

Foreword

Migration is the world on the move. It is a search for a new meaning; a hope for survival or for better life. With each generation claiming the tangible and the intangible, humanity carries on its own sense of immortality. The migrant leaves everything behind either motivated by domestic menace or seduced by the promises of the new world, in a subconscious search for immortality. Even if this experience might turn into a short-lived illusion, the migrant becomes nevertheless an exemplar of hope and courage, just like Gilgamesh did in his search for immortality.

With the immersion into the unknown, the migrant can become anything but a static entity. This is because migration itself is an engine of civilization, claiming a piece of its self-expression and creativity. The perpetual state of creativity is motivated by a long tale of survival. Whether dictated by conflict, by scarcity, or by both, migration has become so unexceptional these days that it will soon claim its own rite of passage for the generations to come.

Migration is as real as it is symbolic. It carries the stamp of ascribed or adopted identities. It is a new lifestyle anchored into shared meaning and repeated behavior. To the host community, the presence of the immigrant reinforces a community's self-assurance; often triggering an inoculated sense of prevalence.

Launching a painful guerrilla against the past, migration carries with it the fears from childhood and the desire to restore the paradise lost, even if this paradise never existed, except in one's hope.

This second volume of the Harvard Square Symposium presents papers in sciences and humanities, written by scholars from three continents, as they bear the impact of migration upon themselves; seeing themselves as builders of a new civilization.

The Editors