

***To find yourself a little: The secular pilgrimage of returning to Chile*****Cristián Doña Reveco****Escuela de Sociología; Universidad Diego Portales, Chile****Abstract**

Current literature that deals with home country visits argues that these are an intrinsic component of transnationalism used by migrants to participate in political elections, to prepare returns or to carry remittances. When analyzed from a memory perspective, however, home visits that are not connected to participation in political acts, engaging in cultural exchanges, or in business and labor activities—classic components of transnationalism—are connected directly to the recuperation and maintenance of a national identity and/or to a “kind of spiritual renewal”. In the receiving country an emigrant engages in acts that are representative of attempting to maintain that identity or feeling of belonging to the country of origin. While abroad, these feelings are reinforced by the participation in national groups and by engaging in everyday activities from the country of origin such as cooking national foods. When remembering the visits to the home country, emigrants construct the memories in relation to aspects of their everyday-life that are connected to how long they have been living abroad and to the reasons for leaving. In this chapter I use Baldassar’s concept of “secular pilgrimage”, conceptualized as returning home as a way of confronting nostalgia and its connection to a permanent process of constructing migrants’ identities, to study “home visits” of Chilean emigrants. In this article I use oral histories of Chilean migrants in the United States that I gathered between 2010 and 2012 to analyze the memories that these migrants have of recent visits to home country in particular with relation to everyday constructions of identities. I argue here that these homes visits are connected to regaining contact with those things that were part of their everyday life and migrants use it to attempt regaining spaces, memories, and artifacts which were lost or that they are missing by living abroad.