).

46. Renshon, *supra* note 43, at 7.

III. THE EFFECTS OF CROSS-BORDER TIES TODAY

Available evidence suggests that such dire predictions are unwarranted. For one thing, dual citizenship may actually encourage immigrants to naturalize—and naturalization, as many have argued, is likely to facilitate (as well as reflect) “the assimilation of newcomers by imparting a sense of . . . belonging, reinforcing their attachment to American values and improving their English language skills.”⁴⁷ A 2001 study of Latin American immigrants reveals that those from countries that recognize dual nationality are more likely to naturalize than those from countries that do not recognize it.⁴⁸ Becoming a U.S. citizen is an easier decision when it does not entail losing privileges in, or renouncing allegiance to, one’s native land or the possibility of being viewed as a “defector” there.

As a growing number of immigration scholars point out, assimilation and transnationalism are not mutually exclusive—and often coexist.⁴⁹ Incorporation in a new state and enduring transnational attachments, as Peggy Levitt and Nina Glick Schiller have recently written, “are not binary opposites,” and host country incorporation and transnational ties influence each other.⁵⁰ While immigrants buy property, build houses, start businesses, enter into marriages, and influence political developments in their home societies, they are also involved in building lives in the United States, where they buy homes, work on block associations, join unions, set up businesses, and take an interest in, and sometimes become active in, political campaigns. Interestingly, a recent study of Mexican immigrants in Los Angeles shows a positive association between home ownership there and sending back remittances.⁵¹

Involvement in home country-based politics and organizations need not detract from involvements in the United States. Quite the contrary. A number of studies maintain that transnational political engagements actually strengthen migrants’ ability to mobilize support for political issues and elections⁵² in the United States and reinforce or encourage an interest in U.S. politics.⁵³ On the basis of survey data on three Latino immigrant

47. Peter H. Schuck, *Plural Citizenships*, in *Immigration and Citizenship in the Twenty-First Century* 149, 164 (Noah M. J. Pickus ed., 1998).

48. Jones-Correa, *supra* note 41, at 1023.

49. See, e.g., Levitt, DeWind & Vertovec, *supra* note 2; Ewa Morawska, *Immigrant Transnationalism and Assimilation: A Variety of Combinations and the Analytic Strategy It Suggests*, in *Toward Assimilation and Citizenship: Immigrants in Liberal Nation-States* 133 (Christian Joppke & Ewa Morawska eds., 2003).

50. Peggy Levitt & Nina Glick Schiller, *Conceptualizing Simultaneity: A Transnational Social Field Perspective on Society*, 38 *Int’l Migration Rev.* 1002, 1011 (2004).

51. Enrico A. Marcelli & B. Lindsay Lowell, *Transnational Twist: Pecuniary Remittances and the Socioeconomic Integration of Authorized and Unauthorized Mexican Immigrants in Los Angeles County*, 39 *Int’l Migration Rev.* 69, 94 (2005).

52. Nancy Foner, *Introduction: New Immigrants in a New New York*, in *New Immigrants in New York* 1, 10 (Nancy Foner ed., rev. ed. 2001).

53. See Linda Basch, *The Vincentians and Grenadians: The Role of Voluntary Associations in Immigrant Adaptation to New York City*, in *New Immigrants in New York* 159, 184 (Nancy Foner ed., 1987).

communities in northeast cities, José Itzigsohn and Silvia Giorguli-Saucedo contend that participation in transnational life does not reduce immigrants' desire to incorporate into American society.⁵⁴ They argue that incorporation into the United States and transnational involvements of "first generation immigrants are complementary rather than competitive processes."⁵⁵ Often it is "the most incorporated immigrants, those who participate actively in American political and economic life, who are also involved in transnational activities."⁵⁶ Indeed, the experience gained in founding hometown committees or participating in other kinds of transnational organizations can be transferred and usefully applied to campaigns for local causes in U.S. cities and towns.⁵⁷

This theme also comes out in Reuel Rogers' recent study of Afro-Caribbean New Yorkers,⁵⁸ which shows that "the skills, aptitude[s], and appetite[s] for civic engagement [that] immigrants develop in the transnational arena" may travel well to the American context.⁵⁹ To be sure, the Afro-Caribbean immigrants whose links to the home country consisted mostly of personal or social ties were slow to become U.S. citizens and participate in American politics.⁶⁰ Yet, those with high levels of involvement in home country civic activities (membership in home country associations, for example, or campaigns for political candidates in the Caribbean) were more likely than others to vote in the United States—as well as to participate in other forms of political activity beyond voting such as raising money for New York politicians or becoming involved in Democratic political clubs.⁶¹

CONCLUSION

Obviously, much is new about transnationalism. Modern technology, the new global economy and culture, and new laws and political arrangements have combined to produce cross-border connections that differ in fundamental ways from those maintained by immigrants a century ago. This said, the novelty of contemporary conditions should not be exaggerated. Immigrants who move from one country to another seldom cut off ties and allegiances to those left behind, and immigrants in the past

54. José Itzigsohn & Silvia Giorguli-Saucedo, *Incorporation, Transnationalism, and Gender: Immigrant Incorporation and Transnational Participation as Gendered Processes*, 39 *Int'l Migration Rev.* 895, 917 (2005); see also Patricia R. Pessar & Pamela M. Graham, *Dominicans: Transnational Identities and Local Politics*, in Foner, *supra* note 52, at 251.

55. Itzigsohn & Giorguli-Saucedo, *supra* note 54, at 917.

56. *Id.*

57. Luis Eduardo Guarnizo, Arturo Ignacio Sánchez & Elizabeth M. Roach, *Mistrust, Fragmented Solidarity, and Transnational Migration: Colombians in New York City and Los Angeles*, 22 *Ethnic & Racial Stud.* 367, 386-87 (1999).

58. See generally Reuel R. Rogers, *Afro-Caribbean Immigrants and the Politics of Incorporation: Ethnicity, Exception, or Exit* (2006).

59. *Id.* at 164.

60. *Id.*

61. *Id.*

were no exception. Contemporary immigrants are “no more emotionally attached to their home countries or ambivalent about committing to [the United States] than their European predecessors.”⁶²

Whether the focus is on the past or the present, it is also clear that immigrants’ transnational ties and home-country attachments are not incompatible with successful integration and participation in American civic and political life—and do not necessarily depress their propensity to become engaged with American institutions and to develop allegiances to this country. Of course, involvement in political and organizational affairs of the home country may at times draw energies and interests away from political and civic engagements and activism in the United States. The point is that this is not always—or perhaps even most often—the case.

Because research on transnationalism is in its infancy, we are only beginning to have studies that investigate the consequences of cross-border ties. Indeed, there are only early systematic investigations, of a qualitative as well as quantitative kind, examining the scope of transnational activities among contemporary immigrants, including variations “in the sectors, levels, strength, and formality” of trans-border involvement.⁶³ As the study of transnational practices, relations, and communities expands—and as large-scale immigration continues apace—there is a need for research that will allow us to obtain a fuller and more accurate picture of how cross-border connections and transnational practices are affecting incorporation—and social and legal citizenship—among the millions of recent immigrants in the United States. It is hoped that such research will also stimulate parallel studies among historians on past immigration eras to add to our understanding of transnationalism in earlier times and further enrich our appreciation of just what is new about engagements across national borders today.

62. *Id.* at 150.

63. Levitt, DeWind & Vertovec, *supra* note 2, at 569-70. The studies of Alejandro Portes and his colleagues on the transnational political and economic activities of Colombian, Dominican, and Salvadoran migrants show that regular involvement in transnational activities is a minority practice among them. See Portes, *supra* note 3, at 882-84.