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Redefining the Boundaries of Belonging: Thoughts on Transnational Religious and Political Life

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Abstract. Many aspects of religious life have long been global. Contemporary migrants extend and deepen these cross-border ties by transnationalizing everyday religious practice. Instead of severing their connections to their homelands, increasing numbers of migrants remain strongly connected to their countries of origin at the same time as they become integrated into the countries that receive them. While some “keep feet in two worlds” by earning their livelihoods or supporting political candidates across borders, other migrants do so by belonging to transnational religious organizations and movements, therefore expanding already global religious institutions and allowing them to belong in two places. Based on a study of transnational migration to six immigrant neighborhoods in the Boston metropolitan area, this presentation will examine how transnational religious membership intersects with other forms of transnational belonging. In what ways does migrant incorporation into host countries or migrants’ impact on their countries of origin change when they remain connected through churches rather than political groups?

INTRODUCTION

Every Sunday morning numerous families in Governador Valadares, Brazil gather in their living rooms to watch the Catholic mass that is broadcast on their local TV. But this mass is not held in Valadares or in any other city in Brazil. Rather, it is a videotaped recording of the Portuguese mass said at St. Joseph’s Church in Somerville, Massachusetts where large numbers of Brazilians have migrated. Those who remain behind watch hoping they will catch a glimpse of their relatives as they worship in Boston. They follow along with the familiar liturgy while they scour the crowd for some sign that their relatives are okay.

This ability to bring U.S. religious life into the living rooms of Governador Valadares is one piece of a larger dynamic that this paper seeks to illustrate. Many aspects of religious life have long been global. Contemporary migrants extend and deepen these cross-border ties by transnationalizing everyday religious practice. While some “keep feet in two worlds” by earning their livelihoods or

supporting candidates across borders, other migrants do so by belonging to transnational religious organizations and movements. By expanding already-global religious institutions, they create new arenas which also allow them to belong in two places. By participating transnationally in religious life, they broaden and thicken religious globalization.

But what is the nature of transnational religious life for ordinary individuals? How does transnational religious belonging complement or undermine other kinds of transnational membership? What difference does it make when new migrants' principal mode of integration into their host country and primary means of staying connected to their sending communities are through religious rather than political arenas? How do religiously - defined public spheres and notions of civil society differ from political conceptualizations? How will these differences be resolved as increasing numbers of individuals live transnational lives?

The findings I present here are based on more than three years of on-going research on transnational migration among six immigrant communities in the greater Boston Metropolitan area. The larger study includes Pakistanis and Israelis but here I highlight the experiences of Dominicans from the village of Miraflores who have settled in the Jamaica Plain neighborhood in Boston, Irish from the Inishowen Peninsula in County Donegal who live in the southeastern sections of the city and its surroundings, Brazilians from the city of Governador Valadares who live in Framingham, Mass., and Indian migrants from Gujarat State who have settled in and around the city of Lowell.

This paper focuses on the institutional aspects of transnational religious life. It illustrates the ways in which different organizational configurations prompt migrants to engage in different combinations of home and host-country directed practices. It also brings to light the ways in which these organizational arrangements can re-orient migrants' focus away from very local sending-country targets toward a mix of local, national, and globally-directed activities. This broadening of scope may make

transnational practices more likely to endure. Finally, this paper underscores how different organizational structures shape the relationship between transnational religion and politics, as broadly defined, in different ways.

Three patterns of transnational religious organization are suggested by our findings thus far. The Catholic churches' extended pattern allows migrants who choose to do so to move almost seamlessly between sending- and receiving-country parishes and religious movement groups. The Church integrates them into powerful, well-established networks where they can express interests and make claims with respect to their home and host countries. Members gain skills and information that guide their participation in the secular home- and host-country public sphere. In the Brazilian and particularly, in the Irish case, church membership furthers host-country incorporation but does more to reinforce migrants' ties to a national sending church than to particular parishes.

The second type of negotiated transnational organization, exemplified by the Protestant religious groups in this study, also incorporates migrants into an emerging set of cross-border organizational arrangements, but these are still being worked out. In general, these churches reinforce localized transnational attachments as well as broader ones. They also promote civic engagement based on religious beliefs. Members of the Brazilian International Church of the Four Square Gospel, the Protestant Church that I focus on here, situate themselves within an alternative, sacred topography guided by a kind of religious citizenship with its own set of rights and responsibilities. Religious beliefs drive some members to become civically engaged in a politically-defined landscape while others are motivated to action because they see themselves as living within a religious space where they are "working for God." Because negotiated transnational religious groups are constituted by weaker and more informal organizational connections, they overlap less with formal political arenas and tend to be

less effective sites for claims making and protection than their Catholic counterparts for expressing interests and making claims. At the same time, they are more easily adapted to the challenges of operating in transnational environments.

Finally, recreated transnational religious groups, like those represented by the Gujarati Hindu groups in this study, strongly reinforce members' ties to their home country, often at the expense of furthering receiving-country social integration. Participation reinforces members' local attachments and redirects them to sites of religious importance in India as a whole. It does little to promote formal political involvement but instead makes migrants into indirect political actors by bringing about personal transformations which prompt wider social change. The Swadhyaya Hindus in this study, for instance, engage in politics by default. They set an example for others by accepting the indwelling God within themselves. They believe that when sufficient numbers of individuals undergo such a change a more just society is achieved.

THEORETICAL DEBATES

The study of religion around the world has many names.¹ Work on world or global religions largely grew out of the West's attempt to make sense of non-Christian or Eastern religions. Studies of religion in the diaspora have their roots in recent scholarly interest in broad diasporic experiences. Diaspora studies have gone beyond their traditional focus on the Jewish, Greek, and Armenian experiences to include other migrant experiences because these earlier groups provide a model for contemporary groups seeking to survive displacement and preserve strong group ties. Implicit in much

¹ For a more in-depth discussion of different approaches to religion around the world, see Levitt (2001b).

of this work is the question of whether life across borders involves resistance to the nation state and allows previously marginalized groups to challenge the social hierarchy (Vertovec 2001).

While these two bodies of work critically contribute to our understanding of religious life, they suffer from the same nation-state bias that pervades much social analysis. The concepts and languages we use to describe collective action are rooted in the project of creating modern nation states in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Terms like “government,” “organization,” and “citizenship,” carry with them embedded nationalist assumptions, and for that reason, may be problematic as increasing numbers of individuals live aspects of their lives transnationally.

With the exception of writing on the Catholic Church, studies of global religion tend to examine specific religious traditions in a single setting instead of looking at the international connections that like communities share with one another. While work on diasporic religion takes the multiple memberships and fluid identities of its subjects as central premises, it too tends to focus on the religious life of immigrants rather than on how host country practices inform and are informed by home-country religious life. However, national religious life is influenced by many of the same global forces as economics and politics. Examining religious practice and institutions as if they stopped at the border, even when migrants make up only a small proportion of religious group members, is no longer enough.

A third, emergent body of work, which this study forms part of, uses a vocabulary of transnational religion. One of the principal books examining religion from a transnational perspective is Rudolph and Piscatori’s (1997) Transnational Religion and Fading States. Here, “transnational” is used in two ways. On the one hand, global or world religions are seen as creating a transnational civil society that challenges nation states and security interests as they have been traditionally conceived.

Another set of articles documents the macro-level connections between global religious actors that cross national boundaries.

I want to propose another approach to the study of contemporary religion that builds on recent work in migration studies and in the sociology of religion. A number of migration scholars acknowledge that to understand today's migration experience, we must take both home and host-country influences into account. Yet, to date, religion has been suspiciously absent from this emerging work on transnational migration. At the same time, sociologists of religion have become interested in the practice of lived religion or the role that religion actually plays in the everyday lives of ordinary individuals. Here again, migrants have been noticeably absent from these debates.² I want to wed these two theoretical advancements to study immigrant religion. I take as my point of departure the everyday, grounded religious practices of ordinary individuals in sending and receiving communities and the reciprocal relationship between the two.

When the magnitude, duration, and impact of migration is sufficiently strong, transnational social fields or public spheres spanning the sending and receiving country emerge. Both the migrants and nonmigrants who live within transnational social fields are exposed to a set of social expectations, cultural values, and patterns of human interaction shaped by at least two, if not more, social, economic, and political systems. They have access to social and institutional resources that imbue them with the capacity remain active in two worlds.

Movement is not a prerequisite for transnational activism. There are those who travel regularly to carry out their routine affairs, whom some researchers call transmigrants (England

² Notable exception include Ebaugh and Chafetz (2000), and work now underway under the rubric of the Pew Charitable Trust's Gateway Cities Projects.

1999, Guarnizo 1997). There are also individuals whose lives are rooted primarily in a single sending or receiving-country setting, who move infrequently, but whose lives integrally involve resources, contacts, and people who are far away and who locate themselves within a topography that crosses borders. And there are those who do not move but who live their lives within a context that has become transnationalized. They may engage in few activities that actually span borders but they too imagine themselves and express an allegiance to a group that is constituted across space. In each case, the social fields within which these individuals are located may be constituted by ties between a single sending and receiving-country site or by connections to co-ethnics in multiple locations, giving rise to a sense of belonging to a broader diasporic group.

Those frequent travelers, periodic movers, and individuals that stay in one place who do participate in transnational practices do so in a variety of ways. Portes et al. (1999) and Guarnizo (2000) define core transnationalism as those activities that form an integral part of the individual's habitual life, are undertaken on a regular basis, and are patterned and therefore somewhat predictable. Expanded transnationalism, in contrast, includes migrants who engage in occasional transnational practices, such as responses to political crises or natural disasters. Itzigsohn et al. (1999) characterize broad transnational practices as those that are not well institutionalized, involve only occasional participation, and require only sporadic movement. He and his colleagues contrast these with narrow transnational practices that are highly institutionalized, constant, and involve regular travel.

These terms help to operationalize variations in the intensity and frequency of transnational practices but cross-border engagements also vary along other dimensions such as scope. Even those

engaged in core transnational practices may confine their activities to one arena of social action. Or the same person may engage in core transnational activities with respect to one sphere of social life and only expanded transnational activities with respect to another. There are those, for example, whose livelihoods depend upon the frequent, patterned harnessing of resources across borders while their political and religious lives focus on host-country concerns. In contrast, there are those who engage in regular religious and political transnational practices but only occasionally send money back to family members or invest in homeland projects. Some individuals whose transnational practices involve many arenas of social life engage in comprehensive transnational practices while others engage in transnational practices that are more selective in scope (Levitt 2001b). Table One provides concrete examples of variations on these different dimensions of transnational activism.

Table 1: Variations in the Dimensions of Transnational Practices

	Comprehensive	Selective
Core	Transnational business owner who is also active home-country political party member, member of church with sister congregations in home and host country, and hometown association leader.	The political party official whose job it is to coordinate party activities between the sending and receiving country but who does not participate in any other kind of transnational group and maintains few cross-border social and familial ties.
Expanded	Periodically contributes to sending community projects, makes contributions to political campaigns, and provides occasional economic remittances to family members	Periodically engages in only one of these activities.

Transnational religious practices represent one type of transnational activity in which migrants engage. In contrast to studies of diaspora religion or global religion, studies of transnational religion focus on the everyday, lived practice of migrant religion in at least two locations. They explore the transnational religious practices of ordinary individuals by focusing on grounded, concrete expressions of religious beliefs, practices, and organization and how these are embedded in broader social and political power hierarchies. These analyses produce maps of the horizontal ties linking individuals, leaders, institutions, and religious social movement actors in the home and host country and situate these localized ties within the context of the regional, national, and global cross-border connections in which they are embedded. For example, the connections arising between members and leaders of Baptist churches in Governador Valadres and in Massachusetts would be analyzed within the context of the

broader national and international organizational connections that they also form part of. This context-specific approach is particularly important in studies of religious traditions not characterized by a unitary set of beliefs. Since there is no central authority and no one way to practice one's beliefs, these faiths vary considerably across contexts.

Studies of transnational religion go beyond a single focus on the transformation of religion in the host-country setting and, instead, purposefully examine the ways in these changes alter sending-country religious practices, and the continuous, iterative interaction between the two. Ideally, this requires field work in multiple sites. If this is not possible, researchers must ask migrants about how they see transnational activities transforming sending-country religious life. Furthermore, research on transnational religion takes an inclusive approach to what constitutes religious life. It examines individual and collective manifestations, formal and popular religious practices, and rituals enacted in both institutionalized and non-institutionalized settings. These studies also take theology seriously by examining how migrants use religious ideas and symbols to construct the identities and allegiances that characterize the diasporic experience. Because they ask respondents to reflect on how they use faith-based vocabularies and icons to situate themselves in multiple landscapes, they make concrete and observable processes that are often alluded to in the literature but are rarely clearly explained. Finally, work on transnational religion recognizes the porousness of the boundaries of religious life and that religiosity manifests itself in social, economic, and political arenas. One of the primary goals of my work is to understand the relationship between transnational religious identity and other types of transnational practices.

The goal of this paper is to outline several types of transnational organizational forms and to discuss their implications for members' continued participation in their home and host communities. Before I do so, however, one caveat is in order.

Transnational religious life is not new. From their inception, most religious institutions, and the religious movements they produced knew few boundaries. The Catholic Church, with its hierarchical structure, ideology of universality, and centralized leadership apparatus provides the primary example of purposeful transnational religious development. Its interconnected network of national churches and religious and lay orders of Jesuits and Franciscans systematically transported Catholicism throughout the world (Casanova 1994). But other world religions were disseminated without the aid of federated administrative hierarchies. Islam, for example, spread through unsupervised networks of entrepreneurs, Sufi orders, and individual sufis who propagated their faith in accordance with their unique inner vision (Rudolph and Piscatori 1997).

Migration in the early twentieth century generated patterns of religious contact that had much in common with those we see today. European churches in the early 1900s also maintained strong connections to their parishioners. Because religious leaders were concerned about defections to other faiths and felt an enduring sense of responsibility toward migrant members, they often contributed money, clergy, and resources toward the establishment of ethnic churches. Italian Bishops, for instance, collaborated with one another to help migrants in the U.S. (Astori 1968). But it was not just the Catholic church that was engaged in these types of activities. Evangelical pastors also traveled back and forth between Italy and the U.S. and preached in both settings (Simpson 1916).

Other religious organizations saw migrants as a resource in their efforts to influence political outcomes back home. The Hungarian government provided particularly generous funding to any group

that supported the Hungarian monarchy, offering direct subsidies to loyal churches, priests, schools and newspapers, regardless of the ethnicity of their members, as a way to control and weaken opposition among those living abroad (Bodner 1985). During the first two decades of the 1900s, Chinese Protestants helped persuade Chinese Americans to support a republican government for China. Using evangelical teachings, they criticized China as a backward, pagan land that would only achieve modernity, democracy, and Republicanism when it accepted Christianity. “The immediate aim of our effort is the salvation of souls by preaching of the gospel,” one leader remarked in 1917. “The ultimate aim is the redemption of China through the earnestness of our converted young men when they return to the homeland.” (Tseng in Yoo 1999:31).

Some churches were more concerned about how return migrants might influence the sending-country religious landscape. They feared that those who had joined new faiths would return to proselytize and convert other followers. They believed that migrants would introduce new ways of thinking that would challenge Church authorities. Returnees did not treat priests with the same deference as they did prior to their departure. Thousands who returned used the political organizing skills they learned to create village organizations, labor unions, and even political parties, also challenging the stronghold of the church (Wyman 1993).

But despite these similarities, there are also clear differences between transnational religion past and present.³ New communication and transportation technologies permit more frequent and intimate connections between those who move and those who remain behind. The airplane and the telephone make it easier and cheaper to stay in touch. Technological advances heighten the immediacy and

³ See Levitt (2001a) for a discussion of the differences between earlier and contemporary migration in general.

intensity of contact, allowing migrants to be actively involved in everyday life in fundamentally different ways than before. Yang and Ebaugh (2001) identified a number of immigrant congregations that kept in daily contact with their sending-country church partners via the internet

A second difference in the nature of present-day transnational relations is the economic and cultural context within which they develop. Migration today takes place in the context of heightened global economic interconnectedness. The spread of global media has brought the “core” to many of the world’s “peripheries” so that many of today’s migrants arrive partially socialized into aspects of the new cultures they encounter. They arrive already strongly identifying with these values, having been exposed to them through the media and through their conversations with earlier migrants. This kind of prior cultural compatibility, and the convergence in worldviews and strategies that it brings about, may make it easier for migrant and nonmigrant religious group members to establish transnational partnerships with one another.

The changing nature of the United States economy also means that migrants are incorporated into the labor market in different ways than in the past. In the early 1900s, rapidly industrializing U.S. companies needed low-skilled labor for jobs that often did not require workers to speak English. In contrast, today’s migrants enter a postindustrial economy that courts high-skilled workers but offers limited opportunities for the unskilled, non-English speaker. Many new migrants find work in the service sector which pays less, offers fewer benefits, and affords more limited opportunities for advancement than the manufacturing sector.⁴ High skilled migrants may choose to engage transnationally to “get two

⁴ It is true that migrants today enjoy certain opportunities that 100 years ago, both foreign and native-born minorities lacked. Earlier this century, even native-born minority men, including those with Ivy League degrees, were barred from certain jobs in universities, industry, and the public sector. Present-day migrants also benefit from government initiatives like Affirmative Action (Gold 2000).

for the price of one.” Lower-skilled, racial minorities may be pushed into transnational lifestyles because they cannot gain a secure foothold in either setting. In either case, migrants may turn to religious arenas to help advance their transnational projects.

The context of receiving-country incorporation has also changed considerably. For instance, the Irish who arrived in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries helped create the U.S. Catholic church. They worshipped at national parishes, an interim strategy the church adopted to serve its new immigrant member. Irish priests, who often had no intention of returning home frequently accompanied them.(Dolan 1992). Today’s Irish migrants encounter a well-established Catholic Church in the process of reinventing itself as a multi-ethnic group. They are just one of many new Catholic constituencies who, in contrast to their predecessors, must now adapt to an existing set of organizational arrangements rather than create new ones. As I will argue, the church no longer demands that they abandon their home-country practices but rather creates a setting where they can maintain these indefinitely, although often within the context of pan-ethnic congregations.

Furthermore, the kinds of homeland connections sustained by migrants today differ from those in the past because they are forged within a cultural context more tolerant of ethnic pluralism. At the turn-of-the-century, and particularly during the period preceding World War I, migrants were under tremendous pressure to naturalize and become “good Americans.” In contrast, the United States of the early twenty-first century tolerates ethnic diversity more. The pressure to conform to a well-defined, standardized notion of what it means to be “American” has greatly decreased. Contemporary migrants enjoy the protections of new anti-discrimination and affirmative action legislation. Displays of continued

ethnic pride are normal, celebrated parts of daily life. Those wanting to express allegiances face a less hostile environment within which to do so.

Finally, most of the countries sending the largest number of immigrants to the U.S. today have completed the process of nation building. As a result, the demands they make of their members, their political discourse, and the ways in which they represent themselves culturally mean that they encourage long-distance nationalism and participation rather than linking activism to return. (Morawska 2001, Glick Schiller 2000). Depending upon the church-state relationship in each context, as states institute more and more ways for migrants to be members without residence, depending upon the church-state relationship in each context, they may increasingly involve religious groups in furthering their cause.

VARIATIONS IN TRANSNATIONAL RELIGIOUS LIFE

Individual transnational practices and the transnational communities that emerge as a result create and are created, in part, by global religious institutions which extend their activities in response to the new demands and needs of migrants. In turn, religious institutions enable transnational belonging. The institutional partnerships established between the sending and receiving-country chapters of religious group chapters allow migrants to live their religious and, to varying degrees, their political and civic lives, across borders. They embed migrants and nonmigrants in transnational organizational networks that contain resources, power, and skills which are relevant to both home and host-country concerns. Operating transnationally, however, does not automatically produce transnational results. As I will demonstrate below, religious institutions may be organized, financed, and led across borders but keep their members' energies and loyalties focused primarily on a single setting.

Extended Transnational Religious Organizations

Thus far, our study suggests three types of transnational religious organizational patterns created by migration. The first, as exemplified by the Catholic Church, is an extended transnational religious organization. From the mid 1800s to the present, the Catholic church has worked diligently to create and reinforce its role as a transnational, publically-influential institution. Vatican II contributed to this position in somewhat contradictory ways. It reversed a century long trend toward centralization by acknowledging the plurality of national Catholicisms, and by legitimizing their expression. At the same time, it rehomogenized practice by prompting a theological renewal and instituting a series of liturgical changes throughout the Catholic world. In essence, it allowed for national Catholic traditions with their different cultural and mental worlds to flourish, though always within the context of a centrally regulated system based in Rome (Hervieu-Léger 1997). A proliferation of emotional and spiritual communities and affinity groups, such as the Charismatic Catholic movement, also cross-cut national traditions and make Catholicism even more portable than before.

Furthermore, the current Pope has positioned himself as a spokesperson for humanity, issuing encyclicals and taking positions on events not only of concern to Catholics but to humankind in general. The Pope has become, “the high priest of a new universal civil religion of humanity and the first citizen of a global civil society” (Casanova 1994:130). By articulating a vision of community that supercedes national boundaries in which a religious transnational civil society takes center stage, he also encourages members’ sense of belonging in multiple settings. Belonging to a transnational religious organization also means that members belong to an institution that can potentially protect and represent them in the home

and host context.⁵

Taken together, these changes mean that transnational migrants are incorporated into sending and receiving-country churches that are connected and directed by a single authority, and often at other levels of their administrative hierarchies, but that also functions quite autonomously at the local level. When they circulate in and out of parishes or religious movement groups in the U.S., Ireland, the Dominican Republic, or Brazil, these individuals are broadening, deepening, and customizing a global religious system that is already legitimate, powerful, and well organized.

These dynamics, and the different ways in which they manifest themselves are particularly apparent in Boston. Elsewhere I have described in detail the transnational religious connections linking Boston and the Dominican Republic which mutually transformed religious life in both settings (Levitt 2001a). New Dominican immigrants became incorporated into multi-ethnic congregations using a generic "Latino" worship style which included some familiar elements while excluding many uniquely Dominican ones. They communicated about changes in their religious practices and beliefs to those remaining at home. Subsequent migrants arrived already pre-socialized into many elements of U.S. Latino Catholicism. They continued to infuse fresh "Dominicanness" into the church, though it was a "Dominicanness" that was increasingly pan-Latino in tone. Continuous, cyclical transfers ensued which consolidated these pan-ethnic practices while weakening their uniquely Dominican elements. In this way, transnational ties reinforced religious pluralism at the same time that they limited its scope.

Catholic church programs for the large numbers of Latinos who migrated to Boston, and other cities around the country, operate under the umbrella of the Hispanic Apostolate. But how was the

⁵ It is important to remember, as Michele Dillon (1999) reminds us, that not all members are equal within the Catholic church and that many women and homosexuals would hardly think of the Catholic Church as an

Church to serve the large post-1965 influx who were also non-English speakers? Despite much variation at the parish level, the post Vatican II Church in the U.S. generally afforded migrants more physical and spiritual room to preserve their traditions than ever before. Just as the meetings of Latin American Bishops at Puebla and Medellin in 1968 and 1972 resulted in a call for *inculturación* or accepting and incorporating popular folk Catholic practices, so the U.S. Bishops backed away from their expectation that homeland customs would eventually disappear. The Church, in this sense, made its own transition from the “melting pot” to the “salad bowl” or “ethnic mosaic.” In many parishes, migrants were allowed to continue to worship in their own style, to celebrate homeland patron saint days, and to receive home-country clergy. The Church has also recently begun to expand upon the national character of particular symbols and rituals and appropriate them for the global church. The meaning of icons such as the *Virgen de Altagracia* (the Patron Saint of the Dominican Republic) is broadened to express national loyalties and signal the existence of a pluralistic global Catholic church.

During the 1980s and 1990s, most Archdioceses throughout the U.S. created ethnic ministries or pastoral centers in the parishes where new groups settled. In Boston, due to the availability, prior work experience, and predilections of particular clergy, as well as the city’s long experience with immigrants, the Church created a separate Office of the Ethnic Apostolate.

According to Father Cogo, the Scalibrini Priest (an Italian religious order that serves migrants throughout the world) who first directed the office.

We established the Ethnic Apostolate not, let’s say, out of a crisis, but because they said, right now we feel that we need something, an office to look after them (the new

institution that represents and fights for their interests.

immigrants) because the numbers are growing and growing and we don't want to lose them since most of them are Catholics. So they got in touch with us and I was willing to come here to start up the office because I had done this kind of work in other places and worked in multiethnic parishes. It is the charisma of our Order. We are raised, let's say, with the law of the immigrants. Because we have this expertise in the field, they just said help us out.

By 2001, the office served migrants from 28 countries including 10 parishes dedicated to the Brazilian community alone. Affiliated priests meet three times a year. The Director of the office reports to the Cardinal's Secretary and, through him, has direct access to the Cardinal as well. Apart from this, Father Cogo reported, in the early years of his stewardship, he was free to create a different kind of program for each group, based on the level of financial support and staffing they received from their sending church and the willingness of local parishes to welcome them.

We were flexible. We created a different structure for each community because each group faces different issues. I looked at history to guide me as to how to proceed. For the Italians, integration was easy. It was easy for them to lose their identity. They moved quickly, more individualistically. They didn't have a strong national identity when they arrived. It was more regionalistic than nationalistic. But look at the Portuguese, they have been much slower. There is nothing wrong with them not having become citizens after thirty years. They still feel like it would be betraying their mother. We continue to preach that they should but really as long as they worship and follow the principals of behavior and faith, Cardinal Law is happy.

There are certain groups, Father Cogo believed, that need or want to maintain ethnic practices longer than others and the church should allow them to do so. Each group brings with it a particular set of traditions, shaped by a particular time and context. One cannot even assume that different cohorts of the same group will share similar views, as evidenced by the Irish case.

The Irish bring out this problem very clearly. The new Irish have nothing to do with the old. Many priests don't see why they need the Ethnic Apostolate. They all speak English. But the old Irish came here 150 years ago. The new Irish just came from an Ireland that is completely different. They don't have the same mentality. They are more imaginative, worldly, but they are also mundane and aggressive. The old Irish are used to devotions, regimentation, the envelope system. They've become American, church

is business. They go every Sunday but that's it. The new Irish are into dancing, getting together, the social aspects. They need this more. The older and younger have different ways of manifesting their faith.

To avoid replicating their earlier experience with national parishes, which emptied as the second and third generations mastered English, relinquished their home-country traditions, and moved away from their old neighborhoods, Catholic leaders opted to locate newly-arriving groups within old congregations in decline. They hoped that this parish- within-a-parish strategy would allow new migrants to preserve their traditions while utilizing and perhaps even revitalizing existing congregations. Although there was some hope that ethnic congregations and their hosts would eventually join forces and participate in the same activities, in most cases, they tended to remain apart as Father Cogo described,

Basically what happens is that we have a parallel parish. The Bishops don't like to hear that word but immigrant parishioners don't know from dinner dances. They go to church and make a day of it. It doesn't do it for them when they are offered a mass with one prayer in Portuguese and go down and have coffee and cake. They don't know about coffee and cake. They know about *churrascos* (Brazilian barbeques) that last for hours.

These kinds of programs for immigrants represent a shift away from the Church's earlier position on the integration of newcomers. While church leaders previously saw national parishes as interim measures, they now expressed greater tolerance toward enduring ethnic differences. Though they still hoped to move groups toward an "American church," religious leaders differed as to the actual nature of the incorporation process including the rate at which it would take place, the level of give and take between partner congregations, and the final outcome of these changes . For Father Cogo,

This is a fluid process. You have to let things happen as they happen. You can't force it. You want them to become part of the local church but you want them to be comfortable first. Often the local people are the greatest barrier. This is a paradox. Many clergy have misunderstand the idea of integration so they try to force it but the local people can be the greatest barrier. There is racism, the local parishioners are not ready to accept another group or the local pastor feels that they have to become like us

as soon as possible. They say, you can't use your own instruments because we have an organ. They think they are primitive and anti-liturgical. The Brazilian community had a Bishop who came here to do Confirmations. The pastors didn't like it. They said, "The children speak English, why not do it in English." But behind those children is a family, let them make noise, let them have it the way they are used to.

For Father Cogo's successor, Father Rozato, also a Scalabrini Priest, integration is the ultimate goal, though he is willing to proceed slowly. He resists the notion that "ethnicity is neutralized" after one generation. Even the third generation who is long gone from the neighborhood, he says, likes to return to the "old" church to be married and to baptize or give first communion to their children. They return to celebrate these pivotal life events and continue to contribute actively to these parishes, thereby ensuring their financial viability.

Usually we have the first generation and the second generation that consider themselves very ethnic. So they speak their own language and they like to go to services in their own language. But after that, once people are born here, raised here, they speak English better than any other language so they go to English services. But they still like the idea of being Polish, being Italian, and being identified with their own Catholic church instead of going to their own community. So even when they learn to pray in English and move away, they still hold on to the church where they were born and want to go there to celebrate special occasions. Also these churches are fairly self-sufficient because most of the time most of them, are very good supporters, as far as their own churches.

Father Rozato's approach builds upon these enduring commitments by trying to match older parishes that are sympathetic to new immigrants and in need of new energy and funding with new groups. He sees himself as creating multi-ethnic congregations in which old and new members ultimately arrive at a new ritual mix that combines both sets of practices through mutual give and take. The "American" side of the hyphen changes as much as the immigrant side.

FR: I would say our goal is more than Americanization or assimilation, we don't use those patterns, we try to slowly integrate. Assimilation is a very bad word, we never use it. Integration is the word we use and that means slowly becoming part of the community. You know you've done it when they don't need a foreign priest to do mass

in their own language anymore. Integration and assimilation reach the same goal, but integration happens more slowly.

P: Are you saying that the church is taking a less forceful role in bringing about this process?

FR: We are trying to respect diversity. We are trying to respect differences and slowly to make even the American church be aware of certain treasures and gifts present in other religions and other people. So it's a matter of sharing. You become a multicultural parish and you share whatever faith you have been brought up with.

The same general ethos that supports religious pluralism in the U.S. Catholic Church and that reinforces the notion of the Church as a global institution also reinforces the maintenance of transnational attachments. By allowing members to preserve ethnic traditions, the church also creates a space for the expression of homeland membership. Elements of ethnic identity and transnational identity often overlap and thereby mutually reinforce one another. Because, for so many individuals, feeling ethnic means some mix of identifying with a U.S. and homeland experience, the same resources and labor that the Church puts in place to serve ethnic congregations also reinforce home-country ties. The activities of the vibrant Brazilian congregation that resuscitated Saint Tarsiscus Church in Framingham, Massachusetts, for example, also function as a constant reminder of and place within which to express connections to Brazil.

Transnational connections are evident in many aspects of Church life including staffing, financing, leadership, and programming. They grow out of relations between individual and religious movement members, parishes, and clergy in the home and host country. Dominican migration between Boston and Baní produced strong ties between local sending and receiving-country parishes. Migrants visiting Miraflores and Mirafloreños visiting Boston circulated in and out of the same churches thereby creating strong connections between them. Friendships between individual priests further reinforced these

relations. One such connection developed, and deepened over the years, when Padre Lorenzo, who had worked in Baní, came to Boston during his vacation to inquire after his former parishioners. He met Father Kevin and Father Mike who later visited him in the Dominican Republic so they could learn more about the religious context their new parishioners came from. Other priests from both sides of the border later followed suit. Parish to parish connections were also further reinforced by relations between Charismatic and Neocatecumenal group members who forged ties between chapters in Miraflores and Boston by attending meetings wherever they were.

Brazilian and Irish migration produce transnational ties of increasingly broader scope. In one parish in Valadares, Padre Carlos reported that migration affected his activities very little because so few people have migrated from the middle-class neighborhood where he works. In contrast, another parish which sent many migrants displayed more comparability with the Dominican case. Father Daniel claimed he was frequently asked to say mass in honor of someone living in Massachusetts or that he would often dedicate a prayer to the community in general. He was often called upon to counsel family members who were separated from their loved ones in the U.S.

These locally-focused, parish-to-parish activities went hand and hand with activities engendering a sense of continued belonging to the Brazilian church as a whole. Brazilian Apostolate churches in Massachusetts use the same weekly handout of prayers and hymns that is used throughout Brazil and that is printed in Brasilia, the capital of the country. The Brazilian Apostolate staff organized mission campaigns that paralleled those undertaken in Brazil. When the National Conference of Brazilian Bishops (CBNN) launched a year long campaign against homelessness, Brazilian immigrant churches started a campaign for better housing and stronger neighborhoods. The priests chose these activities because they allowed migrant parishioners to do something that paralleled the projects undertaken in

Brazil but, at the same time, resonated strongly with the problems confronting immigrants. These activities, they said, meet migrants where they are — with a desire to stay connected to Brazil and to become further integrated into the U.S. through churchgoing.

Irish Pastoral activities in Boston serve a similar function. Organizational connections formed at and reinforced connections between churches at the national level. Though the contributions of Inishoweners in Boston helped renovate the spire of the church in Clonmany, little else suggested the presence of localized, parish to parish connections. Instead connections between the Irish Episcopal Commission and the Archdiocese in Boston helped integrate the new Irish into the local receiving church and to reinforce their connections back to a broader Ireland. These activities are much less about Boston and Inishowen and more about connections between the Irish and American churches. They are suited to a group whose members see themselves as returning to or continuing to be part of an urban Ireland rather than to the rural communities that they came from.

Father Paul, one of the Irish-born priests staffing the Irish Pastoral Center in Boston, described his first encounters,

When I first came, I opened an office where they could drink tea and be made welcome. The Irish have a culture of their own, you know. They needed priests who could meet them on their own terms, who would even understand their unique use of the language. U.S. born priests may be the most empathetic but they don't know the games the Irish play, how to make them feel at home. For some of them, it was the first time they were in a multicultural situation and it felt like a blast of cold air. The Archdiocese paid my salary because their think was that I was taking care of people in a parish and that was their responsibility.”

These broad-based connections are also evidenced in how Father Ted, another staffing priest, describes his job. He does not actually work for a parish, though he lives in a parish known as “Little Inishowen” because of its long history of receiving migrants from County Donegal. Instead, he works

out of the Irish Pastoral Center which has branches and serves the new Irish living throughout the city.

His efforts are directed at migrants from all parts of the country.

But it doesn't matter because when you come out here you forget about the counties. And you forget about all that, you are so far away from home and you are just Irish. Even between the north and the south, you are just Irish as well.

Father Ted sees himself as enabling transnational membership. He wants the new Irish to become integrated into their local parishes but he also wants to help those who want to continue to belong to Ireland to be able to do so. "It is not my intention," he says, "to keep them away from the American Church but to meet them where they are and to help them branch out from there." Since most couples with children gradually become part of American parishes when their children begin attending the local parochial school, much of his work focuses on migrants between the ages of 18-35. Many of those he works with still have the idea that they are just here for the experience and to earn money before they return home, although he does see increasing numbers realizing that they will stay longer than they anticipated. In response, the Irish Pastoral Center offers classes in Irish dance and in Gaelic. Father Ted often says mass in memory of someone who has died in Ireland when their relatives return so the community can mourn together. The pre-marital classes the Irish Pastoral Center offers in Boston, mandatory for all who want to be married in the Catholic Church, are designed for participants with one foot in Boston and the other in Ireland. Because so many migrants return to Ireland to be married, the Pastoral Center helps them prepare all the necessary paperwork before they go. Sessions on budgeting include discussions about how to buy a home and get a mortgage in both places. They cover how to get disability and life insurance in Ireland and how to set up a non-resident bank account. Discussion has also touched on how discouraged so many feel because the \$50,000 they thought would

buy them a house outright will now only barely cover a down payment since the price of housing has risen sky-high in the interim.

Comparable programs and activities directed at migrants with feet in two worlds are just one element of transnational religious organizations. Financing, staffing, and leadership are also important pieces of this picture. Because Father Rozato belongs to a global religious order (The Scalabrini) and because he also functions as a diocesan priest, he can access two potential global labor pools to meet his staffing needs. Because he feels it is important that a Brazilian priest, rather than someone who simply speaks Portuguese, serve the Brazilian community, when he needs new staff, he calls fellow Scalibrini brothers in Brazil and contacts priests working in Brazilian dioceses whom he knows from the international meetings he regularly attends. How he ultimately fills the position is a function of the Brazilian clerical labor market and the availability of priests in Boston.

Staffing and financing arrangements are also organized transnationally in the Irish case. To serve its latest cohort of emigrants, the Irish church simply expanded the infrastructure already in place to care for the Irish who began leaving over a century ago. The priests who accompanied their parishioners to the United States in the early 1900s set a precedent of care and concern for the emigrant flock. In 1947, church leaders created the Irish Episcopal Commission for Emigrants to save those who later went to work in England and Scotland from their “pagan surroundings.” Over the years, dozens of priests have been loaned to English parishes with large concentrations of Irish immigrants. Specialist chaplains have also been assigned to work in economic sectors with large numbers of Irish workers. They established immigration centers to promote integration into British society and to advocate for migrants’ improved access to social services.

Catholic clergy in the northeastern U.S. felt overwhelmed by the needs of the new, largely illegal parishioners who began arriving in the U.S. in the 1980s and they approached their Irish colleagues for support. Because it enjoyed a manpower surplus, the Irish church could afford to send clergy who volunteered to serve to the U.S. These individuals are loaned to the U.S. church for five-year periods. In Boston, their salaries and living costs are paid by the local Archdiocese.

The viability of these arrangements depends upon an enduring surplus labor pool and on sending-country church's continued sense of responsibility toward their expatriate flock. Like the sending-state governments that grant migrants dual citizenship and the expatriate vote to encourage their long-term loyalty and financial role, so some sending churches also demonstrate a continued commitment to their emigrant members. Several priests in Boston said they felt motivated to do this because the church is a global institution and they are responsible for all of its members, regardless of their nationality. They saw their role and the role of receiving-church priests as interchangeable and claimed that because all priests basically work "for the same boss," they serve Catholics everywhere.

Others were motivated by continuing national loyalties. They said that emigrants would continue to be Brazilian or Irish wherever they lived and that they would continue to feel at least partially responsible for them. Father Tim O' Sullivan, who initiated pastoral activities for the new Irish in the U.S., saw those abroad as continuing members of the Irish national and religious family. Just as families do not abandon those who move away, neither should churches or governments.

I don't know if you are a mother or not, but if you are a mother, you are not likely to say that you are no longer responsible for your child if they go away. You want to know that if something happens, someone will be there who is attuned to their needs and can give them help. You want to know that if something goes wrong, you can phone them and someone will take care of your child. A mother doesn't act like that, and neither should churches or the government.

He feels that Irish migrants continue to contribute to Irish society, through the investments they make, the new homes they build, or the new skills and ideas they import. “It would be foolish of us,” he said, “to abandon our sons and daughters just because they no longer live among us. They still contribute so much to our lives.”

The set of relations I have described broadens and thickens what was already a global religious institution in ways which allow migrants to remain active in their sending communities at the same time that they are integrated into their receiving communities. The connections that arise between local-level individual and organizational actors grow because they form within the context of an organization that sees itself as a global actor and which increasingly appropriates national icons and transforms them into symbols of its global scope.

Transnational religious membership also incorporates migrants into powerful, resource-rich networks that function as potential venues for representation and protection vis a vis their home and host countries. This happens in several ways.

First, Church leaders in Boston are public figures. Because the Irish have been so prominent in local politics and an overwhelming number are Catholics, religious and political leaders come into frequent contact. At fundraising dinners, public celebrations, and inaugural events, priests and politicians have ample opportunities to influence each other’s views and to convince one another to support projects of mutual interest. As a result, political leaders often take stands on issues of concern to migrants, such as bilingual education or amnesty laws, while diocesan priests may use their pulpits to convince migrants to support positions more in keeping with the Church’s view.

Several studies have demonstrated the ways in which churchgoing builds civic skills (Verba et al 1995). This is clearly the case for Inishoweners and, to a lesser extent, for Valadarenses as well. As

English-speakers, Inishowners attend the same mass and hear the same sermons as native-born parishioners, generally delivered by native-born clergy who are familiar with the local scene. Unlike non-English speakers, who often form their own ethnic parish councils, they participate directly in parish governance if they so choose.

Inishowners described activities such as signing petitions in favor of school vouchers or attending candidate night at church as some of the new “political” experiences they were introduced to by attending church in the U.S. Several commented that worshipping in an environment where not everyone was Irish was an eye opening experience for them because it made them rethink their assumptions about what Catholicism was and who got to define it. Likewise, the support groups for young families that the Irish Pastoral Center organized became clearinghouses for information about jobs, housing, and schools. Though informal social networks have long served this function in Ireland, many people said they had never turned to the church for this kind of help. “In Ireland,” said Dan, a thirty-five year old migrant, “we go to church for 45 minutes and that’s it until next week. The church and the state are so intertwined, the church never takes a stand against the government. Here, though, our priest says things. I don’t always agree with them but he is not afraid to speak his mind about what should be done.”

In most cases, these messages do not translate into sustained collective action, in part because of the civic culture Inishowners bring with them. According to Father Mike, the Irish are not accustomed to solving problems by forming associations or organizing protests. When something comes up, they find someone they know who can quietly solve it for them. They are likely to go to the local city or county councilor who will be able to take care of it or send them to someone who will. As a result, when Father John, an Irish-American priest, asked some of the new Irish to attend the first

meeting of the Boston Interfaith Organizing Group, an ecumenical effort to rebuild the urban core, some went to the first meeting out of respect but they did not return. “Making a stink” as they called it, was not their way of doing politics.

Instead, migrants’ interactions at church and with clergy teach them how to negotiate the system. As in Ireland, the priest is both leader and guide. But in Boston, Father Peter says, his relations with his parishioners are more comfortable and open. He is their lawyer, social worker, and resource person. He says that migrants tend to see him as the religious counterpart of the local political operatives they might seek out in County Donegal and ask him for help finding jobs, places to live, and ways to stay married. “Yesterday,” he reported, “I received a call from someone who is here illegally who got called for jury duty. He didn’t know what to do. Since he has a social security card, they picked him out of the pool. I told him to get a note from a doctor excusing him because he is ill. It is an Irish doctor of course.”

This local-level advocacy has a national level equivalent in the form of the Irish Apostolate U.S. Irish clergy working throughout the country created this umbrella organization in 1997 to strengthen their efforts through greater coordination. Father Paul, the director, got permission from the Irish Bishops in Dublin as well as the National Council of Catholic Bishops (NCCB) to create this group. He recalls,

In the early 1990s, I went back to Ireland to talk with government officials. I told them that these people are not American citizens, they still need help, without citizenship and a green card they are very vulnerable. If the church does not help them, they will be in bad shape. I said to make no mistake, the Irish church officials working out there (in the United States) are not there working for the American government or the American church but for the Irish church and government.

By 2001, the Irish Apostolate U.S. included programs in New York, Boston, Chicago, San Francisco, Philadelphia, Atlanta, Milwaukee, and San Diego. During the summer, chaplains are sent to

places, such as Ocean City, Maryland, where Irish students often find seasonal work. Because Father Paul is officially affiliated with the NCCB's Office of Migrant and Refugee Services, when problems arise for Irish migrants in places where there is no formal pastoral program, he has the support of the Bishops Conference behind him and he can call upon local parish workers in these areas to help out.

A yearly \$300,000 grant from the Irish Government supports the efforts of the Irish Apostolate U.S; Father Paul reports on the group's activities to the government each year. They have also received some funding from the NCBB, though this is not guaranteed because, he says, "They have many other groups they need to fund." He also solicits funds from "Irish Americans who have made good," and from private foundations. These resources support programmatic activities and enable local groups to meet twice each year.

These activities protect and represent migrants in several ways. At the local level, the Irish Apostolate provides a mix of social and legal services directed primarily at single men and women and at young families. When problems arise at work, with housing, or with legal status, Inishoweners are likely to turn to Father Ted for help. The Irish Apostolate U.S., in conjunction with a national coalition of Irish Immigration Centers, has also formed an informal political action committee and lobbying group that works on immigrant rights, amnesty, and relevant policy issues. Finally, the Irish Apostolate functions as the Irish government's window into the lives of emigrants in the U.S. When the government needs information, they seek out their priests.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs came here three years ago and the Minister for Social Welfare came last year. Any time a President comes, like Mary Robinson or Mary McCalese, they come and talk to us. Mary Robinson came and talked to us at lunch and asked us about the different issues we confront. We also visit Irish prisoners here and we keep the government informed about whether they are being treated properly, what their sentences are, whether they can be sent back home. We are the voice of the immigrant community for the Irish government (Father Mike, Boston, 2001).

The clergy working for the Irish Apostolate in the U.S. and their counterparts in Ireland also represent the interests of Irish emigrants to the Irish public. Father Paul Byrne of the Irish Episcopal Commission for Emigrants in Dublin, who supervises the activities of the Irish priests working outside the country, describes his task as defending the interests of the Irish diaspora. The Commission is one of the few institutions that continues fighting to keep the general public aware of migrants' concerns. There are some in the government, he claims, who would rather ignore migrants because, by leaving, they call into question the success of the Celtic Tiger. "The economic situation in Ireland is better so people can stay put," he says, "but some have bad, boring jobs with few possibilities so they decide to see if they can come here and get something better. People say a rising tide raises all boats but they now say a rising tide raises all yachts, meaning they have jobs but they want better ones."

Toward this end, when the Director of the Irish Apostolate U.S. visits Ireland, he does radio interviews about the experiences of the Irish abroad. He tells listeners how much they can help migrants and how much their plight continues to be Ireland's responsibility.

The church and the government are motivated by the same thing and since the government is elected by the people, it should be responsible for its citizens wherever they are. Besides, when these folks return, they enrich Ireland with the new skills that they bring back. Don't forget, we are talking about the same people, we are talking about the civil and religious branch of the same tree. The same people who go to church on Sunday, vote on Monday... This partnership between U.S. and Irish churches will continue indefinitely because the conditions that produce it are eternal not temporary."

The Inishowen and Valadarene Catholic experiences represent one way in which the relationship between transnational religion and politics plays out. Migrants are incorporated into a well-established, well-endowed religious institution with strong political connections. At the same time, strong programmatic and institutional links with their sending church also keep them tied to their

homelands. Dual religious membership is further encouraged because these connections form within the context of a worldwide Catholic church that has self-consciously positioned itself as a global actor. Churchgoing introduces migrants to the political culture and political practices in the U.S. It serves as a springboard to civic engagement by exposing migrants to political issues and teaching them tools with which to address them. At the same time, the personal and organizational ties that link the U.S. and Irish churches also enable migrants' continued participation in their homeland, although this has less to do with their connections to their sending parishes and more to do with Ireland as a whole.

Negotiated Transnational Religious Organizations

Brazilian Protestant churches typify a second type of negotiated transnational religious organization revealed by this study. In these contexts, relations between sending and receiving country churches evolve without a strong international, federated infrastructure. Few rules guide these relations. Instead, individuals and organizations enter into informal agreements with one another, creating transnational arenas that also shape migrants' continued relations to their home and host communities. These are less powerfully connected to political circles but, at the same time, are more flexibly adapted to newly-arising demands. In this section, I focus on the International Church of the Four Square Gospel to illustrate how religious participation can encourage both secular, substantive citizenship and a kind of religious citizenship with its own set of norms and expectations about the collective good.

Protestantism has grown tremendously in Latin America, and in Brazil in particular, in the last few decades. In the 1960's, less than five percent of the Brazilian population was Protestant. Now, close to 40% of the population claim to be "born again." There are an estimated 422 Protestant churches in Governador Valadares. In 1997, in one neighborhood of approximately 3,000 residents

alone, we identified at least 35 churches. These congregations ranged from Mainline Protestant groups to start-up Pentecostal congregations. Some pray in private homes and storefronts while others worship in elegant, imposing structures that seat over a thousand. Even some of the most fledgling groups, however, had plaques outside their doors indicating they had chapters in Massachusetts.

Like their Catholic counterparts, negotiated transnational religious organizations also evolve from connections between individuals and institutions. In some cases, an individual pastor maintains ties to his or her denomination in Brazil while in others, ties emerge between comparable sending and receiving-country churches.

Amy Simple McPherson founded the International Church of the Four Square Gospel (IGFSG) in Los Angeles in 1924. In 1951, the Church sent its first missionaries to Minas Gerais and Sao Paulo in Brazil. Pastor Cairo, then a teen and a member of an Episcopalian church, remembers how appealing these early tent prayer sessions were because he had never witnessed such an emotional, spontaneous worship style.

Though a relatively small denomination in the U.S., the IGFSG spread rapidly in Brazil. In 2001, there were an estimated 10,000 churches throughout the country, concentrated primarily in the states of Minas Gerais, Parana, Guarana, and Sao Paulo. Brazilian migration to the northeast and the United States IGFSG's subsequent decision to focus on evangelization in this region has produced something of a reverse missionary movement which, nevertheless, is still connected to activities in Brazil.

In 1989, a U.S. missionary working in Brazil vacationed in Massachusetts and discovered the emerging Brazilian community. He planted a church in Somerville and invited a colleague from Rio, Pastor Emmanuel, to come and lead this new congregation. Pastor Luis first came to the area to replace Emmanuel who could not tolerate the cold.

In Brazil, the ICFSG has a national board of directors, whose 9-13 members are elected every four years. Each state also has a board of directors and is divided into divisions that are led by superintendents. In the United States, there is a national board and divisional or regional supervisors. The Eastern district, which includes Massachusetts, encompasses 13 states.

Transnational connections emerge in three ways. First, some migrants continue to belong to their churches in Valadares. Second, Pastor Luis also has personal relations with the pastors in Valadares, with his own former church, and with the members of the national board of directors. Third, national church leaders in the U.S. have heightened their efforts to coordinate worldwide missionary activities and to create stronger bonds between national churches. The Missions Department at the national church headquarters in Sao Paulo opened approximately eight years ago and now supports between 10-15 missionaries around the world. At the same time, the Department of Missions of the U.S. ICFSG also continues to support missionary work in Brazil and in other countries.

Where Pastor Luis falls in this web of relationships speaks to their informal, unsystematic character. When asked if he is considered a missionary, he responds “Ummmm, I’m a [chuckles] -- I’m in the middle. The church in Brazil considers me a missionary. But the church in Brazil does not support me.” Leaders asked him to come to the U.S. because he was the pastor at the national Four Square church in Sao Paulo. Many U.S. colleagues knew him because they came to his church when they visited Brazil.

The way he is supervised and how his work is supported also speaks to the informal nature of these relationships. To come to the U.S. he had to get permission from the national board. Though he is unlikely to return to his former congregation, he is still an official member of his Brazilian denomination at the same time that he is an official member of the denomination in the U.S. He did not have to be

reordained to be able to work in Boston. At first, he received some minimal support from the U.S. church because he is considered part of their congregational structure, not as a missionary. He also received a one-year, \$500 grant from his former church. He now receives some funds from the Missions Department in Brazil, again, not because he is a missionary but because he is friendly with the man who runs the office. He pays for most of his expenses on his own, however, with income from investments he still holds in Brazil.

Although Pastor Luis no longer has any formal responsibilities in the Brazilian church, he recognizes the importance of maintaining good relations with his colleagues there. He goes back to visit at least once a year in Sao Paulo and often invites pastors to come and preach in Massachusetts. Though he submits no formal report, he keeps the national board up-to-date about his church planting activities. Pastor Luis knows his position is somewhat unusual because Brazilian church leaders are likely to turn to him when they want to know what is going on in the U.S. since he was a former national leader. Other pastors might have to give up their credentials when they come to the U.S. but, he claims, they can be easily be reintegrated back into church when they return with “no problem at all.”

The personal connections that Pastor Luis maintains with his colleagues in Brazil parallel the ties that some migrants’ maintain to their sending churches. Pastor Luis himself also had a close relationship with the former Four Square Pastor in Valdares, although this man was subsequently assigned to another region. Since they realized they were caring for the same individuals, they often spoke about the challenges that they shared. The majority of Valadareneses, he says, “are still tithing there because before they left Valdares, they made a commitment to do so and it is very hard to ask them to break this vow.” Because their hearts, as well as aspects of their social and economic lives are still very rooted in Brazil, the church functions as an additional arena where they can express their continued Brazilian

membership. Though Pastor Luis hopes that they will ultimately develop stronger connections to their receiving church, he realizes that these things take time.

P: Is that okay that they still belong to their old churches or do you think that that ultimately needs to change?

PL: Well, we would prefer if they tithed here and were involved with mind, soul, and heart in the church where they are here. For example, when they are here, I would like it if they put all of themselves into the church where they are serving and where they are receiving spiritual counseling and preaching and everything. When I was in Valadares, we spoke about that, we exchanged ideas and Pastor Carlos said that it was very difficult for him to control those situations because he is not asking them to continue to send money to him. The people themselves do that.

P: Making that financial commitment, you mean?

PL: Yes, by themselves they say, "I will go and send money to help our church." Because they have their heart in that church. Before they came here, they didn't know another church. So when they come here, their heart is still there. It takes time for them to change their mind. If they decided to remain in this country for more time, then they start feeling some kind of love for the church here, and they begin to give something.

Finally, these personal and congregation-level ties form within the context of Brazil-to-U.S. and U.S.-to-Brazil oriented missionary efforts that display increasing levels of coordination with one another. Until recently, although several national churches engaged in these kinds of reverse or reciprocal missionary activities, there had been little formal collaboration or planning. In 2001, the new U.S. ICFSG President initiated a series of activities aimed at bringing the efforts of national churches more in sync. These efforts also encourage national actors to feel a greater sense of belonging to an international church. According to Pastor Dale, a U.S.-born former missionary, whose congregation is hosting one of the new churches that Pastor Luis planted,

PD: Last year, the American president invited all the Missions Departments that we have around the world to meet with him. I think he is trying to encourage us all to feel, whether we are Brazilian, Panamanian, or American, that we are all part of an international church that has various national parts that work together. He is trying to

bring about greater coordination in the mission activities, so that we will not duplicate our efforts. All of the countries are independent, equal members of the worldwide assembly and that meets once a year but this is an effort to strengthen our international church community.

P: What do you do at the worldwide conventions?

PD: They have a plenary session to make changes in the by-laws. Or they introduce new plans or changes they are putting into place that I have told you. In these conventions, they try to inform all the pastors and leaders about the new kind of vision that the church has now, to plant new churches in a more aggressive way... So the convention is very important. And also it's a time for relationships and a good time for people to come together at the services. The evening services, they are very powerful, very interesting services --- people are invited from all different countries to preach and to present some kind of choreography. It's wonderful.

Negotiated transnational churches arise from a set of personal and institutional relationships that emerge organically, in response to the challenges posed by the particular context in which they are embedded. Like the Catholic church, these ties deepen and thicken what, in some cases, are already global institutions or they create new global connections. In contrast to the Catholic church, however, they are negotiated with respect to authority, organization, and ritual. There is no leader or administrative hierarchy to set policy and dictate how things are done. When transnational migrants extend these cross-border connections, issues like power sharing, financing, and administrative practice have to be worked out. These negotiations give rise to a more diverse, diluted set of partnerships that are malleable and likely to shift over time. These groups function like what Manuel Castells has described as a network society – decentralized, flexible yet connected networks that provide customized services and goods (Vazquez et al. 2001, Berryman 1985). Just as decentralized, adaptive modes of production are better suited to meet the challenges of global economic competition, so flexible production and dissemination of religious goods may be better suited to meeting the needs of

contemporary religious consumers. Smaller models are also more adaptable and more responsive and, therefore, more likely to endure (Stoll and Levine 1997).⁶

Negotiated transnational churches also influence the political activities of their members in interesting ways. Membership directs believers toward civic engagement in the secular public sphere and provides them with an alternative type of belonging, based on their Christianity, which prevails in an imagined landscape that co-exists with or substitutes for its actual physical counterpart. Belonging based on religious identities comes with its own set of rights and responsibilities that can encourage secular civic engagement and/or engagement in a religious world also imbued with its own imperatives about social change.

According to Pastor Luis, Four Square doctrine provides its followers with clear ideas about what it means to be a good person and about one's contribution to the collective good.

PL: Well, there are some principles in the Bible that we teach about. First, people who have a sincere belief in God, who obey God, and what the word of God teaches us to be are people who live honestly, good husbands that respect their wives, and people who pay income tax, and who are faithful to their commitment to the church and the marriage. We teach young people not be involved with drugs and to remain pure until they get married, to not be involved in sexual activities before a wedding and those things. We consider people who follow this to be good people.

P: OK. So what do you feel is a good community?

PL: A good community is one where you feel loved, safe, and where you can grow. It is not a community where everyone is necessarily equal. Those who work hard can get ahead. Some people have good luck, others don't. But usually we live together without problems... Sure, it is our task to help people become good citizens, and we do that. I think that the church is, in my opinion, the best place to do these things because usually people who go to the church, usually they believe in their pastor. The pastors have a

⁶ Peterson and Vásquez (2001) make this same argument in their study of the Charismatic Catholic Renewal Movement (CCR). While parish life is characterized by a Fordist mode of production that results in a one-size-fits-all product, the CCR is post-Fordist, flexibly creating a customized product that is especially successful because it does not challenge established hierarchies.

strong influence over them. We try hard to make our people to be good people, good citizens.

The church, Pastor Luis declares, should play an active role in teaching people how to create good communities and how to be good citizens. His notion of citizenship, however, combines both civic and religious elements. It endows believers with tools they can use to become political actors in the U.S. and in Brazil but also locates them within a worldwide Christian community, the institutional structures of which are growing stronger and more widespread. Followers become good citizens by being good Christians. Being a good Christian provides them with a set of rules for being in the secular world and an alternative, religious place of belonging. The main point, Pastor Luis says, is that

...when they are good Christians, they are good citizens. So when we teach them to be consistent in their faith, they will be, at the same time, good people, good husbands, good people in the sense that they will try to help others, to try to make a difference in their neighborhoods. They will be concerned about other's well-being. So it's not necessary to become legal and become naturalized and so forth. But in the Bible itself, in the way that Christians should be, would be enough for them to be good citizens...There are a set of ways of being in the world that have nothing to do with whether you are Brazilian or whether you are from the U.S. but that have more to do with faith in Christ. I teach my followers that they have a responsibility to all mankind but especially to their fellow Christians. We live in a world where Christ is the king, not George Bush or Fernando Collar. I urge them to work to make this world a better place.

Pastor Luis, then, stresses to his followers that they belong to the Kingdom of Christ. Religious membership takes precedence over any dual nationality followers might express. At the same time, it accommodates national identities and guides appropriate behavior. Living a good Christian life equals being a member in good-standing in the local, national, and transnational communities.

Pastor Luis provided several examples of the ways in which religious membership has served as a springboard toward participation in the broader political community. He believes that while many

members of his church will always maintain strong economic and social ties to Brazil, he sees a shift toward more permanent residence in the U.S. As a result, he finds himself increasingly called upon to address the U.S. and Brazilian reality.

PL: We got a letter from an organization in Massachusetts, stating that there is a law in the House of Representatives, that they want to change a law to allow same-sex marriages. But then we, as a church, we made a decision to put our names and our address and everything else, to oppose that change.

P: How do you make decisions like that?

PL: I explained to them, I read the letter. I expressed to them that this is my opinion, that we should oppose that because of our faith. Then I said, if you would like to sign, the paper is over there, you just go and sign your name and print your name and address.

P: So like a petition?

PL: Yes. Usually Brazilians are not very interested in those things, but this time to my surprise, they were there.

P: Because nobody would ever do anything like that in Brazil.

PL: No, no. We don't do that. It's different. But here, to my surprise they were very interested and they signed. I took a look and there were many many people that signed it.

Another example involves creating multi-ethnic communities through their common Christianity.

PL: We are trying to have large events, like we had in 1999. I don't know if you were here, but we had a special prayer event in the Fleet Center. We had 14,000 Brazilians and Hispanics, we worked together to organize it, the Brazilian and the Hispanic ministers, and it really worked. And we are now planning to have another one like this, but this time we would like to involve the Haitians and maybe other groups. And this time we would like to have 19,000 or 20,000, that's the capacity. Once you begin working together, and you have some success, people begin to see themselves as part of the same Christian community no matter where they come from... We want to include Haitians and Americans because we thought that Brazilians and Hispanics are not representative of the Christian force in, let's say Massachusetts, or someplace. We want them to be with us because it would be more representative to outsiders. And we

would also like to get better coverage in the media. Usually the Americans are better at obtaining this kind of coverage.

P: Why is it important to you to do this?

PL: I think for two reasons. One thing is that people who come from all over the world will feel a connection to one another and they will begin to watch out for each other and help each other out. The second thing is that the general public will see the force of the Christian community in Massachusetts and politicians and leaders will begin to realize that even though we are immigrants we are strong.

At the same time, Pastor Luis also still finds himself called upon to talk about issues in Brazil. Even if the members of his church are putting down roots in the U.S., he says, they will still want to stay involved in what goes on “at home.” “Even if they live here forever, the Christian family they belong to knows no boundaries.

Brazil will always be a big part of their focus. So, when there are elections in Brazil, or some kind of crisis, we are also talking about what to do and what Christ would want from us. A Christian family is one that stays united wherever its members are. So the members of our church have to continue to help their relatives and keep on working to make Brazil a better place. I tell them being good means being good in all places wherever you have responsibilities, all over the world.

Last year, Pastor Luis recalls, the congregation spent a good deal of time discussing the pros and cons of an special fund created by the Mayor of Valadares to stimulate migrant investment in the region. Contributors received higher-than-average interest rates on their contributions and the earnings generated were earmarked for projects that would benefit the city.

For about a month or two months, I don't remember exactly, we talked about this almost every Sunday. They wanted to know whether I thought this was a good idea. So many of them are very distrustful of the government because there is so much corruption. I told them it thought it was important to strike a balance between trying to get ahead in the U.S. and helping the religious and economic life of Brazil. I don't say that they shouldn't make investments that help Valadares but they shouldn't do this at the expense of helping their churches at home.

In sum, Pastor Luis, along with several other Baptist and Assemblies of God pastors in this study, promote two kinds of citizenship among their members, each with consequences for their participation in their home and host-country public spheres. On the one hand, Pastor Luis uses theology to invoke a sense of belonging and responsibility toward the broad collective good. Christian teachings provide the door through which migrants enter the informal political arena. On the other hand, he situates his followers in the Kingdom of Christ and teaches that being a good citizen is being a good Christian. This Christian landscape takes precedence for some believers. It is here that they see themselves living and their good works are motivated by their religious identities not out of a sense of ethnic pride or patriotism. Above all, they are religious citizens.

When I volunteer at the soup kitchen or at my child's school, it is because this is what God would want me to do. I am not guided by what the Worker's Party has to say about Brazil or the Democratic Party has to say about here. I live in a Christian world that just happens to have national boundaries which criss-cross it. If what good I do helps bring about political change, that's okay with me, but that is not my primary goal (Eliana, 47 year old migrant, Framingham).

In contrast, other church members felt much more firmly rooted in the secular world. They interpreted Christ's teachings as a call to go outside their religious communities to try to make a difference. Religious membership encouraged them to exercise substantive citizenship and religious teachings provided their guide for doing so.

I know there are someone people who think of themselves as living in the Kingdom of Christ. Pastor Luis talks about that a lot. But I see myself as firmly planted on the ground. My life is here and in Brazil. I feel very strongly about my church and about the lessons it teaches. But I see these lessons as telling me to get involved in the world around me. So when the police want to meet with the Brazilian community to understand us better or there are meetings to try to get people driver's licenses (which is

illegal without a social security card), I go. My God tells me to be here and to help out (Umberto, 52 year old migrant, Framingham)

Recreated Transnational Religious Organizations

The experiences of Gujarati Hindus from the Baroda district in India, suggests a third type of recreated transnational religious organization.⁷ Migrants started their own religious groups when they came to the United States because there were so few established organizations to receive them. They either formed organizations with guidance from home-country leaders, or Indian religious leaders came to areas where large numbers of immigrants resided and established U.S.-based organizations with migrant support. Most of these organizations function like franchises or chapters of their counterpart organizations in India. Franchises are run primarily by migrants who periodically receive resources, financing, and guidance from sending-country leadership while chapters are supported and supervised regularly by sending-country leaders.

The Devotional Associates of Yogeshwar or the Swadhyaya movement is one group that has been recreated in the U.S. Swadhyaya groups are informally organized in India. Families living in the same neighborhood may get together once or twice a week to chant *bhajans* and to watch and discuss videotapes of lectures by Dadaji, the group's founder. Larger, citywide meetings take place on Sundays. According to Didiji, Dadaji's daughter and successor, leadership emerges consensually; those who are the most knowledgeable and experienced become *motobhais* or elder brothers of each group. Swadhyaya is, at its core, a family. Members do what they are asked to do because it is their duty as family members.

⁷ Williams calls these Hindu Organizations of Indian Americans "made in the U.S.A...assembled in the U.S. from imported components by relatively unskilled labor (at least unskilled by traditional standards) and adapted to fit new designs to reach a new and growing market." (1992:230).

When people move, this family becomes transnational. It remains a close one, however, because strong networks continue to link members in the U.S., England, and in India. The social lives of these individuals and the business of building Swadhyaya overlap. For example, leaders in Mumbai said that it was not unusual for them to speak almost everyday with someone from the U.S. because they were friends more than religious co-workers and because Dr. Patel, a leader in the migrant community was also one of Dadaji's physicians. During the course of conversations about health issues, concerns about Swadhyaya are also discussed. Similarly, Jitubhai, who supervises Swadhyaya activities in the university town of Vidyanagar said he remains in close touch with many of his former students, who now live in the northeastern U.S. If he hears that someone is facing family or financial difficulties, he calls one of the other *Motobhais* he is close to and asks them to intervene on his behalf.

When someone is facing divorce or a broken family, I call Dr. Bhorat and ask him to see if there is anything he can do. We stay close to our people when they face this kind of problem no matter where they are.. We try to understand what they are facing, whether it be an economic, psychological or any other kind of problem. If the problem is with someone here, I will write a letter or go to see the family. If the problem is with someone in the U.S. we will call Dr. Bhorat or one of the other fellows and say please go there, contact him, and try to help him solve the problem.

The institutional context within which religious communities operate in the U.S. demands that they be more systematically organized. Religious groups need to act like formal congregations to raise funds, obtain permits, or rent meeting halls. They need to be officially registered and officially administered by a board of directors to secure tax exempt status (Warner and Wittner 1995). As a result, the organization of Swadhyaya activities in the U.S. becomes much more highly structured. Local groups have been organized into nine geographic regions. Each region has a coordinator who advise the groups under his jurisdiction regularly and also consults bi-monthly with the other regional coordinators.

Migrant Swadyaya members have adapted Dadaji's teachings so they can continue to observe

them even though they are living very different lives. The principles and values guiding their activities are the same, they say, but they take on different forms. For example, all followers are supposed to “devote time to God” by participating in Yogeshwar Krishi. In India, these are cooperative farms or fishing enterprises, created by the movement. Members donate a certain amount of labor each month and then distribute what they earn to needy members of their communities. To do Yogeshwar Krishi in Chicago, Swadadhyyees formed a small company that makes ink refills for pens. In addition to their regular jobs, members spend some spare time making these items and donate the profits back to Swadhyaya. In Massachusetts, groups of families get together to assemble circuit boards on contract from computer companies. Thus far, the money earned through these efforts has been sent back to India, though several respondents felt there was no reason why these funds could not be used to help people in the U.S.

Swadhaya leaders also reflected that they had modified their messages to make them more in line with the U.S. migrant experience. Young people, in particular, said one U.S. coordinator, need to hear something that can help counteract the heightened materialism they are exposed to. They have less time for religion and they expect scientific, factual answers to the questions life poses. The activities of the Divine Brain Trust (DBT), a special program created to teach young people about Swadhyaya, have been altered accordingly. During Sunday morning meetings, while their parents gather to listen to Dadaji’s lectures, teenagers meet together with two *Motobhais* who translate a summary and then lead them in discussions about the relevance of these ideas for life in the U.S.

Those of us who are working here and those who are working there have talked about it a lot. When you are in the U.S. some modifications are required. We try to suggest to them that there is more to life than making money. That money is a tool not the aim. You cannot neglect it but it cannot be the whole thing. We also think that kids who

grow up there expect a more factual message. They work hard, so they need to hear something direct (Jitubhai, 45 year old, Swadhyaya leader, India)

The International Swaminarayan Satsang Organization (ISSO) provides a second example of a recreated transnational organization. The small community of Swaminarayan followers who migrated to Massachusetts used to meet informally with one another at someone's home. They would travel to New Jersey, where one of the largest temples in the U.S. is located, to celebrate special events. A fairly steady stream of leaders from Ahmedabad, where the ISSO headquarters is located, also visited Massachusetts on a regular basis. Some migrants came to the U.S. with long family histories of Swaminarayan membership. Others became more involved in the group when these leaders visited their homes (which they could do because the community initially involved such small numbers). Migrants felt quite honored by these visits and inspired to become loyal members or even leaders themselves, as Mahendra, a 45 year old migrant described,

M: Yes. Like, when he came to visit America, right? Compared to India, we have very less population here, so we have a chance to invite him individually to our house. Even I was able to invite him.

P: How often did he come?

M: In my house, I think I invited him about 8 times.

P: Wow.

M: So, if he came to Lowell, right? We would have about 50-60 people interested in inviting him to their house. And they are not too far from the temple. And he can at least arrange with that many people, like he can come about 10 minutes to their house, and they feel proud of that. So we keep doing that. So now you become closer, and you know him person. Then during one visit, he said it would be better if we stopped renting a hall every time. You could do more and do it the way you want to if you had your own place. So then we started fundraising to build a temple.

The ISSO in Lowell functions like a chapter of the ISSO in India. It has its own 12-member board of

directors. There is a state-wide Massachusetts organization as well as a national group. Again, strong social ties link members within the U.S. and in India. This high level of personal relations between national-level leaders, and the basic values underlying the group, transform the national organization into something like a revolving loan and skill fund. National leaders meet one another constantly at regularly-scheduled meetings and during the yearly round of special celebrations, inaugurations, and visits by Indian leaders to which state and local chapters normally send delegations. As a result, when a group in one part of the country needs help building a facility or recruiting more members, leaders from other parts of the country go and help them out. Once that group is on its way, the national-level organization turns its attention to the next challenge. According to Ghananesh, a 43 year old migrant leader of the Temple in Lowell,

Our group was always contributing money to other groups that were building temples. There is no set amount. Each group gives according to its own capacity. We used to give money and then when it was time for us to build our temple, those chapters supported us. Like in New Jersey, they say, "OK, we will give you \$40,000." And the California chapter said they would give so much and the Chicago Chapter gave us some money. And in the meantime, we were raising our own money. Whenever there was a supper, people would contribute something and then we were able to go to the bank and they gave us a loan

Like their Catholic and Protestant counterparts, these institutional arrangements, and the theological messages they impart, also influence migrants' continued participation in their home and host communities. Two significant differences characterize the Gujarati case, however. First, recreated organizations clearly play a much greater role in reinforcing sending country involvements than in promoting incorporation into the U.S. In fact, in many cases, respondents saw religious belonging as a way to protect themselves and their children from what they perceived as inferior Western values. Despite fairly high levels of economic and residential integration, they want to remain socially apart.

While they had spent an average of more than 15 years in the U.S., they could cite few examples of times when they participated in the public sphere.

Certain institutional arrangements reinforce this continuing focus on India at the expense of members' social integration into the U.S. First, the ISSO *Sadhus* who are sent to lead the community in the U.S. know little about what goes on outside the temple walls. They speak no English. They are not permitted to interact with women. They are completely dependent upon their male followers to take care of their daily needs. As a result, they are unable to counsel members about the everyday challenges of immigrant life because they learn close to nothing about it. They can do little to encourage members to get involved in the broader community because they themselves have such minimal contact with the secular world.

Furthermore, both groups have created new programs which complement the personal and organizational ties to India already in place. Both Swadhyaya and the ISSO have set up post-secondary school training courses for the children of immigrants. These pupils are sent by their parents for one to two years to India to strengthen their religious education and to ensure that they are fully immersed in "our Indian culture and values." The ISSO established a two-year academic program. The Swadhyaya approach is more informal. According to Jitubhai,

We have set up a kind of school for boys and girls to come back here and learn Indian values. Last year, 20 children came from New Jersey. They are kids who grew up in the U.S. and then come here after they have participated in the Divine Brain Trust (DBT). They come here for one year of cultural education after they graduate from school in the U.S. or in London. What is included in the course is arranged by Dadaji. They come so they can spend time close to Dada and Didiji. You know, 90% of what Swadhyaya has to offer is learned through an indirect approach. So you learn by living and watching.

Like the case of the Irish Catholic Church, for many Gujaratis, religious membership broadens and redirects the locus of sending-country attachments, and reinforces membership attachments to a broader, more-urban India. Joshbhai, a 54 year old migrant from the village of Khandahar, for example, still maintains close contacts with the Swadhyaya group in his sending community but he also feels a sense of connection to Mumbai because that is where Didiji resides. Similarly, ISSO members look to Ahmedabad for guidance from leaders there. The 39 year old Chandresh returns to the city at least once a year to meet with the *Sadhus*. He normally consults with them about at least twice a month about problems he is facing. This broadening of focus may make transnational practices more likely to endure. Though it is unlikely that Joshbhai and Chandresh or their children will return to their sending village to do business or to live, they may be more inclined to invest in Mumbai, particularly if the heart of their religious life lies there. Their transnational religious practices inscribe them in this broader social field which might be more conducive to enduring transnational involvements.

The second difference in the way that recreated transnational religious organizations influence the sustained attachments of their members to their home and host communities is the way in which they think about what it means to be a good person and a good citizen. Both Swadhyaya and ISSO members expressed a somewhat different idea about how to achieve these goals than their Protestant and Catholic counterparts. Again, most Swadhyayees and ISSO members also said that good people were those who took care of the hungry, fed the naked, paid their taxes, and followed the rules and that good societies were one's in which people acted in this way. Social change, however, comes about through individual change. Once individuals recognize the indwelling God within them, they will become better people and through these multiple individual transformations, a better world will be achieved.

The result is civic engagement by accident. One of Dadaji's goals is to enable followers to

extricate themselves from the claims of political strongmen. By solving their own problems, he claims, individuals become less dependent on local elites and corrupt government officials. Dadaji urges followers to stay out of politics. Sociopolitical change, he says, stems from individual change. As more and more people become cognizant of the holiness within them, they will change their behavior and this, in turn, creates a more just, equitable society.

Though Swadhyaya followers often undertake community improvement projects as part of Yogeshwar Krishi, they are adamantly against calling these political acts. In fact, a number of respondents felt it would be overstepping their *dharma* or duty for them to become involved in politics. Their first responsibility was to their families and their neighbors. To think about changing the society as a whole or taking a leadership role in organizing such an effort would be presumptuous.

To some degree, this may be a question of semantics. Though they would not call it political, other members felt they were setting an example for Americans that would ultimately lead to positive changes in U.S. society. Avanti, a 52 year old migrant described this as follows, “We must change ourselves before we change society as a whole. But I do think I am setting an example by my behavior. The other day, I found \$200 at work. Now, I could have pocketed that money. But I gave it to my supervisor. And I felt that by doing that I was setting an example for others of the way one should act. I was teaching them about Swadhyaya through my actions.” Part of Avanti’s religious identity includes thinking of herself as a social change agent. It remains to be seen if this will assume a more explicit, organized form as she spends more years in the U.S.

MOVING FORWARD – THE NEED FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The institutional connections that migration engenders, and that reinforce and are reinforced by already-global aspects of religious life, transform religion into a powerful underexplored site of transnational belonging. The extended, negotiated, and recreated transnational religious organizations in this study enable migrants to stay connected to their sending communities at the same time that they are incorporated into the U.S. They integrate migrants into cross-border institutional networks which enable them to access services, achieve representation, and make demands vis a vis sending and receiving-country civic and political life. Though migration weakens the state-subject relation, transforming many individuals into partial political members because they are not naturalized, religious participation reconnects them to states by virtue of the church-state relationship.

Religious institutions become places where a common vocabulary and shared set of expectations about rights and responsibilities are worked out. Table One summarizes these preliminary findings. In some cases, transnational religious life serves as the door through which migrants enter informal politics. In other cases, transnational religious life provides an alternative script for belonging and social change through personal transformation and by example or because believers see themselves as living within and responsible for improving the religiously-defined world in which they locate themselves. Finally, these findings underscore the importance of taking into account how many religious transnational practices occur sub-nationally or between local, state, or regional sending- and receiving-country actors, shifting and expanding the goals of transnational activism in ways that may make it more sustainable for the long term.

Clearly, the three types of transnational religious organizations I have described here are nascent prototypes that must be developed further and whose forms and consequences must be more systematically understood. Doing so not only brings to light aspects of the globalization of religion, but

highlights the ways in which these dynamics inform and are informed by other fields of sociological research. Below, I propose areas for further study, to deepen our understanding of transnational religious life and to suggest ways in which the sociology of religion can inform and be informed by other subfields.

Organizational sociology raises interesting questions about the relationship between organizations and the environments in which they operate. Transnational economic, political, and religious institutions literally shift the boundaries of these questions. We need to understand how, under what circumstances, and with what effect. A first step is to specify the character and scope of the religious organizational field more systematically. Some of its constituent elements suggested here include formal structural ties at the local, regional, and national levels; informal ties between leaders and members; labor power and resource exchanges; funding; and programmatic coordination. What other elements constitute transnational religious organizations? How are these combined and with what effect?

Furthermore, organizational sociologists conceptualize organizational environments as sets of “institutional sectors or fields, each containing recipes for appropriate organizational forms and scripts for the appropriate performance of organizational roles” (Sutton 1997:947). Transnational religious groups are open, constantly-evolving systems, that operate in multiple, multi-layered fields transcending national boundaries. How are the processes of institutionalization and institutional change altered when they are enacted across borders? If, as neoinstitutionalists argue, institutions are cognitive phenomena – or recipes and scripts for behavior making the world predictable and manageable and reducing uncertainty, what happens when organizations must combine rules, rituals, and routines from more than one setting? What kind of rescripting or cultural renegotiation occurs? What explains how institutional change actually occurs? If goals are “less clear guides to action and more emergent consequences of

organizational discourse” (Dimaggio 1998:10), meaning that organizations act and then think rather than thinking before they act, in what ways do these processes change when they take place across borders? How much of what we know about how transnational corporations and social movements is relevant to religious institutions or is there something about religious organizations that makes them an exceptional case?

Economic sociologists would ask if the social networks and resources engendered by participating in religious institutions result in economic advantages. Are some groups, though they cross borders, constituted such that values like enforceable trust and bounded solidarity remain salient? Under what circumstances do religious networks translate into networks for finding jobs and housing? Do they work differently than their non-religious equivalents such as hometown associations or political groups?

Political sociology raises questions about the relationship between religion and politics. The preliminary findings outlined here highlight a range of participatory practices encouraged by religious membership that can be directed at the home and host country. These include supporting referendums and candidates, organizing in support of community improvement projects, mobilizing in response to humanitarian crises and natural disasters, and learning leadership, fundraising, or organizing skills that are useful in multiple contexts. Like transnational religious organizations in general, the range and frequency of these types of practices must also be specified more systematically. What other kinds of “political” activities emerge from churchgoing? What explains when these are directed towards the home or host country and with what effect? What kinds of activities work best as training grounds for civic engagement and why? How do sending country notions about political participation and governance shape what migrants do both inside and outside their churches? In what ways do these cross-border

activities differ from those nonmigrants engage in to promote change from afar? How does the “global citizenship” expressed by the contributor to an NGO like Oxfam differ from the Hindu who supports development projects in her community of origin.

Finally, to what extent will transnational practices remain salient for the second generation? It makes sense that the children of immigrants born in the U.S., or who spend most of their formative years in this country, would feel their strongest sense of attachment to their family’s adopted, rather than ancestral, home. They receive their primary socialization from the U.S. educational system, the media, and the marketplace. Even if they travel frequently to their parents’ countries of origin or host numerous relatives during extended visits, the air they breathe, the food they eat, and their primary social contacts are with North Americans. Several recent studies find that this is, in fact, the case (Kasinitz, Waters, and Mollenkopf 2001, Rumbaut 2001).

It may be premature, however, to conclude definitively that most second generation young adults are unlikely to engage in transnational practices. Though they be much less frequent and more narrow in scope than the transnational practices that the first generation engages in, other studies indicate that second generation transnational practices often emerge in unexpected forms and in unexpected places (Kibria 2001, Espiritu and Tran 2001). What role will religion play in fostering these relations?

Robert Bellah (1967) based his notion of civil religion on a U.S. that was much less diverse than it is today. The findings outlined here suggest that it is no longer sufficient to analyze religious life in the U.S. by looking only at dynamics taking place within our borders. Instead, we must understand how new migrants’ transnational religious practices, and subsequent religious globalization, challenge America’s civil religion and the civic and political life of the countries they leave behind.

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