

# INTRODUCTION



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Mexican immigration to the United States—the oldest and largest uninterrupted migratory flow to this country—is in the midst of a fundamental transformation. This book is concerned with a central dimension of this change: the rise of new destinations of settled Mexican immigration. During the late 1980s and throughout the 1990s, Mexicans established new settlements in nontraditional destinations of the Midwest and eastern seaboard regions. Throughout this period, Mexicans began to arrive rapidly and massively in specific localities and counties of states such as Iowa, Nebraska, Minnesota, Idaho, Utah, Arkansas, New York, Georgia, North Carolina, Kentucky, and Tennessee. Although some of these places were acquainted with transient agricultural flows and others were familiar with old and isolated Mexican communities, all of them were taken by surprise with the emerging pattern of rapid and massive settled migration. In addition, with entire families making up a substantial proportion of the new influx, Mexican immigrants moved from the liminality of the farm workers' camps to the mainstream of schools, clinics, shopping centers, and other public spaces. The demographic, social, cultural, and political changes that have ensued are the subject of this volume.

In the chapters that follow, editors and contributors show that to understand the rise of new destinations it is important to grasp the often overlooked yet central role of geography. As the Mexican immigrant population in the United States crosses the demographic and symbolic ten million people threshold (Durand 2004), we argue that in addition, scholars need to pay more attention to the spatial distribution of immigrants as well as to the quantity and quality of immigration.

Drawing on micro-level observations, this volume illustrates how, as a factor of social change, the distribution of immigration over space is as significant as its demographic size and composition. Regarding Mexican immigration, social scientists may someday write that at one time this segment of the Latino population lived primarily in the American Southwest. The authors of this volume show how this state of affairs has begun to change in the direction of what Jorge Durand, Douglas S. Massey, and Chiara Capoferro (chapter 1) aptly call “the new geography of Mexican immigration.”

## **THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MEXICAN MIGRATION**

The focus of this book is on Mexican migrants, although for all practical purposes their migration is intertwined with others originating in El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Costa Rica, and Honduras. The emphasis on Mexican migration reflects not only its demographic significance but also three distinct characteristics of the Mexican and Mexican-origin population in the United States. First, the presence of Mexican-origin communities in the Southwest, their culture, lifestyle and economy predate the arrival of Euro Americans, as the names of streets, rivers, cities, and states attest. Instead of impeding the movement of people, the 1848 annexation of southwestern territories and the Mexican inhabitants there set off migratory flows between Mexico and the United States, which have remained largely uninterrupted.

A second distinguishing characteristic of the Mexican population in this country is its geopolitical and economic importance. Mexico shares a 2,000-mile border with the United States and has become the country's second most important trading partner, with more than \$235 billion in commercial exchanges between the two nations in 2003 (U.S. Department of Commerce 2004). The same year, Mexican immigrant remittances reached \$13.3 billion (González Amador 2004). It comes as no surprise, then, that migration is a critical issue on the bi-national agenda. Just as this agenda was dominated by oil and drug-trafficking in the 1970s and 1980s, the salient concern of the present is the movement of hundreds of thousands of people from one country to the other. Third, this massive population movement has over time heightened the sociocultural significance of the Mexican immigrant and Mexican-origin people of the United States. Kinship networks, friendship and business ties, intermarriage, and cultural exchanges have expanded and are now part of the social landscape of contemporary American and Mexican societies (Durand 2000).

This landscape underwent a fundamental transformation during the 1990s as Mexican-settled populations began to spring up in nontraditional destinations. Very often communities in formation, these settlements enjoy multiple and multidirectional connections to Mexico and to the political, cultural and demographic capitals of Mexican immigration in the United States—Los Angeles, Chicago, and Houston (Hernández-León and Zúñiga 2003). Due in part to sheer numbers and new destinations, the most recent waves of Mexican immigration are leading to fundamental yet energizing social change in American society.

## **A NEW GEOGRAPHY**

During a century of primarily working-class migrations between Mexico and the United States, cities like Los Angeles, Houston, Chicago, Tucson, San Antonio, and El Paso were the preferred points of entry for Mexican migrants. Many street names, neighborhoods, business districts, schools, and churches across these cities have crystallized distinct histories, aesthetics, and culinary styles—variously referred to as Mexican American, Tex-Mex, Tejano, or simply mejicano. Not surprisingly, radio tunes, newspapers, the aroma of restaurants, the sound of Spanish, the color of houses, and visibly strong family ties give these urban spaces a deep Mexican imprint. All residents, regardless of ethnic origin, appreciate the Mexican presence that has been and is an essential part of the local history and landscape.

This geography of urban places shows that the spatial impact of Mexicans in the United States since 1848 had been strictly regional, limited primarily to California, Texas, Arizona and New Mexico, and Illinois. With the exception of the greater Chicago area, Mexican immigrants had remained near their homeland, forming a sort of territorial strip in the Southwest, where in some instances Mexicans and Mexican Americans made up the majority of the population. Even though some dispersion occurred during the classic migration period of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when Mexican workers participated in the expansion of railways over most of the United States, and the Bracero period (1942 through 1964), when Mexicans became the preferred source of agricultural labor, the nature of their jobs and the predominantly male composition of the flow made the Mexican presence ephemeral, limited, and frequently almost invisible to residents in various parts of the country. Throughout these two periods, migration between Mexico and the United States was both circular and itinerant, with workers moving from state to state following harvests and rail

lines. Still, by the end of the Bracero Program and throughout the 1970s and 1980s, historical Mexican communities swelled with laborers settling out of agricultural streams, former braceros and their families who had become legal permanent residents, and the now predominantly undocumented migrants working in the urban centers of the Southwest and Chicago. Yet despite these growing numbers, the undocumented status that came to characterize Mexican sojourning during the 1964 through 1986 period also kept a substantial segment of the Mexican immigrant population temporary and symbolically out of sight (Durand 1998; Durand and Massey 2003).

This volume shows how a new geography is opening a new chapter in the history of the Mexican presence in the United States and seeks to explain its impact on the political, economic, and symbolic dynamics of towns and cities across the country. Data from the 2000 census could not be more eloquent in documenting new settlement patterns. By the mid-1990s, as the proportion of Mexicans concentrated in gateway states like California and Texas was declining, the numbers in nontraditional destinations were rising rapidly, putting states like Idaho, Iowa, Georgia, and New York on the map of Mexican immigration (Massey, Durand, and Malone 2002; Passel and Zimmermann 2001). Between 1990 and 2000 the Mexican immigrant population in non-gateway states had grown dramatically: 645 percent in Utah; more than 800 percent in Georgia; between 500 and 600 percent in Iowa, Indiana, and Nebraska; more than 1,000 percent in Arkansas and Minnesota; between 200 and 400 percent in New York, Pennsylvania, Washington, and Wisconsin; and more than 1,800 percent in North Carolina, Tennessee, and Alabama (U.S. Census Bureau 2004). Although the population base of some of these states was rather small in 1990, a look at the ten most important states concentrating Mexican immigrants in 2000 demonstrates a conspicuous new geography. As table I.1 illustrates, where the top four spots are occupied by traditional states along the border and Illinois, the rest are nontraditional states, such as Georgia, Florida, North Carolina, New York, Nevada, and Colorado (a renewed historical destination). Tellingly, New Mexico is absent.

Thus the pattern of Mexican immigration has shifted from almost exclusive settlement along the southwestern border to other regions of the country. This distinctly patterned presence is evident not only in the labor market but also in school attendance, Spanish-language newspapers and Mexican music radio programming, the spread of Catholicism to regions with other religious traditions, soccer leagues, new businesses, expanded kinship and friendship networks, enriched re-

TABLE I.1 Top Ten State Concentrations of the Mexican Immigrant Population in 2000

State	Number of Mexican Immigrants	Percentage of Mexican Immigrant Population
1. California	3,928,701	42.80
2. Texas	1,879,369	20.47
3. Illinois	617,828	6.73
4. Arizona	436,022	4.75
5. Georgia	190,621	2.07
6. Florida	189,119	2.06
7. Colorado	181,508	1.97
8. North Carolina	172,065	1.87
9. New York	161,189	1.75
10. Nevada	153,946	1.67
Total of top ten states	7,910,368	86.14

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2004).

gional cuisines, new markets for Mexican goods, more ethnically mixed marriages, and closer ties between two neighboring countries that have for centuries remained somewhat aloof.

## ORGANIZATION AND CONTRIBUTION

This volume is divided into four parts, an introduction and three thematic sections. Chapter 1 by Durand, Massey, and Capoferro offers a national and historic perspective on the distribution of Mexican immigrant population throughout the twentieth century. The remaining chapters follow a different approach, each studying a particular locality, region, or state. In part I, the chapters focus on processes of immigrant community formation and the economic incorporation of Mexicans into towns and cities and their local industries. The authors describe and analyze localities in Nebraska, North Carolina, and Louisiana. Part II examines the economic, political, and cultural effects of Mexican migration in the new destinations, including the reactions of local residents. These chapters draw on three case studies of Pennsylvania, Iowa, and the Delmarva peninsula, which spans portions of Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia. Finally, the chapters in part III focus primarily on the ethnic and community dynamics between newcomers and residents. They include studies set in Kentucky, New York, and Georgia.

Chapter 1 establishes the geographic, demographic, and historical evolution of the phenomenon. The chapter describes the major periods in the geography of Mexican immigration to the United States using census and current population survey data. The authors present a historical view divided into four main eras: the classic period, from 1880 to 1920; the Bracero era, from 1942 to 1964; the undocumented era, from 1965 through 1986, and the post-IRCA era, from 1987 to the present. Each of these periods produced its own peculiar “geo-demographic pattern.” This chapter also shows how in the wake of the 1986 IRCA, many Mexican families living in Texas, Illinois, and California moved to non-traditional states. IRCA’s three main components were: amnesty programs for undocumented immigrants, sanctions for employers of unauthorized workers, and reinforcement of border controls. Even though each of these programs had its own set of consequences, it was the amnesty that allowed millions of eligible Mexicans to move freely about the United States, compare labor markets, and settle in new areas. Between 1964 and 1986, the predominantly undocumented and increasingly urban character of Mexican migration inevitably produced its own geography. These destinations were few and multiplied very slowly because each was a “safe haven” guaranteeing a certain degree of invisibility to undocumented migrants. These were found almost entirely in the greater metropolitan areas of major or border cities. There a migrant could find solidarity with other immigrants and co-ethnics, facilitating economic and social incorporation.

The IRCA, which for the most part benefited Mexican migrants, changed these circumstances by inadvertently starting an internal migratory flow within an international one—what we have referred to elsewhere as “new destinations of an old migration” (Zúñiga and Hernández-León 2001, 126). Once permanence and settlement became real possibilities, Mexicans were able to choose the destination best suited to their interests, leaving historic immigrant enclaves and settling out of itinerant migratory streams. Once they became residents in localities in Nevada, Idaho, Iowa, Nebraska, North Carolina, or Georgia, family reunifications gave rise to a second international migratory flow. Amnesty beneficiaries brought their wives and children directly from Mexico, something that had long been impossible or very dangerous. In little more than a decade, an array of new destinations had emerged, attracting fresh undocumented flows from Mexico. The rapid rate of growth explains why the rise of Mexican communities was a surprise and a novelty to both academic observers and inhabitants of the East Coast, the South, and the Midwest alike. This volume seeks to move

the discussion beyond describing the new flows to analyze the social and economic dynamics produced by the arrival of Mexicans to nontraditional destinations.

Despite their specific focus, all the essays here narrate social situations, relations, and contexts that remain in a state of flux. The authors document locally specific emergent processes by describing participants' explorations, uncertainties, trials and errors, and multiple attempts to imagine and implement responses to the ongoing changes in each context. The authors are not necessarily in a position, however, to anticipate the definitive direction of these transformations. Instead, they acknowledge the multidimensional and often contradictory nature of social change. The future of the towns and cities described is less than certain as emerging relations will only crystallize into durable forms of interaction after decades have passed. Despite many unknowns, the contributors have taken advantage of the opportunity rarely afforded to scholars to witness social change as it occurs. For this reason, the cases described here are authentic laboratories, in the style of Chicago in the first decades of the twentieth century, in which to rethink findings and to refine and challenge the established conceptual tool kit about immigration and the migratory process.

How can these studies enrich the conceptual tools used to study international migration? We suggest at least four distinct ways. First, by analyzing how new destinations emerge, these studies contribute to the understanding of socioeconomic underpinnings of migration processes. Several chapters (especially those by David C. Griffith [chapter 3], Katharine M. Donato, Melissa Stainback, and Carl L. Bankston III [chapter 4], and Brian L. Rich and Marta Miranda [chapter 8]) complicate perspectives that conceive of migration from Mexico to the United States primarily as the consequence of wage differentials, the economic crises of the 1980s and early 1990s, or the need for undocumented and cheap labor in various sectors of the American economy. As we suggest later, the processes observed in new destinations like North Carolina, Louisiana, and Kentucky are noticeably more complex, with multiple causes operating simultaneously at the local, national, and international levels. In these cases, towns and cities have been affected by profound demographic transformations. Local communities suffer the consequences of technological and market changes that undermine the economic and labor structures that characterized them for decades. At the same time, businesses established in the region have to confront the effects of an increasingly global economy. These processes coincide with networks of experienced Mexican migrants and a migration service industry able

to respond to labor demand in a territory as large as the United States. It is the concurrence of multiple factors at the macro-, meso-, and micro-societal levels that allows us to understand the creation of new destinations.

Second, these studies expand the existing conceptual toolkit to study international migration and immigration by examining the dynamics of racialization, categorization, accommodation, and conflict in social interaction not only between newcomers and established residents but also within each of these groups. The studies in parts II and III of this volume pay particular attention to the fact that neither the local receiving population nor the immigrant group are homogenous, and are actually divided along ethnic and class lines, making newcomer-local resident interplay all the more complex. Thus, the often-neglected intragroup negotiations and conflicts emerging in the context of immigration may have a powerful effect on intergroup relations, as the chapters by Debra Lattanzi Shutika (chapter 5), Mark A. Grey, and Anne C. Woodrick (chapter 6), Brian L. Rich and Marta Miranda (chapter 8), and Rubén Hernández-León and Víctor Zúñiga (chapter 10) illustrate. Yet this is at the very least a two-way street: patterns and outcomes of intergroup relations also have the capacity to profoundly affect intragroup dynamics, fostering, for instance, within group conflict.

Third, the authors show that the fluidity of migratory processes results in unintended consequences. At a minimum, changes associated with migration are not uniform or always predictable. The multiple identifications of Mexicans in New York described in Robert Smith's chapter are a case in point. Depending on region of origin at home, age, and migratory experience, Mexicans in this city identify not only with Puerto Ricans but also with academically successful blacks, as one of the strategies to resist stigmatization and integration to the lowest echelons of the urban economy. While older generations of Irish and Greek ethnicities see them as the current incarnation of the long-standing immigrant New York saga, some Mexicans, especially young ones, try to make the most of their Mexican-ness as a novel New York identity. A second instance of an unanticipated outcome of migration processes is the effects of H2B temporary worker visa program controls analyzed by Donato, Stainback, and Bankston: the legality of H2B workers makes them invisible to local residents, due to a high degree of employer control, compared to undocumented workers, who interact with natives in a variety of less restricted social contexts. Similarly unexpected is the positive role of public controversy and conflict within and between groups as a precursor to social integration. Thus, the chapters by Timo-

thy J. Dunn, Ana María Aragonés, and George Shivers (chapter 7), Hernández-León and Zúñiga, and Lattanzi Shutika show how periods of heightened conflict in neighborhoods, workplaces, and schools, have given way to various and at least partial recognition and integration of newcomers through unions, bilingual programs, and public dialogue about the benefits of immigration. Theoretically, the paradoxical and equivocal character of immigration and its effects call for a recovery of what geographers call *le flou* and *le fluide* (the blurry and the fluid; Monnet 2001) in contrast to what is unambiguous and institutional. Clearly, immigration produces fear, uncertainty, resistance, controversy, ambivalence, movement, and novelty before it produces institutions and fixed patterns of social interaction.

Finally, several chapters underscore the important role played by dialogue and mediation by actors not aligned with any particular group but willing to act as liaisons, namely, health providers, educators, lawyers, and religious leaders. These actors are not part of the social conflicts in receiving contexts, but catalysts for change responsible for facilitating negotiation, accommodation, and for creating arenas for social consensus. The presence or absence of these liaisons largely explains the stories narrated in each chapter. It is worth noting that the study of these mediators has been conspicuously absent from the community and microsociological study of immigration.

## **THEMES OF THE VOLUME**

The themes of the book represent long-standing concerns in immigration research, which have attracted variable scholarly attention in the past one hundred years. The first theme—the study of immigrants in their communities and workplaces—has been a constant topic of interest since the birth of American sociology in the early twentieth century. In contrast, social scientists have dedicated substantially less energy to the investigation of the impacts and reactions of Americans to immigration, a theme that this volume seeks to illuminate. The third and last theme of the book—the intergroup relations between Mexican immigrants and natives—has been the subject of growing interest in the context of post-1965 immigration, reflecting changes in U.S. society resulting from the civil rights movement.

### **Community Formation and Incorporation Processes**

The chapters of part I focus primarily, though not exclusively, on the process of immigrant community formation and economic incorporation

in Nebraska, North Carolina, and Louisiana. All three show evidence of the incorporation of Mexican labor into diverse regional economic sectors: meatpacking, poultry and seafood processing, agriculture (Christmas tree and tobacco plantations), oil extraction and refining, shipbuilding, and operation of ports and canals for the offshore oil industry.

The chapters describe how Mexican workers arrive at their new destinations and become part of these industries, with several combined events explaining the incorporation of Mexican labor. First, the principal detonating factor is the profound local and regional economic transformation. Absent these transformations in the economic structure, the presence of Mexican workers is hard to understand. These changes are in part the result of economic phenomena at the national level and reflect broader effects of globalization. In Nebraska, for instance, since the 1960s the collapse of the sugar beet industry prompted the reorientation of Mexican labor flows to the meatpacking industry, a sector undergoing its own process of restructuring. Second, these changes in economic activity are accompanied by demographic shifts that explain the dearth of local labor. The out-migration of local youth and an aging and low-growth population lead local businesses to acknowledge their enormous dependence on foreign labor, a situation evident in other cases analyzed in this volume as well.

Third, because of these circumstances employers are very active in attracting and ensuring the presence of immigrant workers. They use various recruitment strategies: some take advantage of temporary migration programs (for example, H2B visas), others hire employment agencies, still others offer bonuses to employees who recruit relatives or friends to work at the plants, and others send professional recruiters directly to certain regions of Mexico in search of qualified workers. Finally, the efficient work of migratory networks and the social capital accumulated by generations of Mexican migrants explains their rapid incorporation and “colonization” of industries such as meatpacking in Nebraska, where Mexicans now constitute 75 percent of the workforce.

The chapters in this section also pose questions about the future economic incorporation of migrants. The jobs newcomers hold offer no promising future. Many carry out dirty, unhealthy, unsafe, and poorly paid industrial tasks offering few prospects for mobility. High turnover and work-related accident rates in the poultry processing plants of North Carolina are clear indicators of the limited prospects for the incorporation of Mexican migration into new regions. In the past, the employment prospects experienced by less skilled Mexican workers have been less important because most of these workers did not intend

to live permanently in the United States. Many would have returned to their regions of origin in Mexico after a few months. Today many are a permanent part of American society. Their economic incorporation and the occupations of their children thus take on a political and social dimension that they did not have until recently.

The chapters by Donato, Stainback, and Bankston on Louisiana and by Griffith on North Carolina highlight the unanticipated effects of legal status on the process of immigrant incorporation and community formation. The authors observe that undocumented immigration has been more likely than legal immigration to foster social integration, family ties, child bearing, child rearing, and church and school attendance. Donato and her associates use a comparative approach to explain these unintended consequences in southern Louisiana. On the one hand, the H2B program segregates migrant workers socially and spatially by subjecting them to employer control through the provision of housing and transportation services. Due to this segregation, and despite their bona fide legal status, they become invisible and absent as objects of and participants in public debates. If the receiving community perceives that they do not “exist,” then no one talks about them. On the other hand, undocumented immigration is not subject to the same kind of employer control, allowing for greater spatial and social contact with local residents. To be sure, visibility may entail confrontation, fear, resistance, and tension. However, in Louisiana, as in other places analyzed here, tension and conflict have given way to consensus, social and symbolic accommodation, and institutional responses. These unanticipated outcomes of legal and undocumented statuses merit further scrutiny.

### **Local Reactions to Mexican Immigration**

The significance of public debate becomes all the more evident in part II. In chapter 5, Lattanzi Shutika analyzes reactions to Mexican settled migration in Pennsylvania. She describes what happens as migrants become socially visible in the small but affluent community of Kennett Square, one of the main mushroom producing regions in the United States. Although Mexican laborers had worked in the industry since the 1960s, they had remained largely hidden from the view of locals. “We knew our place well,” some of them affirmed, illustrating their position as outsiders to the local social space. However, as Mexican migrants have become visible in schools, clinics, labor unions (for example, through participation in a 1993 strike), and especially in local neighborhoods, they could no longer be ignored. Their presence has

challenged the residents of Kennett Square, a community that has viewed itself as highly educated, liberal, and tolerant and is now reinventing relations between outsiders and insiders. The author describes in detail a series of events and steps local residents have taken to symbolically include newcomers after an initial backlash that produced collective feelings of shame and guilt. Lattanzi Shutika observes that despite the stated goals these efforts may also be marginalizing immigrants from various spaces and institutions.

In the same spirit, Grey and Woodrick examine complex processes of mutual accommodation in Marshalltown, Iowa. In a very short time, the massive presence of Mexican workers transformed the city from a small, predominantly white, and isolated community, into a multiethnic and multicultural city. Such a drastic and visible change immediately produced anti-immigrant attitudes. Local residents associated migrants with crime, drugs, conflict and a corporate plot to weaken unions and lower salaries. Anti-immigrant sentiment found expression in a 1996 INS raid, an event that in turn unleashed anger, sadness, and pain in Mexican workers and their families. Local authorities, churches and community leaders, law enforcement, migrant workers, union representatives, and employers participated in an ensuing public debate on immigration. Organized and facilitated by experts who acted as liaisons between migrants and native residents, this dialogue brought about the acknowledgment that Marshalltown is now part of a binational labor market in which particular sending towns are connected to particular receiving communities. City leaders accepted an invitation to visit one of the Mexican communities that sends most of its people to this region of Iowa. The trip affected the perspective of local actors and produced what the authors identify as processes of mutual accommodation.

The study by Dunn, Aragonés, and Shivers gives an account of Mexican workers' presence in the poultry and seafood processing sectors, the timber industry, and the tourism and health sectors of the Delmarva peninsula. In this region, Mexican immigrants have played a crucial role revitalizing dormant unions in the plants of the poultry industry. The unfolding story of this isolated mid-Atlantic region has a complex plot involving a cast of characters such as migrant workers, African American union representatives, unions like the UFCW, the local and national press, religious leaders, and municipal authorities. The authors describe this complicated web of relations in the context of the debate between citizenship rights theory and human rights perspectives. Undocumented Mexican workers who suffer the consequences of extremely unsafe work find themselves devoid of labor rights. Corporate

actors can flagrantly violate the most basic rights with no concern that existing laws will be enforced. In this legal no man's land, unexpected forms of cooperation are emerging, including cooperation between African Americans and Mexicans. At the same time, the liminal status of undocumented workers allows for unrestrained expressions of hostility, such as wildcat strikes. As documented by the authors, public discussion forums have offered a venue for emerging discourses about immigration while public debate continues to run its course.

### **Conflict and Accommodation in Intergroup Relations**

The third and final section of this book includes three case studies that analyze how the arrival of Mexican immigrants affects intergroup and interethnic relations. Each case study documents unfolding processes of racialization, xenophobia, and hostility and the role of immigrants as catalysts for irreversible political, social, and symbolic change in new destinations in Kentucky and Georgia. At the same time, in an immigrant metropolis like New York, the massive arrival of Mexicans has added yet another layer of complexity to the already complicated racial architecture of the city.

In Lexington, Kentucky, the "horse capital of the world," Rich and Miranda identify an ambivalent mixture of community responses toward immigrants, which include paternalistic, benign, and cooperative assistance, as well as negative racialized attitudes. In this city, a profound demographic and ethnic change has started to unfold as Mexicans transition from the invisible work of tobacco plantations and horse ranches to visible urban industrial and service sector jobs (construction, hotels, restaurants, domestic services, and factories). Rich and Miranda note that local authorities and business leaders have been the first to promote a paternalistic response to newcomers. In contrast, working-class whites and blacks are more prone to develop xenophobic and racist responses. In the urban setting, working-class blacks on the lower rungs of the ethnoracial occupational ladder perceive Mexicans as a threat. In contrast, middle-class whites react with a mixture of benign neglect and indifference.

Even though newcomers appear to local residents as a self-reliant group whose members share strong bonds of ethnic solidarity, especially when compared to the perceived fragmentation and disorganization of poorer African Americans, and that local and state authorities acknowledge the economic contribution of immigrants, long time residents still alternate between paternalism and xenophobia. The "Mexi-

can symbolic challenge” that the authors identify is reminiscent of Roger Waldinger’s (2003) argument regarding immigrants in general: they are welcomed for their brawn and hard-working attitudes, but rejected as they become more socially visible. Put differently, locals accept single and relatively invisible Mexicans but reject the newcomers the moment they attend schools, go to clinics, shop at supermarkets, organize meetings, or hold public celebrations. In brief, acceptance as a desirable worker does not preclude rejection in other spheres of social life, and even the presumption of greater immigrant integration does not exclude the marginalization of newcomers from all institutional and political representation.

Robert Courtney Smith’s chapter on Mexicans in New York focuses more on what immigrants do than on what residents imagine (chapter 9). He asks whether Mexicans in New York will become a marginalized, racialized minority or an incorporated ethnic group. This is an important question because Mexicans do not easily fit into the racial classification systems of either New York or the East Coast in general. Smith compares the outlook and practices of Mexicans according to migration cohort (that is, first, 1.5, and second generations), age (preteens, teens, and adults), social mobility (that is, those who have experienced generational mobility with those who have not), and gender. He is able to document multiple responses suggestive of several trends. Despite the observed diversity, certain cultural bastions of the Mexican community in New York could provide the basis for new categories in the city’s racial architecture. In this perennial city of immigrants, some Mexicans see themselves, and are viewed by native New Yorkers, as the newest arrivals looking for a foothold in the city’s ethnic ladder. Unlike Puerto Ricans and blacks, who find themselves on the bottom rungs, Mexicans are neither natives nor citizens. To some, Mexican-ness offers a cultural heritage that makes them less vulnerable to the city’s vices and dangers. Particularly to young second-generation women employed in the pink-collar economic sector, being Mexican may be cool and hip rather than racializing and stigmatizing. Finally, to second-generation young males, Mexican-ness is a form of racialization. For this reason, they prefer to follow the model of academically successful blacks with whom they interact in high school settings.

Finally, Smith offers a brief comparison of racialization and re-racialization processes in New York and California. He concludes that “processes of ethnicity and race occur differently in different contexts despite the fact that the same national origin group is involved.” In New York, Mexicans are seen as hard-working strivers whose children will

continue in this vein and will prosper. They do not see themselves as a victimized minority. This is the key to understanding how Mexicans in New York are writing a different story than Mexicans in Los Angeles.

The last chapter narrates how the arrival of Mexican immigrants to Dalton, Georgia—the “carpet capital of the world”—has subverted historical social arrangements in this Appalachian locality. The authors describe different phases of interclass and intraracial social compacts established as a means to solve long-standing labor conflicts between all-white carpet industrialists and blue-collar workers. The absence of black workers from Dalton’s industrial workplaces suggests that these settlements were intimately intertwined with the other significant social axis in this town, namely, the black and white divide. Facing this social and historical configuration, the authors analyze intergroup dynamics and agreements from the perspective of social class relations rather than in strictly racial terms. Mexican immigration has disrupted these intraracial and interclass social compacts and as a consequence is destabilizing existing patterns of social interaction in multiple micro-sociological arenas, such as schools, business districts, churches, government agencies, and workplaces. Clearly, the newly found Mexican presence elicits ambivalent responses that range from nostalgia for an irrecoverable past to the construction of a new future in which, according to various local actors, immigrants will have to be included.

All the studies in this book analyze the consequences of what Lourdes Gouveia, Miguel A. Carranza, and Jasney Cogua call a “tectonic demographic shift” across the United States. Each chapter contributes to a fuller knowledge of incorporation, group dynamics, social responses, and the effects of a migratory flow that for a century hardly crossed strict regional boundaries. This book attests to a turning point and new direction in the history of Mexican migration to the United States. It records the first phases in this shift to new destinations in Oregon, Wisconsin, Utah, Washington, Rhode Island, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Idaho, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Nevada.

## **A New Geography and a New Historical Era**

This book captures two new and seemingly enduring developments. First, Mexican immigrants are arriving in U.S. communities whose residents have had little or no contact with these newcomers in the past. Second, Mexicans are coming to stay. They are no longer birds of passage but appear to be nesting permanently in their new destinations. The effect of both developments may signal the beginning of a new

historical era in Mexican immigration to the United States, spearheaded by a novel geography of diverse receiving contexts to which newcomers are integrating. As several of these essays suggest, each of these contexts has its own racial hierarchy, history of interethnic relations, and ways of incorporating immigrant workers and their families. Just as New York presents very different conditions for Mexicans than Los Angeles and California, new and renewed destinations like Pennsylvania, the historic South, Nebraska, and Iowa also present particularities that will shape the incorporation of Mexican migrants into these areas. The effect of receiving contexts will be especially noticeable in the construction of racial classification systems in each region.

Still other contextual and immigrant specific attributes will also shape the contours of Mexican immigration in this new historical period. A significant feature of new and traditional receiving contexts—one definitely unknown to Mexicans who arrived or lived in Texas or California in earlier decades—is the current normative climate. Recent immigrants are encountering a novel context in which “the right to diversity” is turning into the common ethos (Garcia 2001; Suarez-Orozco 1998). Defined as the right to recapture and develop the fundamental traits that characterize a group as such, the right to ethnocultural diversity is now part of a series of entitlements including political and religious freedom, sexual orientation, and aesthetic taste and lifestyle. But is this new ethos merely a superficial movement characteristic of the most educated and cosmopolitan layers of American society? On the contrary, it appears that the norm of “intolerance for intolerance” is gaining momentum well beyond these strata. In this context, tolerance is something more than “the suspicion that the other fellow might be right” (Wirth 1945/1964, 253). Indeed, it is becoming a moral norm based on the notion that diversity is not only inescapable but also a desirable feature of contemporary social life. At the same time, the multiculturalist ethos is creating its own feelings and behaviors: public shame, indignation, and guilt. These feelings develop as part of the new multicultural morality and the attitudes it rejects and seeks to avoid—hence the shame of being labeled a racist, the horror of being considered a xenophobe, and the guilt of being considered intolerant.

However, nontraditional receiving contexts and a new normative ethos are not enough to explain why the new geography described in this book will likely initiate a new history of Mexican immigration to the United States. Yet another factor is the social capital accumulated by migrants over decades (Portes 1995). Mexican workers arriving at

new destinations are not unfamiliar with the institutions and traditions of American society. As we have shown elsewhere, they are experienced immigrants whose social capital allows them to more rapidly and effectively become incorporated into new destinations (Hernández-León and Zúñiga 2003). From a variety of perspectives, several of the essays in this volume support this point. In a very short time, migrants buy homes, create businesses to meet the market demands that they themselves produce, participate in organizations that represent their interests, and build intragroup and intergroup alliances. They are seasoned migrants quite capable of envisioning and negotiating a future for themselves and their children in Nebraska, Louisiana, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, and Georgia.

Finally, the visibility of contemporary Mexican immigration also suggests the beginning of a new historical era. Most new destinations are smaller towns and cities where it is impossible for migrants to go undetected (with the possible exception of those controlled by employers through H2B visas). But it is not just the size of the receiving communities that makes invisibility difficult. Increasingly, Mexican immigration is a family affair. The presence of wives and children, grandparents, and nephews, among other relatives, has an immediate impact on the most important institutions and organizations of receiving towns and cities (churches, schools, clinics, and business districts). Given these conditions, small and medium-sized cities do not face the same stark choices as large metropolitan areas, namely ghettoization or integration. In large U.S. metropolitan areas, immigrants and established residents have generally lived in separate social worlds (Rodriguez 1999). This separation has produced a particular kind of social order, different from small new destination communities where immigrants and residents share multiple social spaces and are building new and distinct notions of community as well as a new repertoire of local identities.

Most likely, the new geography documented in this book will be the source of a fresh stage in the history of Mexican migration to the United States. This new period has been provisionally dubbed the “post-IRCA” and “post-NAFTA era” because its most significant features are still emerging. What we do know now is that in this new era there are factors that more readily make immigrants agents in their own incorporation and integration despite their lowly positions in the labor queue. The visibility of newcomers, a less intolerant normative context, and especially the social capital accumulated by migrants invite them to be agents rather than victims of their fate.

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The authors would like to thank David Cook and Veronica Terriquez for their research assistance.

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