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# Global Arab World Migrations and Diasporas

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## GLOBAL ARAB WORLD MIGRATIONS AND DIASPORAS

Louise Cainkar

*Don't live in the world as if you were renting or here only for the summer,  
but act as if it was your [mother's] house.*

—Nazim Hikmet

This article provides a comprehensive overview of the quantitative dimensions of contemporary Arab world migrations and diasporas, as well as a commentary on qualitative dimensions of pertinent English-language scholarship.<sup>1</sup> It offers a global context within which scholars may situate their work in order to enhance communication and comparability across scholarly disciplines and regions. Scholars who study Arab world migrations and diasporas in Europe are not often in conversation with those studying these migrations and diasporas in North America or in the Gulf states. The same can be said for scholars who study Arab world migrations and diasporas in Malaysia, China, or Australia, as well as South America, Africa, or the Caribbean. Similarly, scholars approaching these

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topics from the paradigms of postcolonial theory, anthropology, cultural studies, demography, history, comparative literature, or sociology do not often enough engage relevant scholarship outside of their paradigm. Only occasionally do scholars of different disciplines gather together to present their work at scholarly meetings, and even then we seem to speak different languages.<sup>2</sup> Disciplinary differences are healthy and important for the range of perspectives they contribute, but an overarching framework—such as the one offered here—will better enable us to make comparisons across place, time, and social contexts, and to deploy our conceptual categories “in a relational manner.”<sup>3</sup>

Developing such an overview of current Arab migrations and diasporas requires acknowledging the serious limitations inherent to the task. Demographic data are always subject to both random and systematic error; accuracy in migrant demography is especially elusive. Terminology and measurement tools vary according to who is doing the counting and how they construct their categories. Since demography is always connected to place, dominant ideologies, laws, categories, and nomenclatures where the counting occurs introduce variations. Demographic statistics speak to those who have been counted; there are many reasons why migrants might evade enumeration, for example, due to legal or political status. Furthermore, in some enumerations persons born on a state’s soil are considered “foreign-born” if they maintain the nationality of their parents and have not naturalized, while other states may count them as “native-born.” These variations are tied to state ideologies of nation and citizenship and corresponding rules concerning naturalization (where available), thus making it difficult to compare quantitatively across sites.

The numbers provided in this article can offer a general framework for understanding the breadth and character of Arab world migrations and diasporas today. However, it is incumbent on specialists of each migrant location to do the tough investigative work needed for quantitative precision and comparability, including revealing those who are uncounted. Finally, demographic data on migrants tend to be organized by country of birth, potentially masking meaningful distinctions between different groups from the same country of origin. Although the data presented here were tabulated and published (by others) as Arab migration data, I use the term “Arab world migration” to highlight that we are not necessarily describing cultural or ethnic groups, but people who come from a particular place.

There are many indigenous and diasporic peoples living in, moving through, and leaving the Arab world who are not “Arabs,” such as Berbers, Kurds, Armenians, Assyrians, and Circassians, to name a few.

In the process of searching for comparable quantitative data, I discovered that categories of quantification have a reifying tendency that has infected our qualitative research as well. These categories direct our gaze in specific ways that cause us to highlight certain matters while overlooking others, creating an overall imbalanced body of scholarly literature on Arab world migrations and diasporas. This imbalance is particularly notable when one compares the English-language scholarly literature on Arab world migrants living within the Arab world to that on Arab world migrants living outside of it. In the case of the former, the dominant focus is on state policies, occupations, labor conditions, and remittances while the latter tends to emphasize social, cultural, and political struggles, adaptations, constructed memories, and hybridities. This pattern of scholarship might make sense if we believe that official categories of migrants should drive our intellectual curiosities, but my argument is that when we do so, we miss a lot.

### **Categories and Paradigms**

Although migration is a perennial human phenomenon, it was not systematically and globally tabulated until the twentieth century. This era was characterized by decolonization and the creation of scores of formally and often arbitrarily bounded nation-states; global wars and mass movements of displaced persons; the formation of the United Nations and its affiliated agencies; the development of and implementation of rules concerning identity cards, official travel documents, and visas, with corresponding intra- and inter-state controls on human movement; and the construction of technical categorizations of people in motion. Akin to the development processes of earlier nation-states, new ruling powers and dominant groups defined the boundaries of human membership in the state—conferring or denying legal, social, and cultural citizenship—and constructing imaginaries of national identity intended to supersede all other identities. They thereby created and solidified socially constructed distinctions between insiders and outsiders. Over time, international organizations and state authorities developed technical categories to distinguish between types of migrants, and then scholars increasingly referred to international migrants by the categories the latter inhabited. They made distinctions between permanent

and temporary, forced and voluntary, refugee and asylee, documented and undocumented, labor migrant, student migrant, family migrant, guest, alien, tourist, resident, and citizen. These categorizations, however, obscured migrants' shared qualities.

The quantitative overview of current Arab world migrations and diasporas presented here utilizes the broad UN definition of "migrant"—"any person who changes his or her country of usual residence" (usually excluding visitors, business travelers, and students, among others). The qualitative discussion also eschews the technical subcategories in order to highlight how the reification of categories operates in scholarly work. We do risk displacing some important specificities in the process, something Shami has called "erasure through inclusion" when discussing the anthropological treatment of the refugee in the transnational paradigm:

Just like everyone else, if more so, the refugee is mobile, uprooted, dislocated, and lonely. . . . [T]he refugee is simply one of many who travel this landscape, together with tourists, guest workers, exiles, business consultants, expatriate experts, roving academics, and the like. The fact that the refugee appears as a term couched between other terms of mobile existence is erasure *through* inclusion.<sup>4</sup>

Yet if my objective is developing an overarching framework that will allow us to make comparisons across place, time, and social context, I believe distinctions should at least initially be left behind. Diaspora studies scholars similarly engage in collapsing categories when they treat multiple generations as a single transnational unit, since the diasporic subject is defined not by physical movement per se but by identification with and social and emotional ties to the homeland.<sup>5</sup> For example, Safran's framework for a diaspora's defining characteristics include: dispersion from an original center, collective memory of homeland, social distance from the host society, communally shared hope for return, and solidarity around commitment to building the homeland.<sup>6</sup> Ho's work takes a different angle all together, demonstrating how "absence shapes the diasporic experience. . . . To be in one place is to be absent everywhere else."<sup>7</sup> Sociologists who focus on "transnational social fields"<sup>8</sup> often collapse subject categories in favor of networks and linkages while sociologists interested in the relationship between identity and culture consider it important to distinguish between migrant generations. They assert that persons who have left their homelands as adults have qualita-

tively different experiences from those born in the “host” country, and the experiences of subsequent generations are in turn different from both of the aforementioned groups.<sup>9</sup> Brubaker believes that the diaspora concept has been deployed too broadly, as it has been applied “essentially to any and every nameable population category that is to some extent dispersed in space.” For him, the concept loses its meaning when groups like “labour migrants who maintain (to some degree) emotional and social ties with a homeland,”<sup>10</sup> are captured within it.

While these theoretical and conceptual discussions and debates are important for refining our scholarly work, they do not bring us closer to a comprehensive and comparative overview in which to situate it. Being clear about whom we are speaking is crucial to our ability to make global and cross-cultural comparisons; the danger comes when categories become reified and the shared qualities of migrants are obscured. When official statuses and state policies shape the parameters of our research queries—instead of being viewed as the producers of variation that they are—questions are asked about one migrant type that are not asked of another. In fact, every categorical type and every generation of migrant, and non-migrants alike, makes similar demands of their social conditions, the minimum of which is human dignity. Although our perspectives and conceptual schemes may differ, much of our scholarly work on the Arab migrant and diasporic subject shares a qualitative theme or problematic rooted in the concept of human dignity, and it is through this commonality that we can engage each other’s work. It is this very dignity that most often eludes migrants when they take on the status of stranger. Nazim Hikmet’s poetic call to live as if at home, and not a visitor, crystallizes a key challenge for migrants of any generation: finding dignity, security, solace, rootedness, and happiness outside one’s symbolic “mother’s house,” is especially difficult when one is seen by others as temporary, merely a renter.

### **Human Dignity**

The concept of human dignity can encompass most of our disciplinary concerns and provide a framework for cross-disciplinary communication. Economist Amartya Sen and philosopher Martha Nussbaum define human dignity as the ability to act on one’s human capabilities. It lies in possessing the agency to express oneself politically, civilly, socially, and

culturally without arbitrary encumbrances or economic barriers.<sup>11</sup> The crafters of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as well as scholars such as Karl Marx recognized human dignity as the fundamental concept undergirding human rights and equality. Journalist Anthony Shadid, at the height of the Egyptian uprising, articulated dignity as the opposite of humiliation and hopelessness, something denied when the pursuit of one's most basic dreams has been circumscribed:

“Dignity” (*karamah*) was a word often used Wednesday [2 February 2011], and its emphasis underlined the breadth of a movement that is, so far, leaderless. Neither the Brotherhood nor a handful of opposition leaders—men like Mohammed ElBaradei or Ayman Nour—have managed to articulate hopelessness, the humiliations at the hands of the police and the outrage at having too little money to marry, echoed in the streets of Palestinian camps in Jordan and in the urban misery of Baghdad's Sadr City.<sup>12</sup>

Human dignity is a useful overarching term because it does not distinguish between colonial, postcolonial, diasporic, or transnational subjects. It does not distinguish between migrant and non-migrant, documented or undocumented migrant, first- or second-generation migrant, voluntary or forced migrant, labor or family migrant, permanent or temporary migrant. A dignified state of being might be considered the opposite of otherness, a social position that constricts agency and allows the powerful to commit acts of degradation. Dignity includes being able to live in a place where no one feels free to spit on you or to call your children terrorists. Dignity precludes distributing civil and political rights according to a dress code, preferred language, socioeconomic status, or hegemonic lifestyle.

Human dignity transcends borders, but when borders become sites of exclusion, dignity is one of the first sites of battle. Migrants of any type and all generations seek a life of dignity and the freedom to construct a world that offers a sense of safety, some of the comforts of the familiar, the chance to provide life's fundamental necessities for self and others, and access to the resources to advance their capabilities. Yet they often discover a world of boundaries and exclusions, a condition that may hold true whether they are officially welcomed or spurned, temporary or permanent, an immigrant, refugee, asylee, or guest worker, and whether they are wealthy, middle-class,

or poor. Although financial resources can surely help to ease some of the pain and disruptions caused by the migratory experience, dignity is something that cannot be purchased. Indeed, the migrant's quest for human dignity is different only in context from that of every human being.

One way of thinking about human dignity and its relationship to migrations and diasporas within and outside of the Arab world is to cast off analytic, conceptual, and technical categories of migrations and diasporas and think instead of migration and the popular revolutions that have occurred across the Arab world (often referred to as "the Arab Spring") as two sides of the same coin. Migration and revolution are acts of human agency that demand more. Both emerge from discontent with authoritarianism, corruption, blocked aspirations, obstructed possibilities, and social inequalities, and the loss of a sense of agency that accompanies these conditions. Neither migration nor revolution is principally a response to poverty, even though high levels of it may be present. Indeed, research shows that it is not the poorest members of any society that are likely to lead revolutions or to migrate, in part because of the greater damage done to their agency. Only at poignant, some call them epic, historic moments do sweeping waves of popular rebellions such as "the Arab Spring" occur. Migration, on the other hand, is a type of unremitting human rebellion. It is the perennial and persistent, indeed unstoppable, human quest for dignity and autonomy. While the place in which the migrant lands, the way in which s/he arrives, and the paperwork s/he carries may determine his or her category as a migrant, the quest of all migrants is the same.

### **Arab World Defined**

In contemporary usage, "the Arab world" defines the territories of the twenty-two members of the League of Arab States, with a population of some 318.5 million persons.<sup>13</sup> Members include: Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen. Scholars often describe these areas regionally, using the concepts Arab Maghrib, Arab Mashriq, and the Gulf states. The Arab Maghrib (west) is commonly understood as composed of Morocco, Western Sahara, Algeria, Tunisia, Mauritania, and Libya. The Arab Mashriq (east) is understood as composed of Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Syria, and Yemen, and on occasion Egypt. Scholars often refer to the Levant (or



eastern Mediterranean), a place of significant historic emigration, politically organized under the Ottoman Empire as Bilad al-Sham or Greater Syria, including contemporary Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and historic Palestine. The Gulf states are the Arab states on the Arabian Peninsula save Yemen, and are synonymous with the current members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC): Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. Scholars deploy other geographic terms including North Africa (the Arab Maghrib plus Egypt and Sudan), the “Middle East” (the Arab Mashriq, GCC, and Israel and often encompassing a larger area that is not solely Arab), and the Horn of Africa (Somalia and Djibouti, as well as non-Arab League members Eritrea and Ethiopia). The Comoros Islands are situated off the southeast coast of Africa. Scholars may critique the composition of each of these geographic categories because they are social constructions that rely on assumptions about the salient meaning of particular histories and features. In particular, “the Middle East” is a highly problematic category because its definition and scope vary widely, usually based on criteria of importance to external actors and interests. Furthermore, the political/territorial boundaries of all of these nation-states were socially and in many cases arbitrarily constructed, largely by colonial powers.

With regard to major migration patterns, some of these countries are migrant-exporting states while others are migrant-importing states. The countries with relatively high rates of emigration are Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Mauritania, Morocco, Palestine, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, and Yemen. The GCC states and Libya (until 2012) are major migrant importing states. The terminology I use in this article is largely that of data collectors and demographic analysts and is clearly defined in its context.

### **Arab World Migration Overview**

Globally some 214 million people lived as international migrants—persons who have changed their country of usual residence—in 2010. This is about 3.1 percent of the world’s population or one of every thirty-two persons.<sup>14</sup> The geographic spread of these migrants is wider than at any prior historical time and the value of their remittances has increased exponentially over the past few decades. A range of new and old factors shape the movement patterns of today’s international migrants: geographic proximity, concerns for safety, historic economic relationships, state policies, political and economic conditions, family reunification, natural disasters, war, social networks,

knowledge of work opportunities, availability of visas, international agencies, labor recruiters, and human traffickers. Some four percent of persons originating in an Arab state are international migrants including, most notably, one of every thirteen Lebanese.<sup>15</sup>

**Table 1: Current International Migrants from the Arab World**

	Estimated Total	Proportion of Current Arab World Migrants
Current Arab World Migrants <sup>a</sup>	13 million	
<b>Inside the Arab World<sup>b</sup></b>	5.85 million	45 percent
<b>Outside the Arab World<sup>c</sup></b>	7.15 million	55 percent
OECD Countries <sup>d</sup>	4.9 million	38 percent
In France	2.3 million	
In "Countries of Immigration"	980,000	
Rest of World	2.3 million	18 percent

*Compiled by Louise Cainkar from comparable sources.*

<sup>a</sup> International Organization of Migration, "Intra-Regional Labour Mobility in the Arab World Facts and Figures, Cairo." Development Research Centre, Global Migrant Origin Database, Updated March 2007. [http://www.migrationdrc.org/research/typesofmigration/global\\_migrant\\_origin\\_database.html](http://www.migrationdrc.org/research/typesofmigration/global_migrant_origin_database.html) [2000 census data. Foreign born.]

<sup>b</sup> Ibid.

<sup>c</sup> Jean-Christophe Dumont, *Immigrants from Arab Countries to the OECD: From the Past to the Future*. United Nations Expert Group Meeting on International Migration and Development in the Arab Region, 2006. UN/POP/EGM/2006/11.

<sup>d</sup> Ibid.

Of the estimated thirteen million current Arab world international migrants, fifty-five percent (7.15 million) live outside of the Arab world.<sup>16</sup> They are significantly concentrated in the western European and North American countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).<sup>17</sup> The remaining forty-five percent (5.85 million) live in the Arab world.<sup>18</sup> Nearly seventy percent of migrants from the Arab Maghrib live in Europe, although some one million of them live in other Arab countries.<sup>19</sup> On the other hand, nearly seventy percent of migrants from the Arab Mashriq (which the IOM defines as Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, the Occupied Palestinian Territories, Syria, and Yemen) live in the Arab world, mostly in GCC countries.<sup>20</sup>

The term “current” used here is slightly misleading and highlights some of the problems with quantitative data on migrant populations. There are plenty of statistics available on international migrants from a range of sources. However, few of these are comparable across time and place. The data that are comparable, because they are based on similar definitions and sources, are from the OECD, the UN, or the Development Research Centre’s Global Migrant Origin database. While publications may use the term “current migrants” in a 2006 or 2010 report, all of these reports draw their data from information collected on “immigrant stocks” (foreign-born) in national censuses conducted around the year 2000.<sup>21</sup> Certainly, these data must be treated with skepticism, as they are subject to the errors common to censuses and to statistics on migrants. However, until we have better comparable data, this information can provide us with a sense of the proportion, range, and variation of Arab world migrations and diasporas.<sup>22</sup>

### **Arab World Migrations and Diasporas Outside the Arab World: Demographic and Social Parameters**

Fifty-five percent of current international migrants from the Arab world live outside of the region; the majority live in Europe, and some sixty percent live in the developed market economies of the OECD countries. Nearly half of all Arab world migrants in OECD countries live in France (2.3 million in 2000, or forty-eight percent) while the second largest group lives in the United States, but at a rate four times lower than in France, 11.6 percent.<sup>23</sup> The following countries were home to ninety percent of current migrants from Arab countries living in the OECD (in descending order): France, the United States, Spain, Italy, Canada, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Australia, Sweden, and Belgium. Algerians, Moroccans, and Tunisians were fully seventy percent of Arab world migrants in OECD countries, while another twenty percent were Iraqis, Egyptians, and Lebanese.<sup>24</sup> Dumont predicted in 2006 that if current trends continued, Moroccans would be one out of two Arab world migrants in the OECD by 2010.<sup>25</sup> The majority of Arab world migrants to OECD countries are men. However, women from the Arab world have migrated to these countries at substantially higher rates than to other Arab countries.<sup>26</sup> While nearly half of all Algerian and Libyan migrants were female (the global norm is forty-nine percent), the gendered migration rates for other Arab countries ranged from thirty to forty-seven percent female. At the lower end of the scale, women were less than forty percent of migrants over age fifteen from Jordan, Oman, the

Palestinian territories, Yemen, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar. Data on self-identified Arabs living in the United States (native- and foreign-born) also show striking gender imbalances: fifty-seven percent of them are male, and nearly seventy percent are male in the thirty-five to thirty-nine age group. These imbalances do not even out until after the age of sixty-four.<sup>27</sup>

Striking differences in socio-political context and socioeconomic characteristics emerge when the dominant trends for Arab world migrants living in Europe are compared to those living in the OECD “countries of immigration”—the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. These differences include migration history, state ideology, immigration policies, place of origin, human capital, employment, proportionate share of the population, and naturalization rates. These dissimilarities must certainly matter to the qualitative experiences of these migrants, but we have not done sufficient comparative work to specify precisely how they matter. At the same time, there are some overarching similarities across these countries that have increased in momentum over the past decade. I provide broad outlines of these differences and similarities below in an effort to encourage more comparative thinking among scholars of Arab world migrations and diasporas.

Arab world migration to Europe is a predominantly although not exclusively postcolonial movement from the Maghrib, which has shaped the sociopolitical conditions in which these migrants live. Significant exceptions to this pattern include Yemeni and Somali migrations to the United Kingdom, Lebanese migrations to France, and Arab refugee resettlements in Scandinavia. Maghribi men and women moved north across the Mediterranean in large numbers prior to and after World War II, when they were recruited as “guest workers.”<sup>28</sup> Their days as colonial subjects still fresh, they took up social positions in their new countries of residence as workers who were offered a lesser set of rights than citizens. After the 1973 oil embargo and rising fuel prices, the demand for workers in Europe fell substantially (as it simultaneously increased in GCC countries). New immigration policies across Europe prioritized family reunification over importing workers, although in the context of widely varying and often quite restrictive citizenship and naturalization policies, none of which included birthright citizenship (*jus soli*).<sup>29</sup> Indeed, statistics on these groups need to be examined deeply due to varying and shifting policies concerning naturalization and citizenship. For example, one must attend to whether statistics on “Moroccans” apply only to the foreign-born or to multiple

generations, including the native-born lacking citizenship.<sup>30</sup> Master narratives in the dominant cultures of most European states continued to maintain a colonial flavor that included racialized notions of Arab and Muslim inferiority. State actors and citizens used these to justify the continuing social, cultural, civic, and political exclusion of these populations. Unmet expectations that migrants and their children should assimilate to the dominant culture bolstered their claims that these “newcomers” are unwilling to integrate socially and “fit in.”

Current Arab migration to the so-called OECD “countries of immigration”—the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand—is relatively small when compared to migration to Europe and within the Arab world. For example, statistics from 2000 placed the total number of migrants from the Arab world in all of these countries combined at about 983,000, or less than half the number in France alone.<sup>31</sup> The ideological context for Arab migrants living in the “countries of immigration” is qualitatively different from that of Europe. In the former, population replacement (instead of work) guided by the racial ideology of white superiority was integral to their settler-colonial foundation. State policies promoted the aggressive replacement of indigenous populations through isolation and erasure, on the one hand, and open door in-migration for individual and family “white” migrants on the other. Perquisites offered initially only to “whites” included both naturalized and birthright (*jus soli*) citizenship, as well as scores of additional privileges, such as voting, legal, and homesteading rights.<sup>32</sup> For these reasons, Arab migrants’ experiences were deeply influenced by whether they were considered white or not (and this varied) by their new host countries. Over time, racialized ideas have lessened their grip on immigration and naturalization policies in these countries. At the same time, birthright citizenship has been revoked in Australia (as of 1986, it is acquired on the tenth birthday of a child born in Australia regardless of the parents’ citizenship status) and New Zealand (as of 2006 at least one parent must be a New Zealand citizen or permanent resident).

These “countries of immigration” have more recently reconfigured their dominant ideologies to define and promote themselves as sites of ingathering for multiple ethnic groups, cultures, and races, and have more accessible naturalization policies than in Europe. The context of reception for migrants in these countries has been strikingly different from that in Europe, particularly in economic and cultural domains.<sup>33</sup> Although each of these states has a dominant white Christian culture that migrants are

expected to admire and emulate, a continuum of hybrid and resistance cultures seems to be more socially tolerated in these places, ideologically at least, and especially in urban areas.<sup>34</sup> So while notions of “race” and ideas around membership and belonging matter significantly in both European countries and the countries of immigration, how they matter and how they manifest themselves in daily life appear to vary—or do they? More comparative research is needed to tease out the similarities and differences across these regions. General indications are that Arab migrants overall fare better economically in the countries of immigration, but questions remain as to how much this economic success matters to social and political status. Does economic strength translate into any kind of power? And if not, why?

The demographic profile of migrants from the Arab world living in the “countries of immigration” is quite different from that of those living in Europe in terms of countries of origin and human capital (education and skills). In the former, they are more likely to be from the Mashriq, especially Lebanon and Egypt, followed by Syria, Palestine, and Iraq, than from Maghribi countries. An exception is Canada, where migrants from Morocco and Algeria make up about ten percent of the Arab origin population (native- and foreign-born). They are characterized by neither a post-colonial relationship nor a historic guest worker status. Overall, migrants from the Arab world in the above four countries are more likely to be skilled, highly educated, and actively employed than those living in Europe, especially in European countries where they have a longer history, such as France and Belgium.<sup>35</sup> For example, eighty-four percent of self-identified Arabs (native- and foreign-born) ages twenty-five and older in the United States had a high school diploma (higher than the overall US population, at eighty percent). Forty-one percent had at least a bachelor’s degree, significantly higher than that of the US population overall (twenty-four percent), a figure that bears out for each individual Arab country of origin group.<sup>36</sup> Similarly, Canadians of Arab origin (native- and foreign-born) were twice as likely as other Canadians to have completed a university degree (thirty percent compared to fifteen percent) and to hold a graduate degree.<sup>37</sup> On the other hand, migrants from the Maghrib to the OECD countries, the overwhelming majority of whom are in Europe, show much lower levels of human capital.<sup>38</sup> Some sixty-three percent of migrants from Morocco, and fifty-six percent from Algeria and Tunisia, have not completed a high school education and less than twenty percent of each group has had at least two years of college education.<sup>39</sup>

Labor force participation rates show some significant differences when comparing the longer established Maghribi communities in Europe with more recent Arab migrants in the countries of immigration. The labor force participation rate of Moroccans (foreign-born and native-born without citizenship) in Belgium was thirty-five percent overall and fourteen percent for women,<sup>40</sup> as compared to seventy-one percent for Moroccan men and fifty-three percent for Moroccan women in the United States (foreign- and native-born), rates that were quite similar to the US population as a whole.<sup>41</sup> Among self-identified Arabs in the United States aged sixteen and older, the labor force participation rate of men was higher than that of the total population (seventy-three percent compared with seventy-one percent) while the labor force participation rate of women was lower than for women in the total population (forty-six percent compared with fifty-eight percent). In Canada, people of Arab origin aged fifteen and over are somewhat less likely to be employed than Canadians overall—fifty-six percent as compared to sixty-two percent of all Canadian adults—although this difference is mainly due to the lower labor force participation rates of Arab women.<sup>42</sup>

It is generally true that people (including migrants) with higher skill and education levels (human capital) fare better economically, and this pattern holds true for Arab world migrants. Highly skilled Arab world migrants living in Europe do well, but the majority of them do not share this human capital profile.<sup>43</sup> As a result of these differences in human capital and employment rates, Arab world migrants in Europe are far more likely to be low-income than those in the countries of immigration. These descriptors, however, require a deeper examination of why these differences exist. What respective roles do immigration and naturalization policies, history, ideology, proximity, opportunity, segmented labor markets, and discrimination play in producing these outcomes? Despite some differences across Arab countries in terms of educational attainment, all Arab countries have populations with both high and low levels of education. This indicates that social mobility in host countries is partly determined by immigration and recruitment policies, state ideologies, and employment and educational opportunities.<sup>44</sup>

Another critical difference between Arab world migrants in Europe and the “countries of immigration” lies in their relative share of the population. In the latter, (self-identified) foreign- and native-born Arabs combined constitute less than two percent of the population—less than one percent in the United States,<sup>45</sup> and 1.2 percent in Canada and Australia—substantially

lower than the figures for the Arab world foreign-born alone in a number of European countries.<sup>46</sup> Persons from Arab countries are a significant proportion of the foreign-born in the following European countries: forty percent in France, sixteen percent in Spain, fourteen percent in the Netherlands, Belgium, and Italy, twelve percent in Denmark, and eleven percent in Sweden.<sup>47</sup> Additionally, the overwhelming majority of Arab world migrants in Europe are Muslim, while Christians are a substantial proportion of Arab world migrants in the countries of immigration. Social research tells us that a potentially toxic combination emerges when significant demographic proportions (the sociological “tipping point”), low incomes, and negative social constructions of a group intersect. Communities characterized by these features tend to become concentrated in urban ghettos, locked out of upward mobility, and socially crystallized as the other, conditions that supply more traction to the notion that they pose a “cultural threat” to established communities and ways of life. These overall demographic differences in proportion of the population, income, educational attainment, and labor force participation between Arab world migrants in Europe and in the countries of immigration—holding constant prejudice, racism, and Islamophobia—render their ghettoization, social exclusion, and downward mobility more likely in Europe and their capacities to resist negative treatment lower.<sup>48</sup> Even so, the body of social research tells us that communities stand up to these degradations and assert their dignity, that they create cultures of resistance, and that an ensuing two-way dialectic of rejection and acceptance ebbs and flows according to broader social pressures.

Finally, migrants from the Arab world in the “countries of immigration” are more likely to obtain naturalized citizenship and to have political rights than those living in European countries, where naturalization policies are generally more limiting.<sup>49</sup> For example, seventy-five percent of persons in the United States who self-identified as Arabs were US citizens: forty-six percent of these were native-born (either in the United States or abroad to US citizen parents) and twenty-eight percent were Arab world foreign-born (2000 data). More than half of the foreign-born Arabs were naturalized citizens, a higher proportion than the overall US foreign-born population, for whom forty percent were naturalized citizens.<sup>50</sup> More telling, the Arab groups with large proportions of non-citizens—Iraqis and Moroccans at forty-five percent—were also the most likely to be recent immigrants, implying that naturalization is only a matter of time. In comparison, only



about twenty-seven percent of the foreign-born from Algeria, twenty-six percent from Morocco, and forty percent from Tunisia have French citizenship, while these figures are higher for Lebanese, Syrians, and Egyptians.<sup>51</sup> The increasingly restrictive naturalization policies of many European states, often tied to proof of language acquisition and cultural assimilation, suggest that migrants and their children in these places are required to choose between mirroring the dominant culture or accepting a lesser social and political status.

The significant differences between Europe and the “countries of immigration” in social context and socioeconomic and political characteristics of migrants are highly likely to matter to the qualitative experiences of Arab migrants and their children. However, researchers can only specify the ways in which they matter when they do the comparative work the task requires. In addition, there are likely to be meaningful differences across these countries; the master categories of “Europe” and “countries of immigration” are helpful for analysis yet obscure internal variations. These differences aside, all of the countries discussed above as dominant locations of migrations outside of the Arab world share the phenomena of heightened anti-Arab racism and anti-Muslim social agitation.<sup>52</sup>

As activists who are proponents of hostile attitudes toward Arabs and Muslims increasingly connect globally, an unsettling similarity is emerging across Europe and the “countries of immigration.” This was evidenced in the United States, for example, at the 2011 King hearings in the US House of Representatives on whether native-born US Muslims are a source of threat, a topic long discussed in Europe. Thus, although more likely to be economically successful, migrants from the Arab world in the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand share points of similarity with those in Europe, as well as other groups who sustain assaults on their human dignity in attempting to better their lives and feed their families. In other words, Arab world migrants in search of dignity, freedom, and opportunity find an array of shared social and political barriers and exclusions irrespective of varying state ideologies, policies, and opportunity structures. In the “countries of immigration,” they are more likely to find employment and educational opportunities, and to report that they find political freedom, but face a range of indignities tied to dominant understandings around race and anti-Muslim mobilizations.<sup>53</sup>

Nonetheless, return migration to the Arab world from all of these countries is relatively small, mainly due to the same reasons that launched the Arab uprisings: authoritarianism, corruption, blocked aspirations, obstructed possibilities, and social inequalities.<sup>54</sup> Permanent return is replaced instead by life cycle stage-related circular migration and short-term visits to the homeland. These are the occasions when, beyond remittances and business ventures, migrants leave their strongest qualitative imprints on the nations they left, if only in the physical sense. Despite often hostile political conditions and economic challenges, especially for low-skilled migrants, return rates are low. Skilled and unskilled migration from the Arab world to Europe continues, and is increasing sharply between Morocco and Italy and Spain (where labor force participation rates are higher).<sup>55</sup>

### Smaller Migrations

There are, of course, many other contemporary movements of persons from the Arab world to places outside of it, though smaller in volume than to the OECD countries discussed above. Some are ongoing movements that commenced decades or even centuries ago, some are emergent, some highly circular, and some short-term, provoked by crisis. According to the Global Migrant Origin Database of the Development Research Centre, these non-OECD migrants represent about eighteen percent (2.3 million) of current Arab world migrants. Some prominent examples include Lebanese migrations to Sierra Leone and Cote d'Ivoire, Yemeni migrations to Indonesia, Singapore, and Malaysia, Omani migrations to Zanzibar, and Lebanese, Syrian, and Palestinian migrations to Central and South America and the Caribbean. These migrations are not covered in detail in this section because the needed data are more difficult to access, non-comparable, or based on unreliable estimates. While these movements are significant for scholars, they are minor from the perspective of migration data collectors, who focus on the largest migrant groups in each state and on first-generation immigrants. For example, while Arab migrations to Latin America and the Caribbean are highly significant for scholars, they are not even mentioned in reports on current migration patterns in these countries. The same applies to reports on migration patterns within Africa, outside of North Africa.<sup>56</sup>

While the relative size of *current* Arab world migrations may be small in these places (as compared to other migrating groups), this does not render these migratory movements qualitatively unimportant. In fact, they are quite significant when one considers their longer history and their size—some

being quite large covering multiple generations—and their deeply transnational character. Counting becomes more complicated in multi-generational diasporas. Many matters come into play, such as how second, third, and fourth generations identify themselves, and in the case, for example, of Arabs in Malaysia, how generations dating back centuries view themselves. Surely varying state ideologies and policies as well as historic patterns of assimilation, inter-marriage, resilience, exclusion, conflict, nationalism, and transnationalism play a role in identity constructions and reconstructions. Since state policies and ideological dispositions toward internal population groups are interwoven with official counting mechanisms,<sup>57</sup> we need to discern how the state counts the descendants of immigrants—what questions does it ask? Due to these complexities and limitations with regard to quantitative data, I have placed discussion of these migrations in the “Diaspora” section below.

The diaspora perspective offers a wider lens than analyses of current migrations. It observes multiple generations and locations, just as the transnational perspective removes the fixity of assumptions of one-way migratory movement and permanently severed human relationships. Both of these perspectives have great potential to capture the complexities of human migration, especially how culture, state policies, and notions of home and belonging have intersected and changed over time. We know from a large body of research that the children of migrants born in the new place of residence (or migrating there by the mid-teens) develop social and psychological attachments to it—sometimes it is the only place they know well—even if they face discriminatory treatment. They are far more likely than their migrating parents to learn the local language and adopt aspects of local culture, even when it is vastly different from that of their parents, their parents disapprove, and they and their parents are denied membership as citizens. Here, the complexities of hybridity, notions of home, and senses of belonging move to the forefront of qualitative scholarship. The common preference of the children of migrants to stay in the countries where they were born or raised poses challenges to their identity constructions. Undoubtedly the vicissitudes of local context matter to this process. This second-generation desire to stay creates additional tensions for migrants who want to return; doing so will likely split the family apart, repeating the pain of separation and the struggle of adjustment they experienced years back and separating the elderly from their caretaking offspring. As

noted above, overall patterns show that Arab migrants residing outside of the Arab world have tended to remain outside, or to come and go. Surely economic reasons are not the sole factor in this pattern.

In some places that Arab world migrants go, however, return is both the norm and the mandate. In these places, social and political membership are not even remote possibilities for migrants, who are informed a priori that there is no room to aspire for more than that what their visa or paperless status will allow.<sup>58</sup> Here, human beings on the same quest for dignity, agency, and autonomy as all others are called labor migrants, contractual employees, or illegals. The state and host citizenry treat them as persons whose needs are limited to a paycheck and whose capabilities can be justifiably circumscribed, when the main way in which they are *actually* different from other migrants is in their lesser set of civil, social, political, cultural, and economic rights. Here we turn to Arab world migrations and diasporas within the Arab world. I suggest that instead of speaking of “labor migrants” or “contract workers,” as is the common pattern, we should more accurately speak of labor migrant and contract worker *states*, for it is the state that defines the difference and not the migrant.

## **Arab World Migrations and Diasporas within the Arab World: Demographic and Social Parameters**

### **Migrant Worker States and Forced Displacements**

Nearly half (forty-five percent or 5.8 million) of the current estimated thirteen million Arab migrants live in the Arab world, mostly in GCC countries,<sup>59</sup> but also increasingly in Jordan and Lebanon, according to the Development Research Centre on Migration, Globalisation, and Poverty (2007 data).<sup>60</sup> A majority of these migrants are from the Mashriq—here defined as Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, the occupied Palestinian territories, Syria, and Yemen—and Sudan, and a majority of Mashriq migrants live in Arab countries.<sup>61</sup> Egyptians comprised the numerically largest group: some seventy percent of the reported 2.7 million Egyptian migrants lived in Arab countries in 2000, forty-eight percent of whom were in Saudi Arabia, twelve percent in Jordan, and two percent in Libya.<sup>62</sup> A 1988 study found that Egyptian migrants living in the Gulf states held low-wage jobs and had high rates of turnover, distinguishing them from the Palestinians, Jordanians, and

Syrians in these countries.<sup>63</sup> As noted above, migrants from the Maghrib are more likely to live in Europe than in the Arab world (or anywhere else), although some one million of them live in other Arab countries.<sup>64</sup>

The GCC states are the “migrant-importing” countries of the Arab world (as well as Libya pre-2011). They rank among the top countries globally for the proportion of migrants relative to their native-born populations.<sup>65</sup> Qatar ranked first globally on the measure of percentage of its population being foreign-born, with 86.5 percent, followed by the United Arab Emirates, with seventy percent, and Kuwait, with sixty-nine percent. Ranking fourth and fifth are Jordan and the occupied Palestinian territories with forty-six percent and forty-four percent foreign-born, respectively, about which I will say more below. Following Singapore (forty-one percent), Israel (forty percent), and Hong Kong (thirty-nine percent), Oman and Saudi Arabia round out the top ten, with 28.4 percent and 27.8 percent foreign-born, respectively. This statistically significant and otherwise unlikely regional concentration of nations with high ratios of foreign-born residents is the result of three inter-related phenomena: the presence of globally valued natural resources sealed within fixed boundaries of proclaimed national ownership; exclusivist states and notions of nationalism; and demographic dispossession and war.

Since all Arab states grant citizenship principally through the notion of *jus sanguinis* or blood rights, and in most cases through the father’s line only (Yemen and Egypt are exceptions), children of migrants born on their soils remain foreigners, and migrants’ access to full social and political rights is highly limited.<sup>66</sup> The foreign-born in the GCC countries are officially defined as temporary labor migrants, a categorization that has driven most of the social research about them. The high rates of “foreign-born” in Jordan and the occupied Palestinian territories are the result of demographic dispossession and war; most of them are Palestinians—whether refugees, displaced, or returnees after being born abroad, especially following the 1990-91 Gulf War.<sup>67</sup> Thus, the category “foreign-born” obscures the Palestinian diaspora in motion, a population characterized by multiple instances of uprooting.

The post-1973 economic boom in the oil-rich states of the GCC beckoned migrants because the requisite skilled and unskilled labor was unavailable locally. Large numbers of Yemenis, Egyptians, Sudanese, Jordanians, Palestinians, and Iraqis (with smaller numbers from other Arab countries)

responded to this call. Together they designed, built, managed, cleaned, and otherwise staffed schools, hospitals, ports, hotels, banks, communication and transportation networks, and internal commercial sectors. The flow of Arab world migrants to these states doubled in the years between 1975 and 1980.<sup>68</sup> Some of these were family migrations while others were predominantly male migrations, varying by host country policy and national group. For example, Palestinians and Jordanians in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia tended to migrate as families. Yemenis and Egyptians moving to any GCC destination tended to migrate autonomously. A range of state policies, employment strategies, and economic structures, for example the *kafala* (sponsorship) system, kept these Arab world migrants in social, economic, and political statuses unequal to nationals. Nonetheless, whether low-wage unskilled workers or highly paid professionals, their incomes produced sufficient surpluses to enable sending remittances back home. Indeed, the value of remittances from Arab world migrants is higher than the value of regional trade.<sup>69</sup> For example, “remittances sent to Jordan, Egypt and Lebanon from other Arab countries are forty to 190 per cent higher than trade revenues between these and other Arab countries.”<sup>70</sup> Put another way, the movement of people and the capital they earn is significantly greater than the movement of goods across the Arab world—human beings are the “dynamic economic factors” of the region.<sup>71</sup>

The Iraqi occupation of Kuwait in 1990 and subsequent political alignments around it led to the displacement of a substantial proportion of Arab world migrants in GCC countries, most permanently. GCC countries have expelled up to one million Yemenis (from Saudi Arabia), 200,000 Jordanians (including of Palestinian origin) and 150,000 Palestinians, mainly from Kuwait, as well as Iraqis, Palestinians, Jordanians, Yemenis, and Sudanese from elsewhere.<sup>72</sup> Asian migrants and nationals steadily replaced Arab migrants, with nationals increasingly able and willing to work in government positions and in occupations in which Arabic was required (such as schools, commerce, journalism, and media). The proportion of migrants in the GCC who were from the Arab world was reduced overall to thirty-two percent by the early 2000s: it went from ninety-one percent (1975) to thirty-three percent (2004) in Saudi Arabia and eighty percent (1975) to thirty percent (2003) in Kuwait, and from smaller proportions to ten percent or less in the UAE and Oman.<sup>73</sup>

These demographic changes did not occur because of a shortage of persons in the Arab world seeking work in these countries, nor were they an outcome of a shortage of jobs (although the demand for labor has decreased since the 1990s). They are due to the GCC governments' concerted de-Arabization policies. These policies shrunk the world of possibilities for persons from Arab states in their quests for dignity and autonomy. Consider that the Arab world holds both the global leaders in the category of labor migrant states and one of the world's highest average regional unemployment rates.<sup>74</sup> Youth, many of them well-educated and skilled, were the largest component of the more than fourteen million unemployed in the Arab world.<sup>75</sup> The IOM concluded in its 2010 World Migration Report: "relatively high literacy rates and youth unemployment ranging between 14 and 50 percent, indicates that the Mashriq will remain a source of young migrants—a significant proportion of them skilled migrants."<sup>76</sup> The inverse relationship between migration and rebellion, and how human dignity stands at its pivot, could not be clearer.

GCC countries also stand out globally for having the lowest ratios of female to male migrants, a pattern replicated in the "Middle East"<sup>77</sup> overall.<sup>78</sup> Although women have comprised nearly half of the world's migrants for more than forty years,<sup>79</sup> they make up only twenty-one percent of migrants in Oman, twenty-six percent in Qatar, twenty-seven percent in the United Arab Emirates, thirty percent each in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, and thirty-three percent in Bahrain.<sup>80</sup> These asymmetrical data signal the absence of migrant families and the presence of highly gendered migrant social worlds in the GCC. A large proportion of these female migrants are recruited for household work based on a perception of their capacity to love and nurture others' children. Most are not from the Arab world. In their quest to provide better lives for their own families they are forced to leave their children behind. Their love is the gold they have to sell, as sociologist Arlie Hochschild has articulated.<sup>81</sup>

### **Home to Forced Migrants and the Displaced**

The Arab world also stands out in the field of migration because it is the home to the largest number of forced migrants in the world, including both refugees and internally displaced people. Nearly one quarter of the world's refugees lived in "the Middle East region" in 2008.<sup>82</sup> While 7.6 percent of all migrants globally are refugees, they are seventy-seven percent of the (8.7 million) migrants living in the Mashriq.<sup>83</sup> The Sudan had the largest

number internally displaced persons, with 4.9 million in 2010, despite a drop of 1.1 million persons, and Iraq had the third largest (after Columbia), with 2.76 million.<sup>84</sup> There are also an estimated 160,000 internally displaced Palestinians, and some 60,000 to 90,000 currently at risk of displacement.<sup>85</sup> It is indeed sobering for those who study the peoples of the Arab world to recognize that they constitute the largest number of refugees and displaced people in the world today. The majority live in places where blocked aspirations, political voicelessness, and challenges to human dignity are daily and salient. It is incumbent upon us to address how these challenges are similar to and different from the challenges of being an Arab world migrant in Europe, the United States, Canada, Australia, Malaysia, or Latin America.

### **Knowledge about Arab Migrants in Labor Migrant States**

The qualitative English-language social science literature on Arab world migrants living inside the Arab world is strikingly different from scholarship on migrants living outside of it. Studies of migrants outside of the Arab world have pursued with much more breadth and vigor questions of cultural, economic, civic, and political belonging, social integration, economic mobility, institutional development, material culture, leisure pursuits, meaning, identities and hybridities, inter-group relationships and solidarities, transnational ties, social class, gender, and sexualities (in a nascent stage)—the very anthropologies and sociologies of daily life. In the case of Arab world migrants living inside the region, state policies, work, and human rights are central foci. Certainly, when political membership is *a priori* ruled out, belonging is reserved for a select few, and social integration is highly bounded, these research topics may seem less provocative. Yet we should consider comparatively the ways in which these conditions and their outcomes are similar to and different from those of Arab world migrants in Europe, the United States, Canada, Australia, Africa, Latin America, and Southeast Asia. We should give equal effort to understanding the ways in which Arab world migrants join with others to give meaning to their lives, no matter where they are living. Putting state policies aside, is it the case that Arab world migrants living within the region prefer to return home *more* than those living in Europe or the United States, where anti-Arab racism and Islamophobia rage? Based on our scholarship, questions of “home” are more prevalent and profound among Arab world migrants living in places where they have more fully articulated social lives and permanent residency



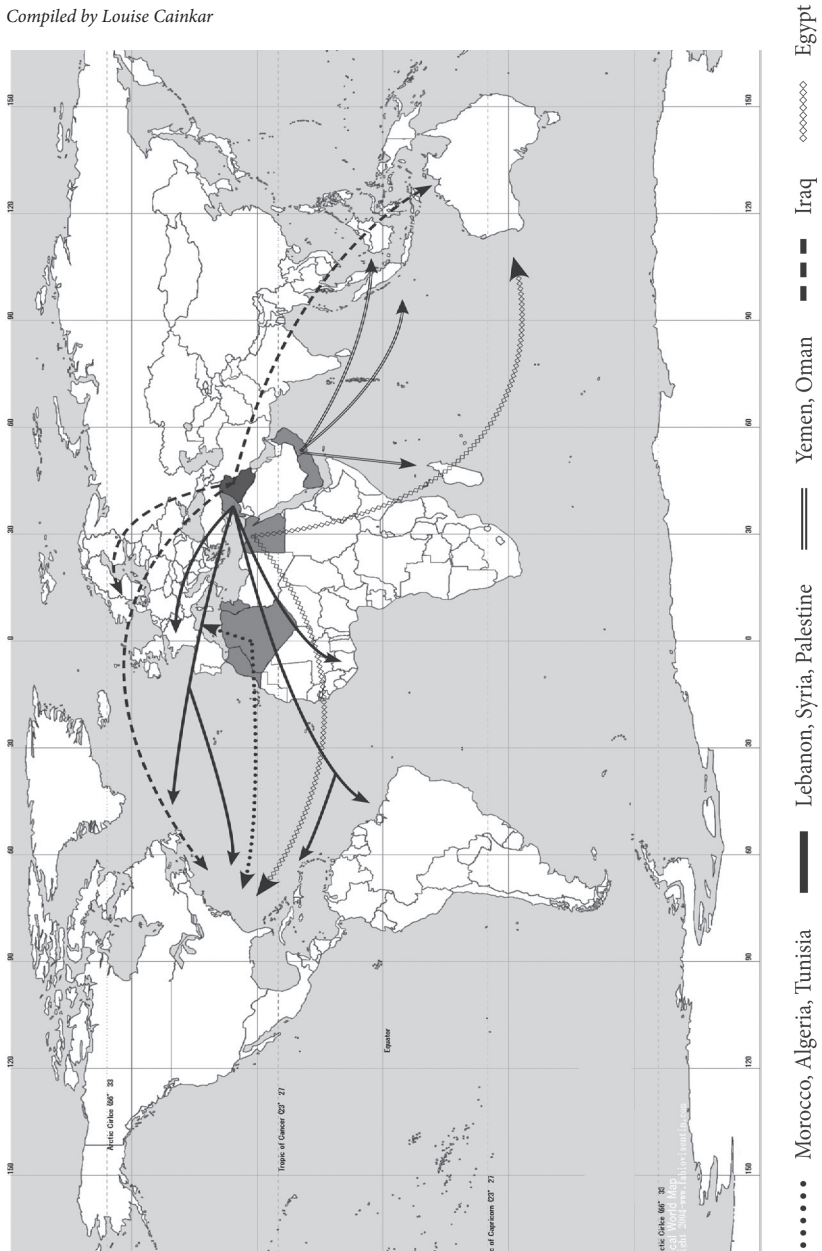
or citizenship. Is this really the case, and if so, why? We should endeavor to better spell out the similarities and differences between the daily life experiences of Arab migrants living within and outside of the Arab world, as well as how these inform group memberships, solidarities, meaning, and notions of belonging and of home.

Questions we might ask of Arab world migrants living within the Arab world include: How do social and political exclusions play out in their everyday lives? Are there any points of inclusion, even if these are officially discouraged? What daily actions do migrants take to resist dehumanization and maintain their sense of dignity? Do women deploy different strategies than men? What types of hierarchies exist among migrants? What types of social communities do Arab world migrants in Arab countries form, and how important is nationality, gender, religion, sexuality, and social class in these formations? What material culture and social institutions have they produced? How do they manifest and practice religiosity? How do they manage relationships with other migrant groups? What are the leisure and cultural pursuits of Arab migrants living in other Arab countries? What are their dreams? Despite their liminal status, they surely remain active creators and producers of culture. Addressing these and other questions will more fully complicate and humanize migrants living in the Arab world. We know these migrants in a unidimensional way as *homo economicus*.

In sum, relative to our knowledge of Arab world migrants in other places, we know less of the complexities and depths of these migrants' lives outside of that reified social category of "labor migrant." As I have suggested, this category more appropriately defines state policies and not the migrants. Similarly, we know less of the worlds of work for Arab migrants outside of the Arab world than we do for those within. We must begin with the assumption that, whether within or without the Arab world, the worlds of migrants whose hearts and souls are split across geographic and cultural spaces are equally complex. A comprehensive understanding of the current social conditions of Arab world migrations and diasporas demands that our inquiries be more internally harmonious. They should not vary by country of resettlement, nor should social categories on the official schemata of migrants set limits on the contours of our work. When we resist what categories deny, we allow all Arab migrants to remain social, cultural, civil, and political equals.

## Global Arab World Diasporas Outside of the Arab World: Major Trends

Compiled by Louise Cainkar



## Global Arab World Diasporas

The Arab world diaspora located outside of the region is roughly composed of some thirty to thirty-seven million people: that is nearly three times the total number of current Arab world migrants, ten percent of the current Arab world population, or the populations of Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan combined (see map).<sup>86</sup> If we add to this total the number of current Arab world migrants and second-, third-, and fourth-generation Palestinians who are dispersed throughout the Arab world, a rough estimate of the Arab world diaspora would approach forty to fifty million persons. Arab world diasporic communities are numerically largest in places where native-born descendants of prior migrant generations substantially outnumber current migrants. This is the case among Lebanese, Syrian, and Palestinian communities in the Caribbean and Central and South America, as well as Yemenis in Malaysia and Indonesia. Since these diasporas are heavily composed of second-, third-, and fourth-generation descendants of migrants, large proportions of them are born into the hybridities of mixed ethnicity and/or migrant and non-migrant fusion. Many have never visited their diasporic homelands. Their identities, homeland ties, movements, material cultures, literature, poetry, social, political, economic, and cultural institutions, even their sports teams (see the film *Goal Dreams*<sup>87</sup>) have been subjects of research, particularly among scholars of history, cultural studies, and comparative literature. The lens of diaspora studies is well suited to the study of these groups, given its focus on the simultaneity of notions of home and away, on cultural production, hybridities, memory, and imagination, and the ways in which these figure into defining and redefining the “we” of those communities. Transnational perspectives are similarly fruitful for developing our understandings of the circularity rather than stasis of migration, the impact of homeland on those abroad, of those abroad on homeland, the meanings of borders and multiple locations, as well as the “challenges and delights of embracing multiple psychic locations.”<sup>88</sup>

Yemeni and Omani diasporas in Asia go back centuries and scholars link them to the early spread of Islam, with the Yemeni evolving into both trade and labor diasporas over time.<sup>89</sup> By most accounts, the Levantine (Lebanese, Syrian, Palestinian) diasporas started modestly in the seventeenth century and expanded significantly in the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries, and are usually tied to commercial developments. Diaspora scholar Robin Cohen calls them “trade diasporas” since they are built by interdependent networks of merchants who mediate between the cultures of buyers and

sellers and remain culturally distinct from the host society, somewhat akin to Bonacich's concept of "middleman minorities."<sup>90</sup> In Cohen's model, trade diasporas would no longer retain this appellation once their communities assimilate to the host society or cease to engage in trade, a proposition that appears ripe for continuing research given the broad range of the Levantine diaspora. Cohen considers the continuing cycle of departure and return among Lebanese as "virtually unprecedented in populations so widely dispersed."<sup>91</sup> He notes that, "over about one-quarter of self-declared Lebanese do not live in Lebanon at any one time" a formula that might refer only to Lebanese-born nationals, because the Lebanese diaspora is many times larger than the population in Lebanon.<sup>92</sup> Cohen shows low and high estimates for Lebanese in France, Brazil, West Africa, Argentina, Australia, Canada, the Gulf/Saudi Arabia, and the United States. These estimates add up to a Lebanese diaspora that ranges from a low of about eight million to a high of twenty-two million.<sup>93</sup> The Lebanese population in Lebanon at the time (in 1991) was about 2.9 million.<sup>94</sup> The Palestinian diaspora has roots in commerce and maintains a commercial character in some places, but its current magnitude and regional concentration are the result of expulsion and dispossession caused by the creation of Israel and later Israeli policies.

Arab world diaspora scholars tend to study communities living outside of the Arab world—with the significant exceptions of the Palestinian, Armenian, Assyrian, and Iraqi diasporas—even though migration data tell us that large diasporic populations live within the region. A significant exception to this pattern is Brand's treatment of Arab state policies, or lack thereof, vis-à-vis their diasporic populations.<sup>95</sup> Diaspora studies scholars' prominent interest in histories and in the linkages, attachments, meaning-making, and cultural products of descendant generations may explain this tendency. So, too, may the continued draw of pan-Arab ideas, which infer that an Arab diaspora cannot exist inside the Arab world, just as the notion of *umma* implies that there can be no "Muslim diaspora." Shedding the diaspora light on the Arab world requires engaging painful questions around the shared and the exclusive. When we deconstruct the logic behind the shared and unbounded qualities of language, food, music, poetry, literature, and film, alongside the exclusivity of material resources that lie within arbitrarily bounded nation-states, we locate part of the explanation for the simultaneity of high labor demand and high unemployment within the Arab world.

While the study of Arab world diasporas tends to focus on the social action and cultural production of multiple generations outside the "homeland," the fact of multiple generations is not a requirement for deploying a diasporic lens. In the social sciences, diasporas are distinguished not by generations

but by persistent identities and social and emotional ties to a homeland,<sup>96</sup> and by forms of consciousness, social forms, and cultural production.<sup>97</sup> These analytic concerns could be applied to migrants from Arab countries living within the Arab world, whether Syrians in Kuwait, Jordanians in the Emirates, Egyptians in Jordan, Lebanese in Egypt, or Yemenis in Saudi Arabia, were we to consistently take a harder look at the ethnographies of their daily lives. Instead, as noted above, our dominant focus has been on work and government policies—such as those limiting residency, family reunification, ownership of property, and political activity. This focus implicitly signals an acceptance that “labor migrants” are somehow different from other migrants and cannot be examined from a diasporic perspective.<sup>98</sup> Brand has noted that transnational studies have “not had much impact on Middle Eastern studies.”<sup>99</sup> Here referring to Arab state policies toward their own diasporic populations, Brand notes: “If civil, economic, and political rights of the average national are given short shrift on home turf, why should one expect the Arab state to engage in substantially different behavior toward nationals abroad?”<sup>100</sup>

As scholars, we could advance the study of Arab world diasporas by refining our understandings of how ideologies, policies, cultures, and interpretations intersect to produce different outcomes in different places. Why does the Arab world diaspora in much of Latin American and the Caribbean look qualitatively different in terms of social and political integration than it does in the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, Europe, and West Africa? For example, when compared to their social positions in other diasporic locations outside of the Arab world, the Lebanese, Syrian, and Palestinian communities in the Caribbean and Central and South America appear to be the most socially and politically integrated, to have the highest rates of intermarriage with the local population, and to have achieved the highest levels of political office, although a comparison with, for example, Yemenis in Southeast Asia may reveal similar patterns.<sup>101</sup> Do we really understand the ways in which Arab world diasporas in Malaysia and Indonesia are similar to and different from those in other locations? Scholars seeking answers to questions not only of “what” but “why,” who want to understand process and causality with regard to racialization, language and culture retention, identities, and social and political integration, need information on the ways in which local and global context shape social behavior. Developing this understanding requires attending to policies and patterns historically and comparing them across time and place. Considerable research lies ahead for scholars in the exploration and comparison of the contours of similarity and difference situated in place, and their implications for social life across the wide-ranging global Arab world diaspora.

**Table 2: Estimates of the Size of Global Arab World Diasporas by Country of Residence, Indicating Country of Origin of Major Constituent Groups <sup>a</sup>**

Compiled by Louise Cainkar

<b>Argentina</b> <sup>b</sup> Lebanon and Syria	1 million – 3.5 million
<b>Australia</b> <sup>c</sup> Lebanon, Egypt, Iraq, Syria	400,000 – 1 million
<b>Brazil</b> <sup>d</sup> Lebanon, Syria, Palestine Note: Brazil's population of Lebanese descent may be larger than Lebanon's population.	1.5 million – 12 million
<b>Canada</b> <sup>e</sup> Lebanon, Morocco, Algeria, Egypt, Syria, Palestine	375,000 – 500,000
<b>Chile</b> <sup>f</sup> Palestine Note: Estimated fourth largest Palestinian population in the world after Palestine, Lebanon, Jordan	300,000 – 800,000
<b>El Salvador</b> <sup>g</sup> Palestine	150,000
<b>Europe and UK</b> <sup>h</sup> Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Lebanon, Iraq, Palestine, Yemen	9 million - 14 million
<b>Honduras</b> <sup>i</sup> Palestine Note: Highest proportion of Arabs in one country in the Western Hemisphere	100,000 - 200,000
<b>Indonesia</b> <sup>j</sup> Yemen and Oman Note: Commenced in the eleventh century	4 million – 5 million
<b>Ivory Coast</b> <sup>k</sup> Lebanon	90,000 – 100,000
<b>Jordan</b> <sup>l</sup> Palestine, Iraq	2.8 million Palestinians 450,000 – 500,000 Iraqis
<b>Lebanon</b> <sup>m</sup> Palestine	260,000 – 280,000 (registered refugees)
<b>Mexico</b> <sup>n</sup> Lebanon	380,000 – 1 million
<b>Senegal</b> <sup>o</sup> Lebanon	15,000 – 30,000
<b>Sierra Leone</b> <sup>p</sup> Lebanon	4,000 – 20,000
<b>Singapore</b> <sup>q</sup> Yemen and Oman	10,000
<b>United States</b> <sup>r</sup> Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, Palestine, Iraq	1.5 million – 3 million
<b>Venezuela</b> <sup>s</sup> Lebanon, Syria	400,000
<b>Yemen</b> <sup>t</sup> Somalis	221,500 (registered refugees)
Other significant Arab world diaspora communities are found in Columbia, Venezuela, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Haiti, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Panama, <sup>u</sup> Malaysia, <sup>v</sup> the Philippines <sup>w</sup>	

<sup>a</sup> Composed by author based on one or more scholarly, official, or credible non-web English language sources for each country, and is non-exhaustive. Numerous web-based sources of various degrees of credibility may be located using search engines; they are not referenced here. This table was composed using destination country and Arab country of origin as its data collection criteria. This method of data collection results in the exclusion of two large diasporic groups associated with the Arab world: Armenians and Assyrians. Armenians are not originally from the Arab world, but have had a significant presence in a number of Arab countries. Estimates of their current numbers are provided as follows: Russia: 2 million, US: 800,000, Georgia: 400,000, France: 250,000, the Ukraine: 150,000, Lebanon: 150,000, Iran: 100,000, Syria: 70,000, Argentina: 60,000, Turkey: 60,000, Canada: 40,000, Australia: 30,000. See Khachig Tölöyan, "Elites and Institutions in the Armenian Transnation," *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies* 9, no. 1 (2000), 107-136. Assyrians are indigenous to parts of the modern day Arab world. Historic Assyria is located in an area that is in today's Iraq, Syria, Iran, and Turkey. Short of reliable numbers, one can report that half of the Assyrian people live outside the "Middle East" with significant populations living in the US, Europe (especially Scandinavia and Germany) Australia, the Caucasus, Lebanon, Georgia, and Russia (see Eden Naby, "Putting Assyrians into Middle East Literature: Memoirs and Novels." *MESA Bulletin* 41, no. 1 (2007), 37-41).

<sup>b</sup> Christina Civantos, *Between Argentines and Arabs: Argentine Orientalism, Arab immigrants, and the Writing of Identity* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006); Theresa Alfaro-Velcamp, "Immigrant Positioning in Twentieth-Century Mexico: Middle Easterners, Foreign Citizens, and Multiculturalism," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 86, no. 1 (2006).

<sup>c</sup> Ghazi Omar Tadmouri, *Genetic Disorders in the Arab World: United Arab Emirates* (Dubai: Centre for Arab Genomic Studies, 2004).

<sup>d</sup> John Tofik Karam, *Another Arabesque: Syrian-Lebanese Ethnicity in Neoliberal Brazil* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2007); Tadmouri, *Genetic Disorders*.

<sup>e</sup> Darcy Zabel, *Arabs in the Americas: Interdisciplinary Essays on the Arab Diaspora* (New York: Peter Lang, 2006); Ibrahim Hayani, "Arabs in Canada: Assimilation or Integration?" in *Arabs in America: Building a New Future*, ed. Michael. W. Suleiman (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999), 284-303; Colin Lindsay, *The Arab Community in Canada 2001* (Ottawa: Statistics Canada: Canada's National Statistical Agency / Statistique Canada: Organisme statistique national du Canada, 2007); Tadmouri, *Genetic Disorders*.

<sup>f</sup> "The Wandering Palestinian," *Economist*, 8 May 2008, <http://www.economist.com/node/11332217>.

<sup>g</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>h</sup> Multiple country-by-country sources are behind this cumulative figure.

<sup>i</sup> Sharon Lopez and Katharine S. Speer, "Arabs in Honduras: Immigration, Integration, and the Palestinian Presence," in *Arabs in the Americas: Interdisciplinary Essays on the Arab Diaspora*, D. Zabel, ed. (New York: Peter Lang, 2006), 117-132; Larry Luxner, "The Arabs of Honduras," *Saudi Aramco World* (2001), <http://www.saudiaramcoworld.com/issue/200104/the.arabs.of.honduras.htm>; Nancie Gonzales, *Dollar, Dove, and Eagle: One Hundred Years of Palestinian Migration to Honduras* (University of Michigan Press, 2003).

<sup>j</sup> Kazuhiro Arai, "Arabs who Traversed the Indian Ocean: The History of the Al-Attas Family in Hadramawt and Southeast Asia, c.1600-c. 1960." Ph. D. diss, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 2004; Faisal Dareem, "Yemen & Indonesia: Ten prosperous centuries of relations," *Yemen Observer*, 12 December 2009. <http://www.yobserver.com/business-and-economy/10017730.html>.

<sup>k</sup> Tadmouri, *Genetic Disorders*; Robert Handloff, ed., *Ivory Coast: A Country Study* (Washington: GPO for the Library of Congress, 1988), <http://countrystudies.us/ivory-coast/>.

<sup>l</sup> Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, *Palestinians at the End of Year 2006* (Ramallah - Palestine, 2006); Kristin Dalen and Jon Pedersen, *Iraqis in Jordan Their Number and Characteristics* (Amman: FAO and Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Department of Statistics, 2007).

<sup>m</sup> International Labour Organization (ILO), "Palestinians in Lebanon Working but Under Precarious Conditions." Press Release, 20 November 2012, [http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS\\_193717/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_193717/lang--en/index.htm); Jad Chaaban, Hala Ghattas, Rima Habib, Sari Hanafi, Nadine Sahyoun, Nisreen Salti, Karin Seyfert, and Nadia Naamani, *Socio-Economic Survey of Palestinian*

*Refugees in Lebanon* (Beirut: American University of Beirut (AUB) and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), 2010).

<sup>a</sup> Alfaro-Velcamp, "Immigrant Positioning in Twentieth-Century Mexico: Middle Easterners, Foreign Citizens, and Multiculturalism." *Hispanic American Historical Review* 86, no.1, 61-92."

<sup>o</sup> Mara A. Leichtman, "Migration, War, and the Making of a Transnational Lebanese Shi'i Community in Senegal," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 42, no. 2 (2010), 269-290, and Leichtman, "The Legacy of Transnational Lives: Beyond the First Generation of Lebanese in Senegal," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 28, no. 4 (2005), 663-686;

<sup>p</sup> Lina Beydoun, "Lebanese migration to Sierra Leone: Issues of Transnationalism, Gender, Citizenship, and the Construction of a Globalized Identity," *ETD Collection for Wayne State University* (2005). Paper AAI3196193. <http://digitalcommons.wayne.edu/dissertations/AAI3196193>;

<sup>q</sup> Ameen Ali Talib, "Hadramis in Singapore," *The British-Yemeni Society* (1995)," <http://www.al-bab.com/bys/articles/talib95.htm>; Farid Alatas, ed., *Hadrami Arabs Across the Indian Ocean: Contributions to Southeast Asian Economy and Society* (Singapore: National Library Board, 2010).

<sup>r</sup> Angela Brittingham and G. Patricia de la Cruz, "We the People of Arab Ancestry in the United States," U.S. Census Bureau, 2005. [www.census.gov/prod/2005pubs/censr-21.pdf](http://www.census.gov/prod/2005pubs/censr-21.pdf); Arab American Institute, *The Arab Population: 2000*. U.S. Census Bureau; The Arab American Institute. <http://www.aaiusa.org/pages/demographics/>.

<sup>s</sup> Phillipp Bruckmayr, "Syro-Lebanese Migration to Colombia, Venezuela and Curac o: From Mainly Christian to Predominantly Muslim Phenomenon," *European Journal of Economic and Political Studies* 3 (2010), 151-178.

<sup>t</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *UNHCR Country Operations Profile – Yemen*, 2012, <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49e486ba6.html>;

<sup>u</sup> Habeeb Salloum, "Arabs Making their Mark in Latin America: Generations of Immigrants in Colombia, Venezuela and Mexico," *al-Jadid*. 6, no. 30 (2000), entire issue.

<sup>v</sup> Judith Nagata, "What Is a Malay? Situational Selection of Ethnic Identity in a Plural Society," *American Ethnologist* 1, no. 2 (1974), 331-350; Hussein Alatas, *The Myth of the Lazy Native: A Study of the Image of the Malays, Filipinos, and Javanese From the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Century and Its Function in the Ideology of Colonial Capitalism* (London: Frank Cass, 1997).

<sup>w</sup> See *Asian Journal of Social Science* 32 no. 3 (2004), which is devoted to the Arab (mainly Yemeni, but also Omani and Syrian) diasporas in Indonesia, Malaysia, India, and the Philippines. Estimates for these populations are difficult to determine because of historical and social contexts, as the articles in this volume describe.

In Table 2, I have compiled some of the available estimates of the largest current Arab world diasporas by place, noting the numerically dominant groups in each location. As with all migrant demographics, these numbers should be approached prudently. The greater the number of generations in diaspora, the greater the likelihood of error within and non-comparability across place, since the subject being counted is not always the same. Considerations include whether immigrant, native-born, or third-generation and beyond; single or mixed parentage; citizens, dual nationals, or residents; self-identified or attributed; Arab by ethnicity or Arab country national; and so on. Reported estimates for a number of countries vary widely (or wildly). These numbers, then, are most useful to gain a sense of the proportion and



reach of current Arab diasporas, although only the largest diasporic locations and largest groups are included in the table, excluding many others smaller in dimension. A worthwhile scholarly project, yet one ripe with substantial challenges, would consist in attempting to get a comparable handle on these numbers and filling in the missing data.

## **Conclusion**

Producing a quantitative overview of global Arab world migrations and diasporas is a daunting task. There are so many peoples, places, categories, and definitions, and so little consistency across time and place. Any attempt to produce a comprehensive global portrait of the far-reaching historical and contemporary Arab migrations and diasporas must necessarily sacrifice a substantial amount of depth and detail and engage instead in broad generalities. As a scholar of Arab migrations and diasporas who strives for rigor, I am as unsatisfied with this performance as another reader might be. Nonetheless, it is a necessary exercise that serves to situate the work of other scholars in a global context.

If this overview highlights anything, it is the need for yet more work that deploys a range of scholarly paradigms while at the same time considers what we need to know to advance global and cross-cultural comparisons. I have shown that defining our research interests by official migrant categories and by place has produced non-comparable bodies of literature. My incessant repetition of the word “migrant”—instead of using terms like refugee, guest worker, contract laborer, asylee, immigrant, emigrant, family migrant, transnational, or diasporic subject—has been painful for a writer who prefers precision and invoking the passion that accompanies the meanings of these terms. But I have done this to make a point. By deconstructing how we have been looking at Arab world migrations and diasporas, I suggest that while place matters and immigrant type may be important, and both should be clearly defined, neither should drive our research questions. When we set out to discover, rather than impose, what has meaning, we enhance global, comparative, and cross-disciplinary conversations about what matters for migrants and their descendants. I have also suggested that human dignity is one broadly generalizable overarching concern, stated or unstated, that is shared in our collective body of research. We might consider stating this concern up front.

Similarly, I have used the concept Arab world migrant instead of Arab migrant to highlight the fact that many people who are not Arab live in and migrant to and from the Arab world, which also hosts a number of diasporic communities. Overall, the Arab world receives less credit than it deserves for hosting, mostly harmoniously, a diverse range of peoples, including millions of refugees and displaced peoples. It is cosmopolitan and contrapuntal in its own ways.<sup>102</sup> Similarly, some have mistaken the draw of economic and educational opportunities in Europe and the “countries of immigration” as proof of their cultural attraction or even superiority. While these features that allow people to act on their human capabilities, as well as political freedoms, may indeed be strong pull factors, their lure does not signal a rejection of homeland. Indeed, that abiding love is part of what continually draws migrants and their children back, whether physically or emotionally.

No matter how secure a migrant or diaspora community feels in its adopted home, the risk of collective attack or mass expulsion is always present. States and social movements that thrive on maintaining the otherness of migrants and their families frequently thwart migrants’ efforts to maintain dignity. History has repeatedly shown that an original otherness, even long obscured, can be resurrected with passion through social constructions promoted by persons acting on political and economic interests. This is the double-edged sword of “difference”; it offers dignity at the same time that it actively makes distinctions between people. There are also risks that war and conflict will threaten the perceived safety of the new home. In the past two decades we have seen mass exoduses of Palestinians, Jordanians, and Yemenis from the Gulf states, Lebanese from Sierra Leone, Palestinians from Libya and Iraq, new Iraqi, Sudanese, Somali, Syrian, and Libyan diasporas in the making, and 15,000 Arabs and Muslims in the United States issued deportation orders after the September 11 attacks.

Migration is part of the perennial human quest for dignity and autonomy. It is not a simple option, nor one that is appealing or available to everyone. While it serves as a pressure-relieving valve, it does not resolve the fundamental problems of stagnant economies, elite corruption, massive foreign debt, inadequate development, authoritarianism, racism, inequality, hegemony, and lack of freedom that limit human capabilities and compel people to seek other options. One analyst predicted that Arab migration to Europe would increase due to the growing Arab “youth bulge” if Arab governments

did not find a way to “integrate youth into their development strategies.”<sup>103</sup> Otherwise, Aymen Zohry warned, the outcome might be “violence and civil war, as in Rwanda and other sub-Saharan countries.”<sup>104</sup> Recent events in the Arab world have shown that there is a third way in the unstoppable human quest for dignity, perhaps unthinkable just a few years ago. That third way is the largely non-violent, youth-led revolutions that have taken place. These mobilizations for change started in the Arab countries where unemployment was among the highest and then made their way to the migrant-importing countries of Libya and the Arab GCC, revealing an organic relationship among young generations across the Arab world.

Poets and creative writers may be better at conveying the deep and complex social-psychological and emotional states of the migrant and diasporic subject. But scholars are well suited to capture the ways in which technology has built bridges between migrant and homeland, rendering the emotional rupture potentially less severe and the cultural connection stronger. Migrants today are less likely than in the past to have to relinquish physical and emotional ties to their homelands. This is in part because communication and transportation advances no longer require it, refashioning the meaning of yearning for home. The possibilities of faster air travel and lower-cost communication between the leavers and the left facilitate transnational associations, mutual visits, and circular migration—although some suggest that ease of communication may make physical separation more painful. Vonage, Magic Jack, Facebook, text messaging, YouTube, and Twitter, all made possible by global technological advances, have elided great distances and allowed migrants and their descendants greater participation in life “back home,” including in their struggles for human dignity and social justice.<sup>105</sup> Technological changes have certainly produced other social transformations, both positive and negative for human dignity, which we have only begun to document.

Technology has altered some of the contours, qualities, and reach of human migration, yet it has not altered its underlying character as a movement in search of something better, especially when it feels unachievable where one is. Technology has also not changed the requirement of grand sacrifice—being torn apart from deep human bonds, separated from the familiar, and socially transformed from a member (even if an alienated one) into a stranger—that accompanies crossing into new physical spaces and

social geographies. It is artists, poets, and novelists that have best articulated how these separations from family and community, from the intimate and the known, are profound emotional and social psychological ruptures. In the simple yet profound words of Mahmoud Darwish: “My country is not a suitcase. I am not a traveler; I am the lover and the land is the beloved.”<sup>106</sup>

#### ENDNOTES

- 1 This article was developed from a keynote address given at the Symposium on Arab World Migrations and Diasporas, held at Georgetown University’s Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, March 2011. I would like to thank Shira Teva for technical assistance in finalizing this manuscript, colleague Dawn Moone, and the anonymous *ASJ* reviewers for comments on earlier drafts. Thanks also to Erin LeMoine and Shaun Longstreet of Marquette University for assistance with the map.
- 2 Recent conferences at North Carolina State University (April 2012) and Georgetown University (March 2011) are forging the way for multi-disciplinary and globally comparative conversations among scholars.
- 3 Ella Shohat and Robert Stam, eds., *Multiculturalism, Postcoloniality, and Transnational Media* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2003), 9.
- 4 Seteney Shami, “Transnationalism and Refugee Studies: Rethinking Forced Migration and Identity in the Middle East,” *Journal of Refugee Studies* 9, no. 1 (1996), 7-8.
- 5 Khachig Tölölyan, 2011 Symposium: “Diasporas and Cultures of Migrations,” 20-23 June 2011, Université Paul-Valéry–Montpellier 3.
- 6 William Safran, “Diasporas in Modern Societies: Myths of Homeland and Return,” *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies* 1, no. 1 (1991), 83-84.
- 7 Engseng Ho, *The Graves of Tarim: Genealogy and Mobility Across the Indian Ocean* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2006), 18.
- 8 Nina Glick Schiller and Georges Fouron, “The Generation of Identity: Redefining the Second Generation Within A Transnational Social Field,” in *The Changing Face of Home: The Transnational Lives of the Second Generation* ed. Peggy Levitt and Mary Waters (New York: Russell Sage Foundation Press, 2000).
- 9 Alejandro Portes and Ruben Rumbaut, *Immigrant America* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2006).
- 10 Rogers Brubaker, “The ‘Diaspora’ Diaspora,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 28, no. 1 (2005), 1-19.
- 11 See Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom* (New York: Anchor, 2000) and Martha Nussbaum, *Women and Human Development: The Capabilities Approach* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000).
- 12 Anthony Shadid, “Street Battle Over the Arab Future,” *New York Times*, 2 February 2011.
- 13 United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), *State of the World’s Population 2012* (New York: United Nations, 2012).
- 14 International Organization for Migration (IOM), *World Migration Report 2011* (Geneva: International Organization for Migration, 2011).

- 15 Jean-Christophe Dumont, *Immigrants from Arab Countries to the OECD: From the Past to the Future*, United Nations Expert Group Meeting on International Migration and Development in the Arab Region, UN/POP/EGM/2006/11.
- 16 IOM, *Intra-Regional Labour Mobility in the Arab World Facts and Figures* (Cairo, 2010), [www.egypt.iom.int](http://www.egypt.iom.int).
- 17 The OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) is an international organization of countries with “highly developed market economies and democratic governments.” Members include Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, South, Luxembourg, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, the Slovak Republic, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States. In 2010, Chile, Israel, Slovenia, and Estonia were admitted.
- 18 See Dumont, *Immigrants from Arab Countries*.
- 19 IOM, *Intra-Regional Labour Mobility in the Arab World*.
- 20 At the time these data were collected, Jordan, Lebanon, and Libya also had significant numbers of Arab migrants, although substantially smaller in number than in the GCC. Estimates are based on 2000 Census data, elaborated by the Development Research Centre on Migration, Globalisation, and Poverty (DRC) (2007). See IOM, *Intra-Regional Labour Mobility in the Arab World, 207*; IOM, *World Migration Report 2010* (Geneva: International Organization for Migration, 2010); and IOM, *Intra-Regional Labour Mobility in the Arab World Facts and Figures* (Cairo, 2010), [www.egypt.iom.int](http://www.egypt.iom.int).
- 21 Scholars interested in technical aspects of these data should consult the working paper issued by the Development Research Centre on Migration, Globalisation, and Poverty concerning quantifying the international bilateral movements of migrants. See Christopher Parsons, Ronald Skeldon, Terrie Walmsley, and L. Alan Winters, “Quantifying the International Bilateral Movements of Migrants,” Working Paper T13. The Development Research Centre on Migration, Globalisation and Poverty (2005). [http://www.migrationdrc.org/publications/working\\_papers/WP-T13.pdf](http://www.migrationdrc.org/publications/working_papers/WP-T13.pdf).
- 22 I have written extensively on the historic and current problems of counting Arab immigrants and Arab populations in the United States. See Louise Cainkar, *Homeland Insecurity: The Arab American and Muslim American Experience After 9/11*. (New York: Russell Sage Foundation Press, 2009); “Immigrants from the Arab World” in John Koval, Michael Bennett, et al, eds., *The New Chicago* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2006); and “Coping with Tradition, Change, and Alienation: The Life Experiences of Palestinian Women in the United States,” unpublished PhD diss., Northwestern University, 1988.
- 23 Dumont, *Immigrants from Arab Countries*, 4.
- 24 *Ibid.*, 3. Palestinians are likely diluted in these statistics by holding travel documents from a number of countries. Dumont’s data include the foreign-born and expatriates, indicating that some migrants considered temporary in other counting schemes (such as students) may be included.
- 25 *Ibid.*, 20.
- 26 According to Dumont, the data on female migration “certainly reflects the persistence of a traditional migration pattern, despite the progress in the educational attainment of women, the increasing importance of family reunification, as well as the growing demand for foreign labor in domestic services and healthcare, which tends to be focused on women.” *Ibid.*, 10.
- 27 Angela Brittingham and G. Patricia de la Cruz, “We the People of Arab Ancestry in the United States” (US Census Bureau, 2005), [www.census.gov/prod/2005pubs/censr-21.pdf](http://www.census.gov/prod/2005pubs/censr-21.pdf).
- 28 Hein De Haas, “North African Migration Systems: Evolution, Transformations, and Development Linkages,” International Migration Institute, University of Oxford, 2006.

- 29 Ireland revoked birthright citizenship in 2004, leaving Europe without a single country offering it.
- 30 See Christian Joppke, "Comparative Citizenship: A Restrictive Turn?" *Law & Ethics of Human Rights* 2, no. 1 (2008) and Sammy Smooha, "Comments on 'Comparative Citizenship: A Restrictive Turn in Europe?'" [www.clb.ac.il/workshops/2007/articles/smooha.pdf](http://www.clb.ac.il/workshops/2007/articles/smooha.pdf). Regarding French policies, see Kimberly Hamilton, Patrick Simon, and Clara Veniard, *The Challenge of French Diversity* (Migration Policy Institute, 2004), and Kara Murphy, *France's New Law: Control Immigration Flows, Court the Highly Skilled* (Migration Policy Institute, 2006).
- 31 Dumont, *Immigrants from Arab Countries*, 4.
- 32 This summary statement is qualified by the caveat that policies in each of these countries changed over time and that certain populations who were not voluntary migrants were subject to different policies.
- 33 Portes and Rumbaut, *Immigrant America*. A discussion of the different understandings of multiculturalism across all of these countries is warranted, yet is beyond the scope of this essay.
- 34 I make this assertion with some trepidation and an argument for considering how we might measure and compare this phenomenon.
- 35 See Dumont, *Immigrants from Arab Countries*.
- 36 See Brittingham and de la Cruz, "We the People of Arab Ancestry."
- 37 Colin Lindsay, *The Arab Community in Canada 2001* (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 2007).
- 38 See de Haas, "North African Migration Systems."
- 39 See Dumont, *Immigrants from Arab Countries*.
- 40 Ibid., 18.
- 41 The US figure includes native and foreign born over age fifteen. Sixty-five percent of Moroccans in the US are foreign born. Other Arabs in the US show similar rates. The Belgian figure is for the foreign-born but includes persons born in Belgium without Belgian nationality. Brittingham and de la Cruz, "We the People of Arab Ancestry," 12.
- 42 See Lindsey, *The Arab Community*.
- 43 See Dumont, *Immigrants from Arab Countries*.
- 44 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), *Arab Human Development Report* (New York: United Nations, 2003).
- 45 Arabs in the United States (native- and foreign-born) were 0.3 percent of the US population, according to Census 2000. If we used the higher estimates provided by the Arab American Institute, their proportion would reach one percent.
- 46 See Brittingham and de la Cruz, "We the People of Arab Ancestry"; Lindsey, *The Arab Community*; Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006.
- 47 See Dumont, *Immigrants from Arab Countries*.
- 48 We would still expect some internal variation, for example between Lebanese and Algerians in France.
- 49 See Dumont, *Immigrants from Arab Countries* and J. M. Mancini and Graham Finlay, "'Citizenship Matters': Lessons from the Irish Citizenship Referendum," *American Quarterly* 60, no. 3 (2008), 575-599.
- 50 See Brittingham and de la Cruz, "We the People of Arab Ancestry."
- 51 See Dumont, *Immigrants from Arab Countries*, 10-11.
- 52 See Jocelyn Cesari, ed., *Muslims in the West after 9/11: Religion, Politics, and Law* (London: Routledge, 2010); Robert Marquand, "Why 'Islamophobia' Is Less Thinly Veiled in Europe,"

- Christian Science Monitor*, 5 September 2010; Wajahat Ali, Eli Clifton, Matthew Duss, Lee Fang, Scott Keyes, and Faiz Shakir, *Fear, Inc.: The Roots of the Islamophobia Network in America* (Washington, DC: Center for American Progress, 2011).
- 53 Of course there are variations across each of these countries and no one has yet developed and applied a measurable index for comparison.
- 54 See Dumont, *Immigrants from Arab Countries*.
- 55 Dramatic increases in migratory movement are driven by crises. For example, migration from Libya to Europe, especially Italy, increased sharply beginning in March 2011 in response to violence connected to the popular uprising and NATO bombings.
- 56 See, for example, United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (UN DESA). *Trends in International Migrant Stock: The 2008 Revision*, United Nations database, POP/DB/MIG/Stock/Rev.2008 (New York: UN DESA, 2009).
- 57 See for example, Charles Hirschman, "The Meaning and Measurement of Ethnicity in Malaysia: An Analysis of Census Classifications," *Journal of Asian Studies* 46 (2007), 555-582.
- 58 Some proponents of immigration reform in the United States find this liminal status a viable solution to the problem of the millions of persons who are living and working in the United States without any legal status.
- 59 IOM, *Intra-Regional Labour Mobility in the Arab World*, 207.
- 60 Development Research Centre on Migration, Globalisation, and Poverty (DRC) (2007). The Global Migrant Origin database is available for online access at: [http://www.migrationdrc.org/research/typesofmigration/global\\_migrant\\_origin\\_database.html](http://www.migrationdrc.org/research/typesofmigration/global_migrant_origin_database.html).
- 61 IOM, *Intra-Regional Labour Mobility in the Arab World Facts and Figures*.
- 62 United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, *International Migration and Development in the Arab Region* (New York: United Nations, 2007), 11.
- 63 Elisabeth Longuenesse, "Class Relations, Communal Solidarities and National Identity in the Gulf States: The Case of Migrant Workers." Franco-German Workshop on Labor Migration and the Process of Social and Political Change in the Middle East, Berlin, 2-3 June 1988.
- 64 See IOM, *Intra-Regional Labour Mobility in the Arab World Facts and Figures*.
- 65 See IOM, *World Migration Report 2010*.
- 66 The other main principle underlying citizenship rights is *jus soli* (right of the soil or birth-right citizenship).
- 67 The large, continuous movement of Iraqis into Jordan began in the early 1990s but surged in the mid-2000s, after these data were collected.
- 68 Maurice Girgis, "Would Nationals and Asians Replace Arab Workers in the GCC?" Unpublished paper presented at Fourth Mediterranean Development Forum, Amman, Jordan, 6-9 October 2002.
- 69 See Heba Nassar and Ahmed Ghoneim, *Trade and Migration Complements or Substitutes? A Review of Four MENA Countries* (Cairo: Economic Research Forum for the Arab Countries, Iran, and Turkey, 2002), and Nader Fergani, *Aspects of Labor Migration and Unemployment in the Arab Region* (Cairo: Almishkat Center for Research, 2001), <http://www.mafhoum.com/press4/116S25.pdf>.
- 70 IOM, *Intra-Regional Labour Mobility in the Arab World*, 2.
- 71 Andrzej Kapiszewski, "Arab Versus Asian Migrant Workers in the GCC Countries: United Nations Expert Group Meeting on International Migration and Development in the Arab Region," UN/POP/EGM/2006/02.

- 72 Ibid.
- 73 Ibid.
- 74 IOM, *World Migration Report 2010*.
- 75 Ibid.
- 76 Ibid., 208. The latest data available are from International Labour Organization (ILO), *Key Indicators of the Labour Market* (Geneva, 2007), [http://www.ilo.org/empelm/what/lang--en/WCMS\\_114240](http://www.ilo.org/empelm/what/lang--en/WCMS_114240).
- 77 The IOM defines the Middle East region as including: the Arab Mashriq (Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, the Occupied Palestinian Territories, Syria and Yemen), the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates), and Israel.
- 78 IOM, *World Migration Report 2010*.
- 79 Hania Zlotnik, "The Global Dimensions of Female Migration," Migration Information Source (MPI, 2003), <http://www.migrationinformation.org/feature/display.cfm?ID=109>.
- 80 United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (UN DESA), *Trends in International Migrant Stock: The 2008 Revision* (United Nations database, POP/DB/MIG/Stock/Rev.2008) (New York: UN DESA, 2009).
- 81 Arlie Hochschild, "Love and Gold," in *Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life*, D. M. Newman and J. O'Brien, eds., 8th edition (Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press, 2008), 339-346.
- 82 IOM, *World Migration Report 2010*.
- 83 Mainly 1.9 million Iraqis and 4.7 million officially registered Palestinians. IOM, *World Migration Report 2010*.
- 84 Ibid., 264.
- 85 Internal Displacement Monitoring Center, 2011 Global Figures Occupied Palestinian Territory, <http://www.internaldisplacement.org/idmc/website/countries.nsf/%28httpEnv elopes%29/98F0726BF7D6AA45C12574B30055BD32?OpenDocument>.
- 86 This estimate is based on a crude total of existing data, flawed as they are. It therefore excludes places for which no data are currently available, such as for Arabs in parts of Southeast Asia. Using the baseline figure of thirteen million current migrants from Arab countries, it would seem that the size of the current Arab diaspora should be larger than this, given family size, mixed marriages, and multiple generations. The map displays one-way arrows for clarity of presentation, even though multi-directional arrows would more accurately reflect human movement.
- 87 *Goal Dreams* is a documentary about the Palestinian national football team, including players from the Palestinian diaspora, especially Chile, preparing for the 2006 World Cup qualifiers. Maya Sanbar and Jeffrey Saunders, *Goal Dreams* (2006).
- 88 Shelley Fisher Fishkin, "Crossroads of Cultures: The Transnational Turn in American Studies—Presidential Address to the American Studies Association," *American Quarterly* 5, no. 1 (2005), 17.
- 89 See Leif Manger, *The Hadrami Diaspora* (New York: Bergahn Books, 2010).
- 90 Edna Bonacich, "A Theory of Middleman Minorities," *American Sociological Review* 38 no. 5 (1973), 583-94; Robin Cohen, *Global Diasporas* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 103.
- 91 Cohen, *Global Diasporas*, 94.
- 92 Ibid.
- 93 Seven million is the high estimate for Brazil and 200,000 is the low.
- 94 Cohen's data source is Aaron Segal, *Atlas of International Migration* (London: Hans Zell, 1993), 102.



- 95 See Laurie Brand, *Citizens Abroad: Emigration and the State in the Middle East and North Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), and, "State, Citizenship, and Diaspora: The Cases of Jordan and Lebanon," Working Paper 146 (The Center for Comparative Immigration Studies, University of California, San Diego, 2007).
- 96 Tölölyan, "Diasporas and Cultures of Migrations."
- 97 Steven Vertovec, "Three Meanings of 'Diaspora' Exemplified by South Asian Religions," *Diaspora* 6 no. 3 (1999), 277-300.
- 98 One exception to this pattern is scholarly work on the large Palestinian diaspora living in Kuwait prior to the 1990/91 Iraqi occupation and Gulf War. Estimated to include some 350,000 persons, the vast majority of them were expelled between 1991 and 1993, a collective measure that was justified as retribution for PLO political positions on the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait and by questions of loyalty.
- 99 Brand, "State, Citizenship," 1.
- 100 Ibid.
- 101 Albert Hourani and Nadim Shehadi, eds., *The Lebanese in the World: A Century of Emigration* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1992).
- 102 The failures of Iraqi society after the US invasion illustrate how favoring a form of multiculturalism that stresses human differences (built out of notions of racial differences) can be destructive.
- 103 Aymen Zohry, "The Arab Countries' Demographic Mosaic That Europe Must Not Ignore," (2005), [http://www.europesworld.org/NewEnglish/Home\\_old/Article/tabid/191/ArticleType/ArticleView/ArticleID/21717/TheArabcountriesdemographicmosaicthatEuropemustnotignore.aspx](http://www.europesworld.org/NewEnglish/Home_old/Article/tabid/191/ArticleType/ArticleView/ArticleID/21717/TheArabcountriesdemographicmosaicthatEuropemustnotignore.aspx).
- 104 Ibid.
- 105 Much has been said about the role of technology in the Arab Spring revolutions, as well as the counterpoint that its role should not be overstated. Lara Dotson-Renata describes the ways in which hip-hop music and the iconic soundtrack of the Arab Spring has solidified links between Arab diasporic communities and homelands. See the video at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sCbpiOpLwFg>. See Dotson-Renata, "Hip Hop & Diaspora: Connecting the Arab Spring," *Arab Media and Society* (Summer 2011). <http://www.arabmediasociety.com/?article=777>.
- 106 Mahmoud Darwish, "Diary of a Palestinian Wound" (1969), <http://www.adab.com/en/modules.php?name=Sh3er&doWhat=shqas&qid=65>.