

# 国际移民与侨乡研究

Transnational Migration and Qiaoxiang Research

( 2010 · 国际移民理论 )

主编：张国雄 周 敏 张应龙



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## 序 言

张国雄 周 敏 张应龙

2009年10月，周敏教授受邀来五邑大学广东侨乡文化研究中心讲学。她的老同学、江门市委黄悦胜秘书长宴请周敏教授，五邑大学胡社军校长和张国雄在座。席间，黄悦胜秘书长提出江门是“中国第一侨乡”，应该大力开展华侨历史文化研究。胡社军校长也表达了加强学术交流与合作的一些想法，他说2010年是五邑大学建校25周年，希望通过国际学术会议等形式推动华侨历史研究。

会后，张国雄、周敏多次商议如何确定学术会议的主旨，张国雄提出这次学术会议应该将华侨与侨乡关系的研讨放在国际移民的平台上与其他国家国际移民的比较中进行，此意获得周敏教授的肯定，她提出了很多具体的建议，承担了联系美国和加拿大学者的任务，并在后来的筹备工作中给予了大量具体的指导。

随后，张国雄将此意见分别向广东侨乡文化研究中心的兼职教授、厦门大学李明欢教授和暨南大学张应龙博士做了通报，他们也非常支持，还主动承担了联系英国、荷兰等国家和中国台湾、香港地区学者的任务。

同年底，张国雄在暨南大学华侨研究院参加学术活动时，也将此次学术会议的构想向时任暨南大学副校长、华侨研究院常务副院长的纪宗安教授进行了交流，她非常肯定我们对学术会议的学术构想，表示暨南大学华侨研究院愿意作为主办者之一，参与这次国际学术会议的筹办。于是，我们这次国际学术研讨会的主办单位就发展为五邑大学、洛杉矶加州大学和暨南大学了。

华侨研究在中国是一个传统的学科领域，侨乡文化的研究作为一个比较独立的学术领域还是20世纪90年代中后期的事。五邑大学广东侨乡文化研究中心以侨乡为主要的研究对象，侧重侨乡在近代以来的社会转型。因此我们希望这次学术会议的主题集中在华侨与侨乡方面。

在与周敏教授商议的过程中，张国雄之所以提出这次学术会议应该跳出单纯的华侨圈子，在国际移民的大视野中来讨论华侨与侨乡的关系，是基于对国内华侨研究一些情况的认知。

国内以往的华侨研究多是从中国的角度进行考察，很少将华侨放在近代以来的国际移民潮流中

## 序 言

去认识，很少分析华侨作为国际移民一部分的意义。这样，就比较容易忽视华侨群体的国际移民属性，忽视他们行为中国际移民的共性。因此，有些国内学者的分析过分强调华侨行为的特殊性，比较少看到华侨群体与其他国际移民的共同表现。其实，近代以来很多国家和地区都卷入了国际移民的浪潮，华侨是其中的一部分。各个国家的国际移民除因自身民族文化的影响和在侨居地的不同境遇而在观念、行为上有各自的特点外，我们不应该忘记他们作为国际移民的总体特征。比如华侨与侨乡的联系，并不是华侨独有的一种传统，或者说在国际移民中华侨最恋乡，这样一些认识都是不全面的。传统的学术视角，无疑限制了对华侨认识的深化，影响了我们对侨乡意义的考察。何况在全球化浪潮席卷的 21 世纪，更需要我们从国际移民的视野来看待华侨看待侨乡。

因此，这次学术会议我们希望邀请到来自不同国家和地区，研究不同国际移民群体的专家学者，展示国际移民与侨乡联系多姿多彩的学术成果，即便不能形成深入的具体的比较性的讨论也没有关系，能够在不同国际移民群体研究的专家学者中增进对相互研究对象以外的群体状况的了解，我们的目的也就实现了。以我们自己的学术经历，我们相信这次国际学术会议应该是国内第一次在国际移民的平台上讨论华侨与侨乡，收获最大的，肯定是国内的华侨、侨乡研究的专家学者们。

在多方支持下，“国际移民与侨乡国际学术研讨会”于 2010 年 9 月上旬在广东五邑大学顺利举行，来自美国、加拿大、英国、荷兰、日本、马来西亚和中国香港、中国台湾以及内地的 40 多名专家学者与会，大家交流了对华侨和意大利、以色列、墨西哥等国家国际移民及其与迁出地（“侨乡”）联系的学术成果，基本实现了主办方的办会主旨。

第一次在国内召开的国际移民视野下华侨与侨乡的学术会议，来自国外的专家学者以社会学为主，国内学者以历史学为主，因此这也是一次不同学科间有意义的学术交流。

我们想，这只是一个开端，希望促进华侨和侨乡研究在更广阔的视野和平台上深化，如果能够持续下去，这次学术会议就更加有意义了。

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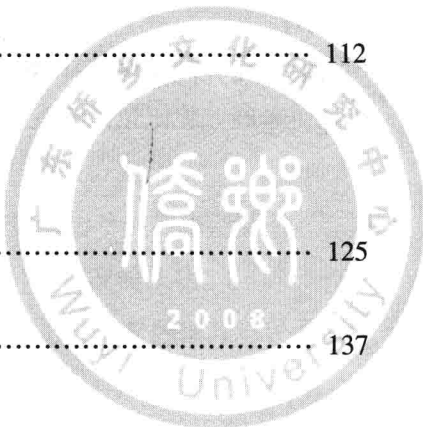
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# Migration and Social Change: Some Conceptual Reflections<sup>[1]</sup>

Alejandro Portes

(Princeton University)

Examining the multiple ways in which migration relates to social change is a daunting task. It requires, first of all, defining what social change is and, secondarily, delimiting the scope of analysis to certain types of migration and not others. The greatest dangers that I envision in this enterprise are, first, getting lost in generalities of the “social change is ubiquitous” kind and, second, attempting to cover so much terrain as to lose sight of analytic priorities and of major, as opposed to secondary, causal linkages. I seek to avoid these dangers by discussing first the concept of social change, second identifying the types of migration to be considered, and third examining the major factors that link one to another.

## The Concept of Social Change

Since time immemorial, thinkers and writers on social affairs have fairly well divided among those who focused on stability and order and those that privileged transformation.

Medieval scholastic thinkers were of one voice in envisioning the terrestrial social order as a reflection of the immutable heavens and, hence, of a natural hierarchy in which everyone was born with a defined place and calling and in which every humanly-created disruption of time-sanctioned norms and patterns of conduct was to be condemned as a violation of the divine design. The only possible society was that which already existed (Maritain 1963; Balmes 1961; Phelan 1969). It was necessarily for thinkers of the Enlightenment to toss off the one-to-one correspondence between celestial and earthly societies – a major intellectual achievement at the time – in order to begin to contemplate the possibility that other ways of organizing life-in-common could exist. The French Revolution shifted the course of Western so-

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[1] Keynote address to the conference on “Theorizing Key Migration Debates”, Oxford University, July 1, 2008. I thank Erik Vickstrom for his assistance with library research for this essay and Stephen Castles and Raul Delgado-Wise for their comments. I also thank Andres Tornos for inspiring ideas that I have sought to incorporate in the paper. Responsibility for the contents, however, is exclusively mine.

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cial thought from stasis to change. The discipline of sociology, a child of the Enlightenment was to make its business to trace the process by which European societies had shifted from Theological and Philosophical Thought to Scientific Thought (Comte) ; from Mechanic to Organic Solidarity (Durkheim) ; from Gemeinschaft to Gesellschaft (Tönnies) ; and from tradition to modernity (Simmel; Spencer) .

Trained as a philosopher, Marx adopted the Hegelian master concept of dialectics but then proceeded to turn his master “on his head” by arguing that it was not ideas, but material forces of production that clashed repeatedly, giving rise to new and previously inconceivable forms of economic and social organization (Marx [1848] 1964; Dahrendorf 1959) . Dialectical materialism became the theoretical anchoring point for a school of thought in sociology and political economy influential to our day (Dobb [1947] 1963; Bourdieu 1990; Merton 1968) .

Sociology had to await the advent of the Parsonian Synthesis in the twentieth century to restore some balance between theories of social stability and change and, in the process, return to some of the long-forgotten themes of medieval scholastic thought. The bulk of Parsons’ intellectual project was to construct a conceptual edifice isomorphic with society itself and where “pattern maintenance” and “equilibrium” were paramount. Social change in this system was relegated to a marginal place where internally-driven transformation occurred only incrementally and where external “shocks” on the system were to be decisively confronted in order to restore equilibrium (Parsons 1951; Parsons and Smelser 1956; Coser 1956; Dahrendorf 1959) .

Much of contemporary social theorizing consists of a continuing debate between post-Marxists and post-Parsonian advocates or, what is the same, between latter-day enactors of the historical contest between ideas of stability and change (Collins 1988; Bourdieu 1990; Kincaid 1996) . Leaving these debates aside, we may ask what these centuries-old traditions have bequeathed us in the way of useful tools for the analysis of contemporary events. In other words, what have we learned? At the broadest level, such lessons may be synthesized in four points:

1. Stability and change co-exist. While it is true that “change is ubiquitous” , it is also the case that it could not happen if there was nothing tangible, no established structure to “change” in the first place.
2. Sources of change are multiple and are not limited to the social system’s internal dialectics.
3. Effects of social change are similarly diverse. They can be organized in a hierarchy of “micro-processes” affecting individuals and their immediate surroundings; “meso-processes” affecting entire communities and regions; and “macro-processes” affecting full societies and even the global system.
4. Change at each of these levels must be similarly prioritized into processes occurring “at the surface” and yielding only marginal modifications of the social order and those producing core systemic

changes of the kind identified in everyday discourse as “revolutionary.”

These four general points require additional explanation.

### Culture and Social Structure: A Conceptual Primer – Sociology 101 for Economists

I borrow here from previously published essays on the definition of institutions and their positioning, relative to other elements of social life (Portes 2006; Portes and Smith 2008). This is done in order to clarify the qualitatively different levels at which social change can take place and the scope and the implications of these differences. From its classical beginnings, modern Sociology developed a central distinction, consolidated by the mid-twentieth century, between culture and social structure. The distinction is analytical because only human beings exist in reality, but it is fundamental to understand both the motives for their actions and their consequences. Culture is the realm of values, cognitive frameworks, and accumulated knowledge. Social structure is the realm of interests, individual and collective, backed by different amounts of power.

The diverse elements that compose culture and social structure can be arranged in a hierarchy of causative influences from “deep” factors, often concealed below everyday social life but fundamental for its organization, to “surface” phenomena, more mutable and more readily evident. Language and values are the deep elements of culture, the first as the fundamental instrument of human communication and the second as the motivating force behind principled action, individual or collective (Durkheim [1897] 1965; Weber [1904] 1949).

Parallel to the component elements of culture run those of social structure. These are not made up of moral values or generalized “do’s” and “don’ts” flowing from them, but by the specific and differentiated ability of social actors to compel others to do their bidding. This is the realm of power which, like that of values, is situated at the “deep” level of social life influencing a wide variety of outcomes, albeit in different ways. Weber’s classic definition of power as the ability of an actor to impose his/her will despite resistance is still appropriate, for it highlights the compulsory and coercive nature of this basic element of social structure. It does not depend on the voluntary consent of subordinates and, for some actors and groups to have it, others must be excluded from access to power-conferring resources (Weber [1922] 1947; Veblen [1899] 1998; Mills 1959). While values motivate or constrain, power enables. Naturally, elites in control of power-conferring resources seek to stabilize and perpetuate their position by molding values so that the mass of the population is persuaded of the “fairness” of the existing order. Power thus legitimized becomes authority in which subordinates readily acquiesce to their position (Weber [1922] 1947; Bendix 1962: Chs. 9–10).

Like values are embodied in norms, power differentials give rise to social classes – large aggregates

## Migration and Social Change: Some Conceptual Reflections

whose possession or exclusion from resources lead to varying life chances and capacities to influence the course of events. Classes need not be subjectively perceived by their occupants in order to be operative, for they underlie the obvious fact that people in society are ranked according to what they can or cannot do or, alternatively, by how far they are able to implement their goals when confronted with resistance (Wright 1985; Wright and Perrone 1976; Poulantzas 1975) .

These various elements of culture and social structure, placed at different levels of causal importance and visibility, occur simultaneously and appear, at first glance, like an undifferentiated mass. Their analytic separation is required, however, for the proper understanding of social phenomena, including social change.

### ***Figure 1 about here***

As shown in Figure 1, status with attached roles do not generally occur in isolation, but as part of social organizations. Organizations, economic and otherwise, are what social actors normally inhabit in the routine course of their lives and they embody the most readily visible manifestations of the underlying structures of power (Powell 1990; DiMaggio 1990; Granovetter 2001) . Institutions represent the symbolic blueprint for organizations; they are the set of rules, written or informal, governing relationships among role occupants in social organizations like the family, the schools, and the other major areas of social life: the polity, the economy, religion, communications and information, and leisure (MacIver and Page [1949] 1961; Merton 1968; North 1990; Hollingsworth 2002) .

The discussion in this section and the accompanying diagram serve to flesh out the five basic points cited previously. First, the causal hierarchy among different components of culture and social structure implies that those factors affecting deeper levels will have much more significant consequences in producing change than those impinging on its surface elements. A successful revolution that upends the power hierarchy of a nation or a charismatic prophecy that transforms its value system will have more far-reaching implications than a decree creating a new government ministry, a new ban on smoking in public places, or a modified curriculum in public schools. Second, institutions crystallize prior processes of change at deeper levels of society because they represent the embodiment of existing power arrangements, social classes, values, and skill repertoires.

### **The Concept of Migration**

With this conceptual spadework done, we can turn to the relationship between migration and social change. Migration is, of course, change and it can lead, in turn, to further transformations both in sending and receiving societies. Here I restrict the scope of analysis to migration across national borders, although several of the points made below may apply as well to long-distance domestic movements. As a form of change,

international migration has been analyzed as a consequence of a diverse set of causes, both in the source and receiving countries. A number of summaries of this literature already exists (Massey et. al. 1998; Portes and Rumbaut 1996; Sassen 1988), and thus it would be redundant to review it in detail again.

As a cause of change, migration has been analyzed from a cultural perspective that emphasizes its potential for value/normative transformation and from a structural perspective that highlights its demographic and economic significance.

The power of migration to effect change either in sending or receiving regions and countries depends on three main factors: a) the numbers involved; b) the duration of the movement; c) its class composition. Concerning the first, it is obvious that small displacements have little causative power, seldom going beyond the lives of those involved and their immediate kin. At the other extreme, “telluric movements” that see an entire people decamp and move to other parts of the planet in search of better future can have dramatic consequences in the places that they leave and in those where they settle. At various points in human history, such displacements have literally redrawn the social and demographic map of the world.

Concerning the second factor, circular flows of short duration tend to produce less durable change than permanent displacements. Under certain conditions, cyclical movements may reinforce the existing social structures rather than change them. This may occur, for instance, when migrant workers’ earnings help support the development of rural productive structures at home, thereby strengthening their long-term viability (Stark 1984).

Finally, the third factor – the composition of migrant flows – affects the change potential of migration in unexpected ways. One may argue that movements composed of persons with higher human capital would have a greater impact on receiving societies because of the greater capacity of such migrants to express themselves and protect their cultural traits. In fact, the opposite tends to happen because educated migrants have greater flexibility and capacity to adapt to the receiving culture, being often fluent in its language. Greater human capital translates into better opportunities in the labor market and easier entry into the host society’s economic mainstream (Hirschman and Wong 1986; Portes and Rumbaut 2006: Ch. 2). That is, in part, why migration of professionals is seldom seen as a problem in the host societies. On the contrary, flows composed of poorly-educated workers can have a more durable impact because of their initial ignorance of the host language and culture and the tendency, especially among migrants from rural origin, to adhere tightly to their customs. Sizable flows of migrant workers tend to give rise to visible cultural-linguistic concentrations, generally in marginal areas of host societies. Such “ghettos” go on to become natural targets for nativists who paint them as tangible evidence of migrants’ inferior cultural or even biological endowments (Borjas 2001; Brimelow 1995).

### Migration-Induced Change

#### a. Host Societies

“Immigration has transformed America” is a frequent mantra in the current immigration literature. As a rhetorical device, there is nothing wrong with these statements, but it is time to consider seriously how accurate they are. Referring to the hierarchy of elements in Figure 1, it is evident that truly revolutionary social change requires the “remaking” of the value system and the transformation of a society’s class structure. Are migration-induced changes capable of achieving this?

Seldom. It is true, as many authors have asserted, that massive immigration can transform the “sight and smells” of cities. But these are “street-level” changes. As portrayed in Figure 2, mass immigration “pushes from below”, affecting certain organizations such as labor-intensive industries and public schools and forcing some institutional accommodations at this level. However, the transformational potential of migration is limited, at every level, by the existing web of institutions reflecting deep cultural and power arrangements. These institutions channel migrants to “proper” places in the status system and educate them and their descendants in the language and cultural ways of the host society. This is what the process of assimilation is about.

At this point, it is necessary to distinguish between the structural significance and the change potential of migration flows.

Unless immigration becomes a “telluric movement” overwhelming the existing structures of power, its capacity to induce profound social change is limited. In order to prevent migration from doing to the receiving societies what the “barbarian invasions” did to Rome, there is a thick institutional web defending the primacy of existing values and normative structures and there is, above all, the state. Modern states are sufficiently powerful to ensure that migration-induced change does not get out of the way and certainly that it does not challenge the core cultural and structural pillars of host countries.

The “assimilative clash” portrayed in Figure 2 certainly has a number of important consequences, but they are not of a revolutionary kind. Leaving aside cyclical movements for the time being, it is a fact that even permanent settlers are unable and, for the most part, unwilling to confront the power of the host state. Instead they seek various forms of accommodation which depend on the third factor noted previously, namely the class composition of each flow. High human capital migrants tend to learn the ways of the host country rapidly and seek entry into the wealthier classes, riding on their occupation skills and cultural resources; manual laborers cluster in poor and marginal areas, creating a host of religious, cultural, and sport organizations for comfort and self-defense.

The presence of these foreign sub-societies frequently catches the eye of nativists and other ob-

servers, prompting the assertion that migration is “remaking the mainstream” . Nothing of the sort actually happens. Migration can transform the “looks” and the ethnic composition of the working-classes without altering the basic social order. In America, working-class migrant communities effectively disappear with the occupational and residential mobility of the second generation, as it happened to so many “Little Italys” and “Little Polands” that once dotted the Eastern and Midwestern urban landscapes (Alba 1985; Dinnerstein Thomas and Znaniecki 1927: 1511-49) . Alternatively, racism and other structural forces may keep children of immigrants bottled up in the same marginal areas occupied by their parents which then degenerate into urban “ghettos” or “barrios” -- places of permanent subordination and disadvantage (Wacquant and Wilson 1989; Mills 1967; Vigil 2002) . For subsequent policy-makers, the problem posed by these areas is precisely how to make them join -- not remake -- the social mainstream (Wilson 1987; Barrera 1980; Bean and Stevens 2003) .

Whether descendants of immigrants end up at the top or at the bottom of the class system, they do not alter its fundamental structure; they simply populate its different layers with new names and new faces. The “diversity” that mass migration brings about consists precisely on the growing presence in existing organizations of new, ethnically-distinct role occupants. Some institutional rules may be changed to accommodate this population -- such as making services to the public available in various languages. But the public and private institutions that decide to do so and the underlying class system commonly remain untouched. Aside from creating diversity in the streets and building sub-societies at the margin -- some as vehicles for upward mobility, others destined to degrade into permanent poverty -- the transformative potential of migration is limited. Certain foodways and folkways will undoubtedly filter up and be incorporated into the cultural mainstream, but the bedrock value system and power structure operating through the existing institutional network ensure that whatever “melting” occurs will be decidedly asymmetrical. These are conclusions that, of course, apply best to the “canonical” cases in the immigration and immigrant adaptation literatures: large countries where the foreign component may be sizable, but is still a minority of the total population. I will have something to say about the exceptional migration to small countries where the foreign-born come to comprise a majority of the population. But first, on to sending countries.

## b. Sending Societies

The same distinction between structural importance and change potential of migration flows applies to sending countries and regions. Put differently, in a number of instances these flows may actually strengthen or stabilize the existing socio-political order rather than transform it. This occurs, for example, when out-migration provides an economic safety valve, alleviating the pressure of popular discontent on elites and allowing them to preserve their privileges (Robinson 1996; Ariza and Portes 2007) . A similar effect is associated with the flow of remittances, which may grow to a sufficient size to resolve chronic balance-

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of-payments problems and even serve as collateral for securing additional external loans (Guarnizo 2003). In such instances, there is no question that migration acquires “structural importance” for the sending country, but its main effect is to consolidate the existing class structures rather than change them in any significant way. This is the reason why many scholars from these nations have rallied against mass out-migration, seeing in it not only an indicator of underdevelopment, but a cause of its perpetuation (Delgado-Wise and Cypher 2007).

The distinction between circular and permanent out-migration is also relevant here. Circular flows are less likely to make a dent in the culture and social structure of sending regions because migrant workers are expected to return after a short period abroad.

More far-reaching transformations are generally associated with the emergence and consolidation of large expatriate communities. Consequences that follow from mass permanent and semi-permanent out-flows are not always positive, however. While, in some instances, they can bring about significant innovations and infuse local economies with new dynamism; in others, they merely aggravate the problems and imbalances suffered chronically by poor societies. Three such consequences may be cited for illustration.

First, permanent out-migration may end up depopulating entire regions. The path-dependent character of migration generally makes the costs and risks of the journey lower as experience accumulates and as migrant communities consolidate abroad (Tilly 1990; Massey 1987). The continuation of the process over time may remove the very demographic basis for development as fewer and fewer able-bodied adults are left behind. As Arias (2008) has recently noted, continuing out-migration from the Mexican countryside has transformed vast areas into semi-empty places no longer seen by authorities as having any developmental potential, but merely as sites for implementation of welfare programs. Similar empirical accounts come from other countries of out-migration, such as Morocco and Turkey (Lacroix 2005).

Second, when not demographically emptied, the culture of sending regions and even the entire nation may be thoroughly transnationalized. This implies that the value system and the pattern of normative expectations become increasingly affected by “imports”, in particular those from expatriate communities.

These change-inducing cultural transfers can affect not only towns, but entire countries. In El Salvador, arguably the Latin American nation most affected by this process, researchers note that TV news programs often dedicate more time to events occurring in Los Angeles than in the country's capital (Lungo and Kandel 1999). Levitt (2001) refers to these transfers as “social remittances”. While, as noted previously, consequences may be positive, as conveying health-enhancing information and new technical skills, in other instances the outcome is more dubious. This is especially the case when upward mobility expectations among a country's youths become geared to out-migration, to the neglect of education and the search for occupational opportunities in their own society. Scholars in several sending countries report that