Displacements from Iraq, Afghanistan, and Syria, sustained flows from Central America, and dislocations in North Africa and Southeast Asia—migration continues to grab headlines as the third decade of the twenty-first century approaches. Media in host countries cover the day-to-day realities in the form of interviews with migrants in camps along the Greece-Macedonia border, politicians’ stump speeches warning of flood tides of humans, and reactionary right-wing militia movements. The work is worthy, of course. Much can be learned from only a short conversation with a person stranded on a border in squalor and legal limbo. Often lost, however, in the granular, one-off stories is social context, especially the cross-national relations and social structures that motivate migrations and shape the contexts that receive migrants.

For in the migrants’ stories, the politicians’ narratives, and the militia members’ diatribes are the lived experiences of social transformation. Migration is an intrinsic aspect of social change (Castles 2010). The movement of people across national boundaries produces economic, political, and cultural changes within both host and origin countries. Migration thus raises questions about development—about human living standards and qualities of life. Migrations that cross national boundaries expose inequalities, often vast, in living standards demarcated by national boundaries, raising questions about development and underdevelopment and the relations between the two.

Sociological questions, theoretical frameworks, and methodological tools can significantly advance knowledge of the complex relations linking migration and development. Sociological research is capable of informing policies and interventions to reduce the insecurities and enhance the capabilities of migrants, the people they leave behind in origin communities, and the people in the places that receive them. It is an auspicious time for the sociology of development (Viterna and Robertson 2015), with the formation of a new section on the sociology of development in the American Sociological Association, as well as the creation of this journal.

This issue of Sociology of Development contributes to the ongoing reinvigoration of the sociology of development by focusing specifically on the migration-development nexus. Each paper went through a double-blind review process by at least two reviewers. The issue exhibits a variety of questions, theoretical lenses, and methodological tools sociologists use to address questions of migration and development. What is the role of migration in fomenting, or inhibiting, development in origins and destinations? How does migration reveal
underlying structures and dynamics associated with development? The issue considers multiple dimensions of the migration-development nexus, from multiple vantage points, across a diverse array of world regions. Together, the articles encourage a retrospective review, present a wide cross section of current research, stimulate innovative paths for sociological scholarship on migration and development, and ultimately, contribute to the emergence of a more humane, just, equitable, and sustainable world.

REFERENCES