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MIGRATION—EDITORIAL INTRODUCTION

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The movement of population has been and remains an essential component of economic development, social change and political organization. Capital investment in new industry must be matched by investment in labour resources and the effects of the labour market give rise to far reaching consequences in the spatial relationships of people to their total environment. The growth of cities, the development of new resources and territories and the increasing international context of business, leisure and political experience depends upon the settlement, temporary or permanent, of individuals in diverse locations away from their place of birth and upbringing.

Surprisingly, shifts of physical space and their consequences have received little attention from sociologists. Somewhat rigid dichotomies such as that posed by Tönnies between *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* have been developed into equally rigid distinctions between *either* rural or urban, with the consequence that the more gradual, but significant shifts in spatial relationships which occur in the life-cycle have been given scant emphasis. When, in industrialized societies—as well as many based on agriculture—few can expect to be born, live and die under the same roof, spatial shifts increasingly are associated with alterations in status, changes of occupations and retirement. Even in the cradle-to-grave situation the changes in status from baby to child, man to parent, parent to aged dependant are all accompanied by changes in the relationship to physical space. Certain parts of the room, items of furniture such as chairs and beds, certain rooms or parts of the farmyard or garden are allocated for the distinctive use of those performing specific roles associated with age and status. Thus any change in a social relationship implies changes in the relationship to the spaces of the physical environment. The interest of the sociologist in migration stems essentially from his concern with all such movements from one environment to another. Thus it is migration, albeit of a limited kind, when a child moves from cradle to bed, leaves home for his first day at school or goes courting in the next village. More characteristic, and permanent changes, are represented by moves from rural areas to cities for

employment; moves from one part of the country to another with the entire family; moves from one country to another often over long distances such as those which have characterized the major shifts of population between Europe and America or Australasia.

Every such movement implies an element of disassociation from the usual and familiar world, a transition and an involvement with a new environment, a new context of physical space and—most significantly—social relationships. This new environment may be already known and prepared for or it may be totally unfamiliar and distinct. Initiation ceremonies, *rites de passage* may act not merely to ritualize the transition but also to prepare and socialize the individual for the changed circumstances he will encounter. But, however adequate the preparation it will never be complete; the new environment will necessitate the making of choices, the definition of new situations and roles. Even where the migration of whole families or even villages has occurred, the new ‘world’ has brought changes in the demands made upon them, changes which have in turn been reflected in the altered social relationships between members of the group. The classic study by Thomas and Znaniecki *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America*¹ was one of the first to demonstrate the contrasting worlds of the migrant; the loss of the one and the gradual acceptance and understanding of the other. The letters written by the immigrants to their relatives at home eloquently document the complex range of emotional problems involved in such a transition.

The study of social change has been rather strangely segmented by sharp contrasts between ‘before’ and ‘after’ dichotomies. Very little systematic study has been made of the disassociation or ‘desocialization’ process involved in moving from one social milieu to another. It is clear that the adult remembers something of his childhood—but not all. He could never again be a child, just as the sophisticate can never again be an innocent. The migrant to a new environment carries with him much of the old and how much will depend on age, socialization, the circumstances of his departure, his personality and much else besides. The composite ‘memory of things past’ is a significant variable in any analysis of immigrant experience, yet it has often been ignored or treated as of scant significance. There are two main reasons which would appear to account for this. The first is the remarkable perpetuation of the *tabula rasa* myth which implies that the immigrant has wiped out the old and is ready to be fully socialized and assimilated to the new. Although particularly associated with some of the initial features of the American experience this assumption was often supported for some by the sense of rejection that had motivated the move in the first place.

¹ W. I. Thomas and F. Znaniecki, *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America* (Chicago, 1918–20).

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The second reason for failure to take full account of the past may be described simply as the 'progressive idea' or the assumption that the significant experience is always the present one. The receiving society is, in any case, not likely to have much experience of the background from which the migrant comes. It can only take him as it finds him and this has usually been the perspective of social scientists who have tackled these questions within the context of the problems posed for their particular society.

The remarkably static theoretical development in the study of migration demands some more adequate explanation in view of the dynamic quality of migration itself and the extraordinary importance which movements of population assume as both a catalyst and ingredient of social change. In spite of the expression of a somewhat general unease with the too narrowly materialist basis of the 'push-pull' model there has been little serious attempt to grapple with some of the underlying assumptions and myths regarding the human condition and the decision-making process which students of population movement have often quite unconsciously constructed. The most obvious, and the most readily explored of these is the myth of the static society. This implies, by harking back to some pre-existing rural utopia, that the natural condition of man is sedentary, that movement away from the natal place is a deviant-activity associated with disorganization and a threat to the established harmony of *Gemeinschaft* relationships which are implied by a life lived within a fixed social framework. The most important elements of this particular fallacy are, I believe, the following:

- (a) false ideas about pre-industrial societies as 'static' in contrast to the 'dynamic' qualities of modern, industrial societies;
- (b) the dominance of functionalist and integrationist influences in the interpretation of social change which have resulted in the migrant being defined as a deviant personality, 'marginal man', outsider etc. This has been combined with an emphasis on the problems involved in assimilating or resocializing the immigrant to the prevailing values, normative structure and social needs of the receiving society;
- (c) the statistical data available to the student of migration has, for the most part, been confined to that provided by countries as part of their collection of census data to provide an index of net gain or loss of population. The character of this data, in spite of increasing sophistication, has imposed arbitrary limitations on the study of the processes of population movement.

In relation to the last of these points, it must be apparent that political boundaries may not always be the significant factor in describing migration patterns. As a variable it will depend on the kinds of political controls exerted at their borders by different national entities or regional

governments. Depending on particular 'exit' or 'entry' policies, the existence of political boundaries may distort migration patterns which in a 'free movement' situation might be more amenable to economic and social determinants. In any case, since a great part of migration occurs within states and between purely administrative boundaries, the net movement between one administrative county and another or between countries imposing no restriction on the movement of their nationals, may be less significant than other variables. Nevertheless, the idea of the autonomous nation state as a distinct politico-geographical unit remains strong and carries into the very data an element of the static vision which may inhibit the pursuit of the will o' the wisp of migration itself.

Another assumption which has been dominant in this field and is in part related to the manner in which the data is collected, is the 'snapshot' character of the unit act of migration. This idea that migration is usually a *once and once only* phenomenon has grown out of the emphasis on net change rather than gross movement. It was of course the usual experience of the nineteenth-century transatlantic migrant who left Ireland or Poland for Boston or Philadelphia to leave his homeland for ever. But, as Thistlethwaite has pointed out distance was not, even then, a barrier to the more enterprising who would quite frequently travel back and forth.¹ Today it is increasingly apparent that a significant number of migrants spend periods of their lives outside their country of birth, returning home and perhaps after a further period setting off again, without the implications of finality usually associated with such moves. Richmond,² in his study of returning British migrants to Canada has referred to these as 'transilients' and the studies of the return migrant by Appleyard,³ Hernandez⁴ and Wilder-Okladek⁵ and the OECD⁶ have demonstrated the disadvantages of the assumption that migration is to be seen as a once only process. This tendency to look at migration as a single act has been accentuated by the fact that the decennial or quinquennial census data which has been available for most countries has been inadequate to allow full analysis of migration profiles for given cohorts of migrants as well as their latitudinal movement within the society. Significantly, the much improved data available for internal

¹ F. Thistlethwaite, 'Migration from Europe Overseas in the 19th & 20th Centuries', *Rapports du XIe Congrès International des Sciences Historiques* (Stockholm, 1960), pp. 34-57.

² A. H. Richmond, *Post-War Immigrants in Canada* (Toronto, 1967).

³ R. T. Appleyard, 'Determinants of Return Movement...', *The Economic Record*, 38 (September 1962), pp. 352-68.

⁴ J. Hernandez Alvarez, *The Return Migration to Puerto Rico* (Berkeley, 1967).

⁵ F. Wilder-Okladek, 'The Returnee Movement of Jews to Austria' (M.Sc. Thesis, London 1965).

⁶ OECD, *Emigrant Workers Returning to their Home Country*, Final Report and Supplement (Paris, 1967).

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migration in Britain for instance depends on questions introduced as recently as 1961 and 1966 to a sample of the census population asking for the address where a person was living one year ago (1961) and one year and five years ago (1966). What these questions of course exclude is movement which may have taken place within these spans of time; it also must exclude those born and dying within the relevant periods who may have been migrants.

A final and serious tendency has characterized the field of migration study. Migrants, especially international migrants, characteristically find themselves in minority groups within the receiving society. The emphasis on the problems of minority populations and the related social problems involved in the settlement of minority groups from different ethnic, linguistic and social backgrounds has served to divert attention from the process of migration and settlement itself. Too often the study of the migrant as a social problem has failed to consider the more general variables which are significant in the society as a whole. The work of Malzberg,¹ Lee² and Rex,³ among others, has demonstrated that the migrant is not generally a carrier of social problems but rather his experience is usually symptomatic of the existence of such problems—or social risks—for all those of a particular age, occupation, housing, marital, or social nexus in a given area at a particular point in time.

Unfortunately the student of human migration cannot easily apply labels to the individuals he studies as the ethologist can in order to track the migrations of birds or fish. He must often rely on inadequate and unsatisfactory data to describe the pattern of migration. On the other hand he has the advantage of direct communication with his subjects so that the effects of the process, the experience before, during and after migration can be analysed and related to the interplay of variables which lead to the decision to move. This, usually voluntary, decision is rather like the decision to marry. It becomes possible to isolate in a particular environment a variety of predisposing causal factors which lead to the net result. One is left, nevertheless, with a fascinating range of questions regarding the actual factors of selection in the decision-making process which lead some to migrate or marry and particular others to remain as they were.

The measure of migration is, in any case, complicated in a given population by the inadequacy of conceptualization in the definition of community or society. From a sociological point of view communities with a high turnover of population may be more easily defined in terms

¹ B. Malzberg, 'Mental Disease among Puerto Ricans in New York State', *The Psychiatric Quarterly*, supplement, 22 (1948), pp. 300–8.

² E. S. Lee, 'Socio-Economic and Migration Differentials in Mental Disease', *Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly*, xli (July 1963), pp. 249–68.

³ J. Rex and R. Moore, *Race and Conflict* (London, 1967).

of an exploded concept—e.g. to follow Lindemann¹ all those belonging to a particular place rather than all those living within its boundaries. Where patterns of migration have been long established, as in Ireland, not only may it have a profound effect on the structure of social and national life as Schrier² has indicated but it may also lead to a situation where a significant part of the supposed resident population is in fact made up of returned migrants.³

II

The amount of empirical evidence available in the field of migration is enormous and the range and coverage of the statistical data is constantly improving. In spite of this, and partly for the reasons outlined in the preceding section, there has been only a relatively slight attempt to order the confusion with the development of theoretical propositions and models which would lend both elegance and understanding to this large and important subject.

In part this is due to the wide range of disciplines for which migration is a relevant, but not necessarily a central, factor. For the economist, the sociologist and the historian it has usually been seen as an effect of other events in the societies which they studied. Until quite recently, the lack of attention to comparative analysis in all of these fields tended to ignore such inevitably double-ended and comparative phenomena as migration. Where it was treated it was usually emphasized at one end of the process or the other, either *emigration* or, more usually, *immigration*. For demography, migration has necessarily had a far more central place and yet even here the problems of measurement, together with the somewhat residual role that migrants play in the establishment of vital statistics, has meant that there has been little development toward an adequate theoretical formulation to describe the process. The first attempt at formulating migration theory was made by E. G. Ravenstein in his two papers of 1881 and 1889 on 'The Laws of Migration'. These 'laws' which outline demographic and economic variables particularly in relation to the factor of distance represent the beginning of an attempt to relate in a systematic way the factors which enter into what is simply a temporary or permanent change of residence. As Lee and others have noted, in dealing with either short- or long-distance moves the analysis must take into account factors in the area of origin, factors in the area

¹ E. C. Lindemann, 'Community', *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, 4 (New York, 1930), p. 103.

² A. Schrier, *Ireland and the American Emigration* (Minneapolis, 1958).

³ See for instance my study of *The Irish in Britain* (London, 1963), and *Report on the Skibbereen Social Survey*, Human Sciences Committee (Dublin, 1967) and C. K. Ward, *Manpower in a Developing Community, a Pilot Survey of Drogheda* (Dublin, 1967).

of destination, intervening obstacles between them, and the selection or decision factor which leads to a move.

The actual calculus of gain and loss which the potential migrant may work out in such a situation can of course be subjected to the rational principles of minimax analysis and, indeed, much of economic theory has depended on this. The rational element in the decision to migrate, however, is only partial and depends on the variations of personality, information, emotion and independence in attitude of the individual. The world view and perspective of the situation will vary markedly as will also the opportunities available to individuals to make moves. Consequently, however much it is possible to set out in broad terms the factors which predispose a given population to migration to particular destinations, this does not in itself serve to explain the variety of responses which may be made to the pressures to migrate. The failure of the Netherlands government to promote voluntary emigration to Canada from those areas of over-population and depressed agriculture which might be thought most susceptible to strong economic inducement suggests the need to take into account more than the rational imperatives. In spite of the presence of all of the factors of 'push' usually associated with heavy emigration, people were unwilling to leave a social structure which appeared to them adequate and satisfying.¹ The analysis of the causes of migration remains dependent on both objective and subjective elements in the situation of the migrant and his appreciation of it. As J. S. Nalson has pointed out in a recent and fascinating study of *The Mobility of Farm Families* 'Demographic circumstances place certain limitations upon some members of a family and give certain advantages to others.'² These are related to factors in the domestic life-cycle which provides not only a particular orientation to the world outside and its influences but also a particular set of opportunities at different stages of the family.

The increasing attention that has been paid to the circumstances surrounding migration decision, to which Taylor's paper in this volume makes a substantial contribution, has been matched by a growing number of studies of areas affected by migration. In the past these were normally areas receiving large numbers of immigrants such as the Boston studied by Oscar Handlin³ or indeed the whole United States.⁴ This has given way both to a number of studies of the community from which the immigrant came of which those by Schrier and Holbrook⁵

¹ G. H. L. Zeegers, 'Some Sociographic Aspects of Emigration from the Netherlands', *Proceedings of the World Population Conference, 1954, Papers*, II, pp. 297-8.

² J. S. Nalson, *The Mobility of Farm Families* (Manchester, 1968), p. 173.

³ O. Handlin, *Boston's Immigrants* (Cambridge, Mass., 1959).

⁴ M. A. Jones, *American Immigration* (Chicago, 1960).

⁵ S. H. Holbrook, *The Yankee Exodus, An Account of Migration from New England* (N.Y., 1950).

are interesting and valuable examples and with increasing interest in the return migrant and migration in an international context, to a number of double-ended studies of the migration process itself.

A further area which is continuing to attract the attention of scholars in the field and which has always generated considerable interest is that of the assimilation of the migrant within the new society. The two studies in this volume by Price and Richmond show how far approaches in this area have moved away from the static view and toward an analysis of the implications of a plural society.

It is not possible in a brief introduction to give more than an indication of the enormous range of both empirical and theoretical development in this field. The papers which follow give some indication of the breadth and capacity of the topic as well as its fascination. The fact that an ordered theoretical model of migration has been, and remains, elusive is in large measure due to the central role of the migrant in the framework of social analysis. Just as he is seen often as a threat to the society he leaves (brain drain etc.) and a threat to the society to which he comes, he presents for the sociologist a serious challenge to any restricted and narrowly functional or static model of human society. The migrant not only provides the human capital of social change, he is its agent and as such he plays a significant part in shaping ideas about the societies in which he lives.

III

The papers in this second volume of *Sociological Studies* cover a number of aspects of the study of migration and suggest developments and refinements of many of the concepts available for analysis. The approaches vary in their emphasis and some attempt has been made to retain the wide framework of discussion of the problem between demographic, historical and economic as well as specifically sociological dimensions. Thus the first paper by G. Beijer gives an impression, not only of the problems associated with migration statistics, but also the range of data and variety of types of migrant and forms of migration. The increasingly international character of population movements and interchange as well as the relation between the developed and the underdeveloped countries in terms of manpower training and recruitment is emphasized as a factor of growing importance with the establishment of free or relatively free labour markets such as that of the European Economic Community.

In the second paper C. Jansen firmly shifts the emphasis to some specifically sociological features of migration and describes the application of Merton's distinction between cosmopolitans and locals to groups

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of migrants and residents in a study of Bristol. The critique of the simple rural–urban movement proposition contained in this paper is carried further in the paper by H. Lind, an economist who treats the recent census data on internal migration in Britain to an exhaustive and illuminating analysis. He suggests that the fact that most regional development policy is still governed by the Keynesian model of regional disequilibrium is likely to have disastrous effects unless a more realistic model of overall internal migration can be found.

R. C. Taylor develops the difficult but fascinating topic of decision-making and drawing on a study of mineworkers suggests four migrant-types with distinctive motivational characteristics. He demonstrates the advantages to be gained by a satisfactory combination of both objective and subjective aspects of motivation.

The next two papers by J. Gugler and J. Clyde Mitchell are devoted to the context of internal migration in Africa and suggest interesting contrasts and comparisons with predominantly European and American material. Both show the characteristics of rural–urban migration in Subsaharan African societies and the nature of the continuing relationship between the urban migrant and his village. Clyde Mitchell's paper, using the specific case of Southern Rhodesia, suggests the circulatory character of migrants' labour histories and suggests the implications of the 'plural society', within which the migrant necessarily lives. This in turn is suggestive for the effects of social change brought about by the migrant on each of his environments.

The papers below deal primarily with the question of assimilation—indeed this is the title of C. Price's paper. It is a complex area which, as Price shows, allows in the analysis of the various theories of immigrant absorption as well as the rich record of immigrant experience, for an appreciation of not merely the empirical data but also the subjective truths so often captured in the writings of the immigrants themselves. A. H. Richmond's paper provides a detailed and fascinating account of the relationship of migrants to urban ecology and the development of ethnic sub-systems within the wider social fabric. The lack of homogeneity in complex industrial societies suggests that the assumptions which were originally attached to concepts like 'assimilation' are no longer valid and consequently the adaptation of immigrants in contemporary urban environments demands a far more sophisticated model of both the determinants of migration and the processes of absorption.

Finally, Everett Lee in a paper which analyses the development of migration theory sets out viable elements and definitions of a number of hypotheses which may be tested in relation to migration data. His scheme shows clearly the criteria which any model of migration must satisfy and provides many valuable indications of ways in which 'middle

principles' may be developed from testable hypotheses. These, even if they lack the assumed stature of Ravenstein's laws, certainly are necessary equipment for any student of the subject.

It is clear that it may still not be possible to provide a completely satisfactory sociological model of migration which can adequately embrace its various types and implications. Nevertheless, these papers suggest that there is an encouraging clustering and crystallization in the development of both appropriate new concepts and emphasis on significant, but hitherto neglected areas of study. The dynamic character of migration is increasingly matched by dynamic models of both rural and urban societies, pre-industrialized and industrialized economies. It is to be hoped that the social sciences can continue their already considerable attainment in discerning and describing the patterns which shape the plural character of those societies in which diversity of experience and opportunity increasingly characterizes the human condition.