

What do you lose when you cross a border?

On one side of Gate 23 at the Miami airport, my family and I are excitedly waiting for our flight to Ecuador. It has been three years for my kids and four for my wife since they last visited Ecuador. Lots of emotions, feelings, fears, and questions are filling our minds while we wait. Our experience is one of excitement, reconnections, family, and traditions. We all look happy.

In the same Gate 23, on the other side, a young Ecuadorian woman has arrived right in front of us. She is not alone, and her face does not express excitement. It is not hard to notice her because she is accompanied by an immigration officer. The young woman looks embarrassed. She sits quietly and begins charging her phone, the only belonging she seems to carry with her. Her long black hair blocks her face, but the officer who sits a few seats away, perhaps to provide some dignity, does not take her eyes from the young woman. She is not older than 25, looks healthy and bright. She reminds me of when I came to this country for the first time, ready to face and embrace the "American Dream," but in this case, hers is stopped right there. An ankle tracker shined on her left leg, confirming my suspicion: she was being deported. We both had the same destination, Ecuador, but mine came with a return ticket to the US while hers would perhaps lead to another attempt crossing the Mexican - US border.

As an immigrant, you lose many things when you cross the border. Your family, your friends, your connections, your identities, and even your dignity. But it is possible to one day regain all these things you lost, or even rebuild them. The roots of migration are ancient, but most people don't leave their home countries just for the sake of leaving but for a reason that usually goes beyond their will. To be able to understand the conditions that force people to migrate it is important to deeply understand the historical events that each country holds.

In the effort to provide opportunities to our community to understand the conditions and consequences of human mobility (refugees, migrants, asylum seekers, and others), I would like to invite you to be part of our Hilltop's EJI-Parent Education Series, Session 10 **"Refugees and Migrant Voices"** with Dorah Urujeni and Marco Yunga Tacuri, this Wednesday, March 16th at 6:30 pm via Zoom.

Please, contact [me](#) if you would like to participate, or would like more information.

Yupaichani / Gracias / Thank You,
[Marco Yunga Tacuri](#)

