

## **Labors of Globalization: Emergent State Responses**

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### ABSTRACT

This paper seeks to add to a growing body of empirical research on state transformation due to processes of economic globalization, in particular the assertion of state policy over areas where control at first seems to be “eroded”. We examine the process of global labor migration, a process that is both fundamentally transnational and the target of concentrated state appropriation. Scholars have only recently begun to recognize the extent to which developing states actively seek to encourage and facilitate migration to generate external finance through remittances, thereby creating a globalized national workforce. Yet far from a vision of international worker solidarity, this global workforce is being increasingly integrated into new national projects, where diasporic communities are cultivated and constructed within the discursive framework of the nation, reconfiguring the national concept to include diasporas. Whether through remittances, overseas voting rights, dual citizenship laws, hometown associations or investment/development schemes, migration transforms states and states transform migration. This brings into stark relief the tensions between sovereignty, transnationalism, and nationalism and shows how states are transforming themselves, but not under conditions of their own making.

## **Labors of Globalization: Emergent State Responses**

Jonathan Bach and M. Scott Solomon<sup>1</sup>

### **Introduction**

Our project concerns the co-evolution of the state and globalization. Not only does the state enjoy a continuing, often expanded role under conditions of globalization (rather than its dissipation), but globalization itself is the product of symbiotic interaction of the state with the flows and norms of the international system. Rather than seeing domestic processes as an effect of globalization that elicits reactions, we regard domestic processes as co-constitutive to global processes and contributing to structural change (Sassen 2006). This approach has the distinct advantage of treating globalization as not inexorable or mechanistic but as possessing an effective history that can be traced, investigated, and contextualized. Within this history we can study states' 'creative adaptation' to transnational flows, by which we refer to state-led policies that explicitly engage and take ownership over transnational flows, as opposed to seeking their stemming or reversal.

In this paper we are particularly interested in how states actively seek to re-territorialize their populations. As international financial flows, distributed economic processes, and labor migration de-territorialize national space, states seek to re-territorialize their populations. The urge to re-territorialize is partly about maintaining state legitimacy through the identification and participation of its citizens, partly about exercising sovereign power over extra-territorial flows, and partly an attempt to secure sources of state revenue as wealth becomes located outside the country. Re-territorialization is both discursive and institutional, necessitating new national narratives as well as new institutions to mediate the relation between society and state.

In what follows we address national re-territorialization strategies regarding labor migration. With over 100 million migrant laborers estimated worldwide at the beginning of this century, states are looking for new ways to capitalize on remittances as a major and stable source of foreign currency earnings by exporting their labor as state policy. The advantage to the state in controlling remittances extends beyond adding revenue to, as Neil Ruiz writes, conceiving of emigration "not...as lost-labor, but as a potential source of savings and foreign exchange, and safety valve for easing unemployment (Ruiz 2006: 11)."

Concurrently with revenue control, the state develops new national narratives in which to locate the migrant as a source of national pride rather than of shame or indifference. Domestically, state bureaucratic institutions are taking on new tasks and forms from managing financial and macro-economic aspects of labor migration to recruiting, training, and registering workers. Once abroad, protection of workers, such as the July 2006 crisis of 80,000 Sri Lankan workers in Lebanon when war broke out, necessitates new forms of overseas assistance and diplomatic responsibilities. These forms of assistance combined with the domestic institutions and services, government campaigns

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to promote strong cultural, social and economic ties between the home country and those abroad, and a growing civil society infrastructure for migrants, result in an evolving trans-national interpretation of national culture and history. We could call this ‘trans-nationalism’ to denote the retaining of the nation-state as a salient analytical category for a globally distributed political subject. We see this form of subjectivity becoming inscribed as higher percentages of sending countries’ nationals reside abroad and migrants are increasingly interested in political representation both back home, as well as in their countries of residence. New expatriate voting laws, campaign strategies, fundraising and media coverage potentially impact the electoral landscape in both the sending and receiving countries.

The first part of the paper focuses on the case of the Philippine state’s creation of a migrant export sector of its economy for the primary purpose of generating external finance through remittances. The second part focuses on the increasing demand for political representation from abroad, specifically through access to the home ballot. Individually these re-territorialization strategies create new regulatory regimes for concentrating wealth produced by dispersed labor, new political integration mechanisms for distributed citizenship, and new jurisdictional spaces. Together, these strategies concerning space, money and political franchise point toward an extension of the horizontal imagined political community put forward by Anderson as the basis for modern nationalism. Our paper argues that globalization leads not always to decentralization but also to significant state efforts in building centrally controlled administrative structures. Secondly, we argue that the transnational migrant worker shapes new articulations of belonging and political membership, and as such migrant populations function as agents of social change. Finally, the formalization of trans-nationalism among migrants points to new, institutionalized mechanisms through which nation-states with large migrant populations manage, channel, and forge political action and subjectivity.

### **1. The Politics of Dispersed Labor: Philippine Overseas Workers**

The tension between the mobility of capital and the rootedness of labor is a fixture in the globalization discourse. The increase of capital mobility implies a disadvantage for labor, yet increased mobility of labor does not imply much disadvantage for capital. Indeed, we seem to be entering an era when labor mobility is reaching new highs and assuming new forms. Migration is responsible for the major part of labor mobility, with a potential negative for states through the loss of skilled workers and potential gains through the remittance of foreign earnings. Ideally, a state could turn the outflow of its citizens into a net positive by the ‘return migration’ of bringing educated, entrepreneurial migrants back to the country of origin through various incentives and by tapping into remittance flows. Attempts at “brain gain” (instead of “brain drain”) has met with mixed results, (Lowell 2003), but states are developing a range of responses to migration that, as Jean-Baptiste Meyer (2003) puts it, tries to effectively manage, rather than block, the flow.

Yet management is perhaps too soft a word—states such as the Philippines have come to view migrants as a vital source of the external finance necessary for servicing debt and

importing oil. Given that remittance flows are the second largest source of foreign currency earnings for developing countries (behind FDI) (Ratha 2003), is it any wonder that states might come to see migrant workers themselves as an export? And like any other successful export, would not the state want to play a lead role in producing the product?

Of course people are not products, yet this is precisely the tricky situation that emerges in the Philippines, the most dramatic example of a trend among developing countries to generate controlled migrant flows to generate remittances, which in turn can be used to pay international debts or acquire imports. Although labor is increasingly commodified, as John Keane (2005) reminds us, “it is not produced for sale and cannot behave as a pure commodity. Labour is just another name for a type of social activity.” Because labor functions as both a commodity and a social activity, the Philippines cannot successfully apply the neo-liberal prescriptions of the World Bank (2003) to facilitate international mobility without creating the social context where this makes sense and fitting the migrants into a national narrative that can justify the unusual approach toward the state-led export of labor. This is a challenge, because migrants are usually less than supportive and understandably distrustful of the very state that cannot provide work for them. A successful strategy has been to draw on nationalist sentiments to turn migrants into “heroes of the nation,” the representatives of the nation abroad. In the Philippines, a sense of solidarity latent among countrymen and women abroad was skillfully mobilized in order to capitalize on three things: 1. The desire of Filipinos to make money abroad to support family back home; 2. The desire of Filipinos abroad to consider themselves part of their nation; and 3. An appeal to pride in order to raise the skill-level and market niches of the migrant workers.

While small-scale migration of various sorts has occurred in the Philippines for many decades, the large-scale migration of temporary workers overseas began only in 1974 in response to the oil shock of 1973 (Abrera-Mangahas 1989). Like many developing countries that import oil, the Philippines was particularly vulnerable to the quadrupling of oil prices following the OPEC-induced oil shock. The government of President Ferdinand Marcos established an innovative approach to dealing with the balance-of-payments crisis that quickly followed. In what was originally envisioned as a temporary program to generate hard-currency remittance income, the Philippine government established a policy of encouraging Filipinos to work overseas for fixed periods of time (established by contract before leaving the Philippines). Fittingly, the first region to receive large numbers of Filipino workers was the Middle East, especially oil-exporting countries suddenly flush with enormous revenues and possessing populations not inclined to perform manual labor. Essentially, the Philippines dealt with the massive increase in price for oil imports by trading workers for oil. Today the tarmac at Ninoy Aquino International Airport in Manila is packed with Saudi Arabian Airlines, Qatar Airways, Kuwait Airways, and a number of other Persian Gulf airlines, filled with Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) going to or returning from jobs in the Middle East. There are estimated to be nearly 1 million Filipino contract workers in Saudi Arabia alone, and what was envisioned as a temporary policy became a permanent, essential part of

Philippine economic policy (Chin 1998, Philippines Department of Foreign Affairs, 2001).

**Table 1**  
**Estimate of Overseas Filipino Workers**  
**(December 2003)**

<u>Region</u>	<u>Permanent</u>	<u>Temporary</u>	<u>Irregular</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Africa	318	53,706	16,955	70,979
S. and E. Asia	85,570	944,129	503,173	1,532,872
Middle East	2,290	1,361,409	108,150	1,471,849
Europe	165,030	459,042	143,810	767,882
Americas	2,386,036	286,103	709,676	3,381,815
Oceania	226,168	55,814	31,001	312,983
Sea-based		216,031		216,031
<b>World Total</b>	<b>2,865,412</b>	<b>3,385,001</b>	<b>1,512,765</b>	<b>7,763,178</b>
<b>Population of Philippines (2003): 84.6 million</b>				
<b>Value of Remittances (2003): \$ 7.6 Billion</b>				
<b>GDP of the Philippines (2003): \$80.6 Billion</b>				

Source: Commission on Filipinos Overseas, Philippine Dept. of Foreign Affairs and Central Bank of the Philippines

Table 1 shows the striking figure that out of a total population of 78 million approximately 7.4 million are working abroad—roughly one in ten Filipinos. This results in seven billion dollars of remittance income generated by these workers, or roughly 10% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the Philippines. The regional breakdown shows that temporary contract workers are the norm in most regions of the world, with only the Americas (overwhelmingly US/Canada) showing large numbers of permanent migrants.

To operationalize this undertaking, the Philippine government created a bureaucracy that gave overseas work both the official imprimatur of the State and the administrative apparatus to channel fees, training, and skills. The two main government institutions to promote and service a Filipino workforce overseas are the Overseas Worker Welfare Administration (OWWA) and the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA). The POEA is a government bureau charged with managing the documentation of overseas workers, encouraging overseas temporary migration, creating export markets, marketing Filipino workers abroad, and generally managing the outflow of temporary migrants. Operating on a slim annual budget of approximately \$3.5 million dollars, the POEA processes millions of overseas workers while actively seeking new markets for OFWs in a variety of sectors. The expected occupations such as domestic workers, construction labor, and seafarers (labor for shipping) are present, but the POEA actively seeks markets for teachers, information technology specialists, highly skilled healthcare workers, and other skilled positions.

The POEA and Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) are both attached to the Philippines Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), and primarily deal with the promotion, surveillance, and protection of migrant workers. While the POEA regulates recruitment agencies, validates contracts, offers pre-departure orientations, and other services related to sending workers abroad, the OWWA is responsible for provision of basic social welfare for OFWs through Filipinos Resource Centers located in countries where there are large numbers of OFWs (Philippine law calls for a center anywhere there are more than 20,000 OFWs). Membership in OWWA is compulsory for legal migrants, and offers benefits like the OWWA identity card which also functions as a bank card that allows OFWs to link to banking networks through ATMs. The government of the Philippines also promote Resource Centers as locations for dissemination of information, gatherings for holidays, classrooms for skill improvement (computer classes are popular), and the first stop for OFWs who are in need of assistance. While advocacy organizations find the OWWA to be long on promises and short on delivery, it is undeniable that the government of the Philippines is global in reach if we view these centers as extensions of the state apparatus.

The state mobilization of OFWs rests on the careful deployment of the nationalist discourse that underlies the export of contract workers. Media campaigns, government policy pronouncements, and a steady repetition within government offices encourage all Filipinos to take pride in these “heroes.” The economic and the national are intimately intertwined, for example, in the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration website announcement of the annual “Our New Heroes” (“Bagong Bayani”) award:

The Bagong Bayani Awards (BBA) is an annual search for the country’s outstanding Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs), as new heroes of our time. We pay tribute to their significant efforts in fostering goodwill among peoples of the world, enhancing the image of the Filipino as a competent and responsible worker and contributing to the nations’ foreign exchange earnings (POEA 2003).

This strategy, however, emerged only in the wake of domestic protests that forced the government to design new ways of responding to this newly-found national resource. The frequently cited number of 8 million overseas Filipinos masks the much larger impact on the Philippines, as each of these 8 million Filipinos have family and friends at home who either rely on remittance income or at least are concerned with the well-being of OFWs. The watershed moment in overseas workers’ resistance to the state’s instrumental use of migrants came in 1995, when a Filipina domestic worker in Singapore, Flor Contemplacion, was hanged by the Singapore government for the murder of a fellow domestic worker and the employer’s child. Although the facts of the case were contested, the inability of the Philippine government to stop the execution served as a symbolic representation of how powerless the Philippine state was in protecting millions of overseas Filipinos. The response among Filipinos was global, igniting protests and mobilizing OFW organizations, opposition parties, unions, and women’s and church groups (Castles and Miller 2003: 168-9).

Massive pressure at home and abroad forced the Philippine legislature to pass the watershed Republic Act 8042, commonly known as the Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act of 1995 (Asian Migrant Yearbook 2003). Though the act called for a variety of strengthened protections for migrant workers, the weakness of the Philippine state vis-à-vis labor-receiving states has prevented much in the way of concrete achievements. What made the act so significant for OFWs was the ability of migrants and their allies to pressure the state into action.<sup>2</sup> Not only were administrative changes made, the Philippine state publicly acknowledged that the welfare and rights of workers were to be a primary concern, not merely the satisfaction of economic goals. As Castles and Miller (2003: 169) observe, the 1995 Act was a sort of ‘Magna Carta’ for OFWs. It was this and more—the 1995 Act was a public acknowledgement that the Philippine state was increasingly composed of a global polity, and that the deterritorialization of the Philippine state was being codified.

Nine years later, in mid-July 2004, the Philippines once again faced a serious crisis concerning overseas workers. Angelo de la Cruz, a 46 year old Filipino truck driver and employee of a Saudi firm working in Iraq, was kidnapped by a group identifying themselves as the Khaled Bin Al-Walid Squadrons of the Islamic Army of Iraq and demanding the withdrawal of Philippine troops. This was a sadly familiar news event in Iraq, but what was unfamiliar was the reaction of the government in question. Almost all governments similarly threatened (the U.S., U.K. and Italy, among others) had officially refused to even consider such demands and condemned any country who would “negotiate with terrorists.” President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, in a decision harshly criticized by most governments in the Iraqi occupation coalition, essentially agreed to the demands of the kidnapers in order to save the life of Angelo de la Cruz.

What led Macapagal-Arroyo to agree to “speed up” the withdrawal of Philippine forces in Iraq? Though often presented in establishment media circles as the case of a weak government giving in to terrorist demands, and although the government of the Philippines maintained the decision was only the change of a time schedule for removal of forces, Macapagal-Arroyo was upfront about the issue in her 2004 State of the Nation Address:

Why was Angelo de la Cruz saved? Because I stuck to my oath. Since I first became President in 2001, my declared foreign policy focus has been to protect the vital interests of the nation, including our eight million overseas Filipinos.

While being seen as giving into terrorists was potentially damaging for a government that continues to wage a decades-long internal battle with Islamic separatists, the death of de la Cruz would have resulted in massive public outrage at the government’s inability to protect an Overseas Filipino Worker. Had de la Cruz been killed by his captors it is possible Macapagal-Arroyo would have been forced from power. Given the two previous occurrences of Philippine presidents being removed from power through extra-

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<sup>2</sup> No doubt this was foremost in the mind of the Macapagal-Arroyo administration in its handling of the Angelo de la Cruz case discussed below.

constitutional, popular revolts (the 'EDSA Revolutions' of 1986 and 2001 that removed Marcos and Estrada, respectively), Macapagal-Arroyo had to take the potential of a popular revolt seriously. De la Cruz became a symbol of the nearly 10% of Filipino citizens who are living and working abroad and also symbolized the dependence of the Philippines on OFWs that makes at least an attempt at their minimal safety imperative for legitimacy.

Devesh Kapur (2004) compellingly argues that the pursuit of external finance via remittances has resulted in a new form of development policy. By describing remittances as "The New Development Mantra" Kapur captures the enthusiasm many developing countries and policy makers have found for migrant flows. Developing countries that have been forced to abandon import substitution and domestic 'hot-housing' of infant industries due to trade agreements and the Washington Consensus, generally find export-led growth elusive and are faced with a declining number of development strategies. Kapur notes the stability (and even increase) of remittance flows during periods of economic turbulence for developing countries, the consistency with 'self-help' visions of development policy whereby developing countries embrace their comparative advantage, and the enthusiasm with which the I.M.F. and World Bank embrace this form of generating external finance.

This is not lost on other countries, which look with a mixture of curiosity, envy, and trepidation at how the POEA, along with the other government agencies dedicated to the promotion and welfare of OFWs, have combined to make the Philippines the paradigmatic example of a managed labor-export system. While no other country comes close to the same level of government involvement, many other countries in the region view the Philippine contract migration model as something to emulate. The International Labor Organization (ILO) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) have helped organize visits to the POEA by a number of countries in the region (e.g. Thailand, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Vietnam) as well as countries not usually thought of as major labor exporting countries such as Jordan and Azerbaijan. Although it could be argued that such training and information exchange can lead to competition from other countries (thereby putting downward pressure on wages) POEA officials are hopeful that coordination with other labor exporting countries will lead to cooperation in upward pressure on wages and working conditions. The dramatic increase of temporary migrants from Indonesia has resulted in large numbers of Indonesians competing with Filipinos in various markets. In response to this competition in January 2003 the POEA formed the first bilateral agreement with another labor-sending country, Indonesia, to promote and protect the welfare and rights of both Filipino and Indonesian migrant workers (POEA 2003: 19). Regardless of the strategy, it is clear that more, not less, contract labor migration will be on offer in the foreseeable future.

We see in the Philippine case institutional development resulting from interactions between state and citizens but, unlike the usual narrative, it is taking place within a network of far-flung "overseas workers." The extension of the "arms of the state" (Ruiz 2006) and the growth of a large, interconnected civil society network has led to the rising consciousness of OFW as an interest group, to put it dryly, or more to the point, as

a new form of citizen, such as the one who submitted the winning entry to the *Philippines Today* essay contest on the theme of “Filipino nationalism in the age of globalization” who wrote, “The challenge is for us to redefine Filipino nationalism in a way that will not fight, but manage globalization.” We turn next to this question of citizenship.

## **2. Extra-territorial elections and political representation**

The development of state institutions to support and facilitate their citizen’s work abroad and the concomitant framing of state appeals in patriotic language are an adaptation to what Michele Wucker (2004) calls the “perpetual migration machine.” The machine is fueled by a growing dependence of richer, graying, industrialized countries on migrant workers and the growing dependence of poorer countries on migrants’ remittances for foreign currency (Wucker 2004). If migrants are being sent abroad with the support and often training and placement of their governments, it is reasonable to expect that migrants would begin to expect more of the state than would previously have been the case, particularly in the representation of their interests.

The question of the rights and proper role for citizens living abroad, for whatever reason, has a long history. For democratic states, the legitimacy of state power rests on self-governing principles, premised on the congruence of territory and identity as criteria for political membership. Does a citizen living abroad possess enough membership in the political community to be able to vote? There are two primary groups abroad around which this discussion centers: non-citizen immigrants and dual citizens. Historically states have treated citizenship as exclusive, and dual citizenship was allowed, if at all, under exceptional circumstances with the acquisition of a new nationality often requiring the expatriation of the old (Faist 2004). Non-citizen immigrants only retained the right to vote in their country of origin if their respective country had an explicit provision. The actual range of laws spans the gamut, as Rainer Bauböck (2005: 683) has detailed, from not allowing expatriates to vote, to requiring the return of expatriates to vote, to allowing them to vote at a consulate or embassy, to absentee voting by post.

For migrants abroad, the question of representation concerns not only the right to vote but also the right to be represented in their respective parliaments, either by having seats reserved for citizens abroad or through a political party. It also includes the much-studied subject, especially in Europe, of non-citizen voting in local elections in the host country. While neither idea is new, extra-territorial electoral issues are set within a changing relationship between citizenship, territory, and governance. Migrants are not only structurally more present in host countries and vital to sending countries, but the oft-noted relative ease of personal communication, media information and travel (for some) allows for transnational connections that can sustain political practices. Electoral representation is only one—perhaps the least effective—of the practices that Ostergaard-Nielsen (2003) calls emigrant politics, by which she refers to the economic, legal and political claims migrants make toward their homeland which, intentionally or not, work to institutionalize their transnational status.

When large percentages of the citizenry is outside of the state's borders, as in the Philippines, Mexico, and the Dominican Republic, their potential for playing a political role is substantial, if difficult to mobilize. While a relatively small group of "true transmigrants," as Guarnizo, Portes and Haller (2003: 1213) call them, engage regularly in cross-border activities, the potential impact of, say, the four million eligible Mexican absentee voters in the United States remains, despite the fact that their mobilization has not yet proved successful. Migrants have a demonstrably greater economic and, arguably, political effect through home town associations and clubs than through national elections, yet precisely mobilization of the political power of the population abroad remains a tantalizing proposition. Governmental interest would stem from a confluence of factors: responding to lobbying from migrants for greater representation; the self-interest of certain political parties or forces (though this can, of course, work in the opposite direction as well); the desire to connect migrants more closely with the home country to attract their remittances and knowledge; and, in some cases, to seek to build a legitimate basis in the context of democratization (cf. Itzigsohn 2000, Bauböck 2003, 2005).

In the Philippines, for example, voting and citizenship laws have been undergoing recent changes in response to the incorporation of the OFW into state bureaucracy and national mythology. In February 2003 the Absentee Voting Bill was passed into law followed by the Dual Citizenship Bill, signed that August. The Absentee Voting Bill was the culmination of a long grassroots struggle by migrant worker advocacy networks to allow an electoral voice for the now nearly 8 million Filipinos living and working abroad. The voting law allows for migrants abroad to register and vote in national elections, including for the "party-list" system (a complex proportional voting system which allots 20% of the seats in the lower house). The first election after the law was passed was the national presidential and legislative elections of May 2004.

The results of that election were mixed in terms of migrant worker political strength. According to COMELEC, the Commission on Elections of the Philippines, only approximately 360,000 overseas Filipinos (4%) registered to vote in the elections. This is certainly below the figure many had hoped for. However, the hurdles required for registration and voting, such as an OFW in Norway being required to travel twice to Stockholm, the nearest electoral station, once to register and then again to vote, may well have suppressed voting. The novelty of the process may also have reduced the turnout. Yet the number of countries where OFWs voted was indicative of the global reach of the process. Overseas Filipinos voted in nearly 80 different countries, running the gamut from large concentrations like Saudi Arabia (96,876), Hong Kong (88,001), and Singapore (23,949), to unexpected places like Chile (57), Romania (36), all the way to Senegal with a single voter. Though disaggregated numbers have not been released and we cannot ascertain if overseas votes made any real difference in the party list candidates, some gains are undeniable. The global nature of campaigning for party-list candidates through rallies, print media, and the internet, as well as the willingness of 360,000 overseas Filipinos to deal with the bureaucratic hassle of registering and voting in their very limited free time (for some involving personal expense and travel) demonstrates that many OFWs seek to make claims on the state through the ballot and other means. If more

pressure is brought to bear on the government to simplify the voting process there is reason to believe that OFWs can become a significant political force.

The Dual Citizenship Bill of August 2003 allows Filipinos to have dual citizenship with other countries as long as they are not serving in the military of another country or hold office of another country. The bill is essentially an acknowledgement of the capital and skills that many Filipinos have acquired abroad. The Philippine state is seeking to solicit capital and skills from those who have emigrated and secured citizenship elsewhere (primarily the U.S., Canada, and Western Europe). The hope is that by providing dual citizenship overseas Filipinos will feel more connection to the Philippines, investment will be encouraged, and new economic networks will be created and sustained. Of course, it also provides a *de jure* recognition of a *de facto* reality—the drain of skilled workers from the Philippines and the difficulty of economic development without them.

Mexico is an oft-cited and even more complex example of state action to enable extra-territorial voting. With approximately 4 million eligible absentee voters in the United States (out of 65 million registered in Mexico), over 10 million migrants and approximately 25 million persons of Mexican origin in the United States, the Mexican government has consistently courted their expatriates since the early 1970s, though in varying degrees and with varying strategies (Garcia-Acevedo 2003). Despite growing economic and political influence, Mexicans in the US were largely ignored or even disparaged as traitors by the long-ruling PRI administrations until 1990, when the first official bureau in charge of Mexican outreach policies was created. In 1995 the Zedillo administration began to refer to the “global Mexican nation” and the first non-PRI president in 71 years, Vicente Fox, campaigned on a platform to represent “all Mexicans” including those abroad. Echoing the Philippines he called Mexican migrants “heroes” and created a National Council for Mexican Communities in the Exterior (Garcia-Acevedo 2003).

The Fox administration victory in 2000 inaugurated a new era of state policy on migration, viewing emigrants as heroes who contributed billions to its economy (Durand 2004: 3). With Presidential support, a historic bill to allow absentee balloting passed in June 2005, building upon a 1998 law that allowed dual citizenship for Mexicans who are naturalized US citizens and a report of that same year on the feasibility and logistics of an election abroad. Concern about the effects of Mexican campaigning on US soil led to a restriction on campaigning of fundraising outside of Mexico. The absentee ballot law had the potential to increase the electorate by 10 percent, but despite concerns of a “chaotic situation with people lining up at the consulates in the United States to vote” (Barclay 2004) only 56,749 valid applications—1.4% of total eligible—were received by the registration deadline in January 2006 (Stevenson 2006). Similar to the Philippine experience (where about 4% of Filipinos abroad registered), potential voters complained of bureaucratic hurdles associated with applying such as the requirement to pay for certified mail to Mexico (\$8), the necessity of providing documentation that many undocumented workers do not have or cannot travel to Mexico to obtain, and the lack of information provided by the Mexican government. The massive cost of the absentee-voting initiative—\$26 million—worked out to about \$458 per migrant vote to be cast, 25

times the comparative cost in Mexico, causing much criticism within Mexico and counter-criticism from migrant activists who point out that migrants remitted \$20 billion in 2004 to Mexico (Stevenson 2006). The impact of Mexican voters in the United States was insignificant in the 2006 Mexican elections, but the closeness of that election was a clear indication of how important a highly mobilized expatriate community could be in deciding future elections.

The Mexican government has domestic incentives to limit migrant electoral participation, ranging from concerns about US nativist responses to the concern that emigrants will seek to punish government officials whose policies result in the need to migrate for employment. However, over time it is likely that pressure from migrants will result in more accessible balloting procedures. The history of effective suffrage within democratic countries has been a slow but gradual movement towards more inclusion over time, and absentee balloting by migrants should be no exception. Within the larger context of increasingly “flexible citizenship” (Ong 1997) where increasing numbers of people begin to master multiple political, economic, and cultural logics, we are likely to see an increase in both local voting by non-citizens and absentee voting by citizens abroad, creating new forms and meanings of political membership that, as Faist (2004: 10) puts it, compliments “national citizenship when life-world social and symbolic ties of citizens overlap state borders.”

### **Conclusion:**

The de-territorialization of state space through migration and the circulation of global capital have led the state to inventive methods of re-territorialization. We have focused here primarily on migration-related reactions as particularly salient in exploring how the state draws upon the nation to reconfigure itself, creating new national myths premised on the circulation of their citizenry in the global economy and connecting extra-territorial strategies to narratives of national development.

As in the case of the Philippines and in an increasing number of developing countries that are following its model, the cultivation of a stable stream of hard-currency remittances has required more centralized administration rather than less, complete with state institutions, cabinet ministers, and even marketing departments. This complicates the argument put forth by Anna Leander that “controlling finance and capital is an increasingly decentralized business, which does not go hand-in-hand with expansion of central administrations and the two things produce a state which is brokering between competing groups rather than ruling them from a centre” (2004:79). As the case of the Philippines shows, while it is true that the state often brokers between competing groups, this does not necessarily lead to increased decentralization.

The heart of the question of centralization has to do with the process of state making under conditions of globalization. We agree with Leander that the almost canonical formulation of state making coined by Charles Tilly in 1985 is not adequate to capture the process at work today, especially in developing countries (a point with which Tilly

would most likely agree). In describing the emergence of Westphalian states in Europe, Tilly described a dual process of, on the one hand, competition for territory by elites through means of coercion and capital, and on the other concomitant demands made upon the state by those ensnared in the control of these elites (what he refers to as proto-governments). As the war making needs of the state become more complex and expansive, a 'civilianization' of administration occurs, as well as demands on the state by those who sacrifice for war, leading to his oft-quoted formulation that states make war, and war makes states. It is true that, as Leander points out, wars are now more internal than external, leading to entirely different dynamics between military professionalization and state formation. But it is worth retaining the basic symbiotic movement, for in the developing world today one can see a dialectical movement between economic policy-making and state making that mirrors the war and state making relationship in the early days of the European state.

If we revisit the 'civilianization' and 'demands on the state' portion of Tilly's argument, it is clear that the demands made upon the state were unanticipated consequences of state actions based on state goals (defense of and/or expansion of territory). We are, for the most part, past the historical epochs where states sought power primarily through territorial expansion. States are now in the business of securing power through wealth, and for developing countries that wealth is generally located elsewhere. Hence, developing countries are increasingly viewing the generation of remittances (and connected issues such as diaspora networks, return migration, 'brain gain,' etc.) as a vital plank if not centerpiece of a sound development strategy. The unanticipated consequence of this sort of strategy comes from the demands made by migrants for the services of the state, including recognition of their continued and active citizenship in a state project. As much as we read about temporary migrant populations as commodities that can be exported and we analyze migration sectors for their remittance/GDP ratio, at the end of the day these are people, not goods and services, and they place demands on the elites and the institutions that in turn seek to control the process.

We should therefore not be surprised that migrant populations are discursively relocated as agents of social change, primarily through their claims to political representation. If, in response to the relocation of wealth external to many countries, states are remaking economic policy, the often unintended effects of these economic policies is also remaking states. While, as discussed above, the Philippines and Mexico are the two most recent cases of absentee voting bills passed after sustained pressure from overseas migrants, the Dominican Republic already allows overseas voting and active campaigning and fundraising abroad, and the large number of Ecuadorian and Salvadoran migrants to the United States has resulted in national discussions about passing a non-resident voting law.

Electoral laws are but one aspect of the demands made on the state by migrants. Other examples include demands for identity documents through consular offices, a minimum of social services and diplomatic intervention to protect the rights of migrants, and continuing demands that states 'recognize' the sacrifices made by migrants that redound to the state. While developing countries have limited power to protect the rights

of migrant workers, given the inequalities of wealth and power that are the very basis for the flow of migrants, they do have more latitude to engage in the politics of recognition in the home country. As we explained, the Philippines has long had a discursive policy of recognizing and promoting migrants as ‘heroes of the nation’ and the Fox administration in Mexico has increasingly done the same. This sort of discursive politics is more than ‘cheap talk’ and signifies not only new interest group dynamics, but signals a recognition of the distributed nature of the modern state for many developing countries.

We seek a more comprehensive understanding of this process that avoids the longstanding tendency of social science to analyze international processes first and foremost through the lens of the territorial state (Agnew and Corbridge 1995). Territory is a state spatial strategy, not a given set of borders. As what Agnew calls “effective” sovereign practices exceed territorial boundaries (Agnew 2005), what changes is the form and function of territoriality accompanied by shifts in the familiar hierarchies of scale that make up the nation-state. It is in this sense that labor migration is part of the socio-spatial transformation accompanying the contemporary geography of capitalism. With this transformation comes a re-inscribing of membership in the *demos* to include not only those whose “entry into it is only by birth and exit from it only by death” (Rawls 1993) but, increasingly, the temporary migrant, the permanent resident who cannot claim (or does not want to claim) citizenship, the dual citizen, the stateless person, the refugee, and the asylum seeker.

We end with a call for further research in at least three areas: First, we need a better comparative understanding of the state apparatus that is growing around transnational processes, such as those state agencies that promote, protect, and carry out surveillance of migrant workers, from new departments and agencies to new functions in existing agencies and diplomatic offices. This would provide an empirical basis for revisiting theories of the state under globalization. Second, we need to identify the various new forms of political participation, political membership, and sites of contestation that emerge from the interaction between the state and their citizens abroad. This would provide a fresh basis for grasping the changing nature of political representation. Third, we need to better understand the formation of subjectivities that emerge in these new spaces. This would add to the small but growing literature on the biopolitics of transnationalism in specific reference to state-led projects and their resistances.

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