

Research Paper 25

**A Celebration of Migration**

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# A CELEBRATION OF MIGRATION

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## Summary

Traditional interpretations of migration fail to stress its positive aspects. From both the departure and arrival perspectives, migrants are too often viewed as desperate, marginalised people, as 'others' defined only in terms of their misunderstood and falsely homogenised differences from the host culture. Politicians are only too ready to make political capital out of the 'immigration problem', preying on people's fears and ignorance and blaming migrants for the ills of society at large. This paper projects a more positive, celebratory interpretation of migration, and is in three parts. First, migration will be shown to be a constant thread running through the fabric of human history, creating and enriching cultures rather than threatening them - though the precise outcome depends on power relationships. Second, migration provokes clear cycles of landscape change: modifying and reclaiming urban environments, for instance, and renewing previously decaying rural areas through return migration. The third part of the paper examines some of the new forms of migration in the world today, and stresses the need for new models and methods to study them. In pointing to the global importance of migration in the transition to the next century, the paper will conclude with an agenda for some neglected aspects of migration study, and a manifesto for studying migration in a more creative, interdisciplinary and positive way.

This paper is based on a Professorial Inaugural Lecture given at the University of Sussex on 30 January 1996.

## A CELEBRATION OF MIGRATION

In 1906 a migrant ship arrived at Ellis Island, that notorious landing-place for would-be immigrants to the United States. Located in New York harbour in tantalising view of the Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island was the great migrant marshalling-yard where arrivals were sorted, examined, accepted or rejected like human cattle. The ship had come from Trieste, which was then the port of the Austrian Empire; on board, amongst the human cargo, was a group of a hundred or so Slovenians. The voyage had been long and it was a blistering hot day. Using sign language, the Slovenians implored the guards to bring them some water. One of the guards obliged and set down some buckets and ladles in front of the group. Immediately the Slovenian men surged forward whilst the women hung back, according to Slovenian custom. The American guard raised his hand and shouted "Stop! Ladies first!" Dumfounded, the men froze and gradually resumed their places. Equally slowly, the women timidly came forward. One old woman, a little bolder than the rest, picked up a ladle of water, turned to her compatriots and proposed a toast: "To America, where women are first!"<sup>1</sup>

Of course this story, though true, is only an anecdote and one anecdote hardly constitutes solid scientific or historical evidence. Above all, as a single event, it tells us nothing about the lives those women went on to live in America. Were they really liberated from their menfolk, or was the Slovenian social system preserved, even reinforced, in its emigrant setting? Were there new forms of patriarchy and discrimination which were added to traditional Slovenian forms? For those Slovenian women migrants, we will never know, but the story does remind us of another important point - which I shall return to in my conclusion - namely that migration is often a sharply gendered process in which the experiences of men and women are very different and in which power relationships between the two sexes are markedly changed. Sometimes they are changed for the better, sometimes not. As far as one can generalise from a considerable amount of scattered evidence on migration and gender, mostly from North America and Europe, it does seem that on balance migration to a new environment can lead to a certain degree of independence and emancipation for women, but it is not always that way.<sup>2</sup>

This paper, as the title implies, is about the positive side of migration, and about migration as a basically positive phenomenon. It is an antidote to what I feel is a pervasive negativity in the way in which migration is viewed as a major social and historical process. Too often are migrants viewed as marginal, desperate people; too often are they defined only in terms of their difference from host societies, by their falsely-homogenised 'otherness'; too often are they seen as the source of social problems whereas in reality they are merely the scapegoat for the social ills of society at large; and too often do politicians make political capital out of the 'immigration problem' by preying on people's fears and prejudices. Too rarely are the positive aspects of migration celebrated; too rarely are the success-stories of migration described; too rarely are the excitements of the multicultural encounter acknowledged; too rarely - almost never - is it suggested that the so-called 'problems' of migration be solved by more, not less, migration; and too rarely has migration's truly historic role in creating and shaping societies the world over been grasped.

Of course, the negative aspects of migration processes have constantly to be borne in mind. We have to acknowledge that historically capital has used migrants as 'reserve armies' of labour, to hold wages and hence production costs down; we have to remember the shameful way colonial powers enslaved and shunted their colonised subjects around the world; we have to be aware of

the special hardships faced by refugees who are migrants not by their own choice; and we have to admit that still today large numbers of migrants lead difficult lives, daily encountering discrimination and racism. But we have to distinguish between what happened in the past and what is happening in the present. History cannot be undone: the hybridised societies created by migration cannot be unscrambled, nor should they be. On the other hand the present *can* be changed; and part of that change is to view the whole question of migration in a more socially just, tolerant and open-minded way.

This paper is in three parts. First I will look at the role of migrations in world history, and will show how migration has been a constant and recurring thread running through the tapestry of human existence, creating and enriching cultures rather than destroying them. Second, I will show how migration creates new landscapes. Most often these are of settlement, renewal, creative transformation; though occasionally they are of destruction and abandonment. Thirdly, I will examine some of the new forms of migration in the world today, stressing the need for new models and methods for studying them. But first three small points of clarification and orientation: one of definition, one of language and one about interdisciplinarity.

How to define migration? The *Dictionary of Human Geography* defines it as "a permanent or semi-permanent change of residence" and goes on to point out that statistically it is measured by the crossing of some kind of boundary and by the necessity for a certain amount of time to have elapsed residing on the other side of the boundary (Johnston, Gregory and Smith, 1994, p.380). I find this an excessively mechanistic and dry definition which captures nothing of the excitement and richness of the phenomenon, nor the *meaning* of migration for the person who is moving. Therefore the nature of migration as a *significant event* must be stressed: there should be some sense, and understanding, of how the individual's life is changed by migration; and some appreciation that migration has some effect both on the place left behind and the place of destination of the migrant. One has to try to acquire some sense of what it is to *be* a migrant; of migration as a sense of *being* in the world. And one has to try to analyse the shifting meaning of *place* for migrants - such as nostalgia for the place left behind, or the transformation of place by the migrants when they arrive and settle (King, 1995). This is brilliantly analysed by Gillian Bottomley's book *From Another Place*, an anthropological study of Greek immigrants in Australia. Just to pick one poignant vignette out of this book, Bottomley describes an old woman dancing on her own, eyes closed, in a bare hall in a Sydney suburb. Through her dancing she was able to connect herself back to her home village in Greece, to her childhood: she could even smell the pine trees..... (Bottomley, 1992, p.141).

Second, the question of language. There are two linguistic metaphors which are regularly used when migration is being debated. One is a military discourse: politicians of the right (and not only of the right) often portray migrants as armies, invading a territory which must be defended against the hordes; 'Fortress Europe' under siege. This language of war is highly emotive and inflammatory and should be denounced.

Another discourse has more to do with fluvial geomorphology and perhaps reflects the role of geographers amongst the early students of migration, borrowing terms from their physical studies of oceans and rivers. Thus migrants are described as travelling in waves, currents or streams, or even, to stress the magnitude and unstoppableness of the movement, in floods. Whilst this selection of terms might have been ideologically neutral in its origin, phrases like 'floods of migrants' nevertheless carry connotations of invasion and spreading out, which are far from value-free. Nevertheless, so ingrained are some of these words in our migration lexicon that it is difficult to avoid slipping into their usage from time to time.

Thirdly, a word on migration as a field of study. Most of the work on migration has been done by four social sciences: sociology, human geography, anthropology and economics. However it is important to note that many other subjects have more than a passing interest in the theme and have contributed important work - history, international relations, psychology, law, cultural studies, literature and probably others too. Clearly, migration is a topic of multidisciplinary interest, looked at by many disciplines but usually, in these cases, by scholars who tend to remain within their conventional disciplinary boundaries and frameworks. Much more creative work, gaining richer and deeper insights, can be done by adopting an explicitly interdisciplinary perspective: by researchers of different disciplinary backgrounds working together, combining and fusing their approaches in a more integrated and complete analysis. Again, I shall return to this point in the conclusion.

One final introductory remark. In this paper I shall be mainly dealing with 'big' migrations - long-range, mostly international movements. I shall not say much about local-scale and intra-national migrations. And I will be looking mostly at voluntary (or semi-voluntary) migrations, not the forced migrations of refugees.

### **The role of migration in world history**

What can be said of significance about the history of migration in a few words? To go back to a watery analogy; this is veritably like squeezing an ocean into a thimble. All I can do is to range widely and probably very superficially, trying to bring out some important generalisations which relate to the main theme of this paper.

The first point to make is that migration seems to be an ever-present refrain in the history of the world (King, 1996a). Some scholars have gone so far as to maintain that the tendency to migrate or at least to rove is innate in human beings - a natural reflection of their curiosity, energy and enterprise (McNeill, 1978). Migration lies at the heart of the great controversy over the origins of *homo sapiens* on this planet: whether the human species emerged first in East Africa and spread out from there to Europe and Asia; or whether the species evolved independently in different continents (Fagan, 1990). Leaving this archaeological conundrum aside, it is not hard to appreciate the role of migration in world historical processes such as conquest, enslavement, colonisation, imperialism and modern capitalism: all involve the mass movement of people in settlement, transfer, displacement or flight. Oscar Handlin wrote in the Preface to his famous book *The Uprooted* "Once I thought to write a history of immigrants in America. Then I discovered that immigrants *were* American history" (Handlin, 1951). History can be either about 'great personalities' and 'big events', or it can be about the lives of the common people. The big events - the wars, the treaties - were often the triggers of migration, but its protagonists were of course the masses who moved, voluntarily or involuntarily, according to the dictates of imperialism, war-mongers or capitalism. We still have much to learn about their lives and their deaths. Amongst early forced migrations, particularly those of slavery and indenture, rates of morbidity were extraordinarily high. On some transatlantic crossings, up to a third of the slaves died during the voyage. Many did not survive more than a few years on the plantations. Truly this was a case of 'death by migration' (Curtin, 1990; see also Potts, 1990).

Certainly there is nothing to celebrate here. What did happen, over the longer term, was that colonial regimes, having shipped and mixed enslaved and colonised peoples around the world, created plural societies of Europeans, indigenous peoples (where these survived - often they were all but wiped out by European diseases to which they had no immunity), African slaves and Indian and Chinese coolies. In the Caribbean all these elements are present, creating one of the

most hybridised, but also hierarchically segmented, societies in the world. Of course the story of Caribbean migration does not end there, as we shall see presently. For the time being we can note the critical role of monocrop plantation economies - especially sugar in the Caribbean but also cotton, tobacco, coffee and bananas - in producing the demand for labour and for providing the profits not only to sustain the plantocracy but also to contribute to the creation and support of wealthy class back in the colonial metropole. Many a fine historic house in the Sussex Weald was built on the backs of slave labour in the Caribbean sugar estates. It was the subsequent collapse of the monocrop, or its unsustainability in competition with other producer areas or as a result of soil exhaustion, which is the link to postwar emigration from the Caribbean.

But first let us return to the period when forced migrations gave way to mass migrations that were, at least in theory, voluntary. I refer here to the great transatlantic migrations to North (and to a lesser extent to South and Central) America that reached their greatest intensity during the 19th and early 20th centuries - the biggest long-range migration in history, involving some 50 million people. Figure 1 portrays the main flows of this era.

From the American end the rhetoric of immigration was one of opportunity, success and an ultimate assimilation and contribution to the building up of what was seen as a great new country, an ideology embodied in the inscription at the base of the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbour: "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to be free." As Stephen Fender's (1992) work has shown for 19th century British emigration to the United States, this rhetoric, and the literature that accompanied it, masked a much harsher reality. And if the reality was tougher than the ideology of migration for the British, it was even harsher for the migrants who came from different backgrounds, who were poorer, had language difficulties and who did not share the culture of Anglo-America.

There seems no doubt that the mass immigration of Europeans to North America in the 19th and early 20th centuries made a positive contribution to the rate of economic growth in the United States and Canada by providing these countries with supplies of free human capital. Although the move was projected as one of pioneer settlers and homesteaders, the majority of migrants ended up in urban-industrial environments as factory-hands or service workers, or as construction workers building roads, railways, houses or other civil engineering projects. Nevertheless we should not ignore those who were conspicuously more successful, who set up businesses, became professionals, or who took skills with them - in mining or industrial technology for instance - and put them to good use. Nor should we overlook the fact that this vast migration also had economic benefit for the European countries of departure, acting as a safety-valve to trim off much of the surplus population that resulted from a still high rate of demographic growth (the European population had increased by five times, from 100 million to 500 million, between 1650 and 1914, faster than the rest of the world), and enabling the right factor mix to be attained for European industrial development (Baines, 1991).

It would appear, therefore, that transatlantic mass migration provided economic benefit for both sending and receiving regions. The receiving regions were indeed lands of opportunity, even if the opportunities were often tightly constrained by skill and language barriers and even if exploitation, loneliness and suffering were the lot of many migrants, at least for a time. But many migrants had left behind conditions which were even worse - the Irish potato famines of the 1840s, for instance, or the oppressive land tenure systems and hierarchical social structures of the south Italian countryside. If success was achieved, it was only through hard work, personal sacrifice and hardship. Of victims, there were many: those who simply could not cope, who were cheated, or who fell ill and had to return.

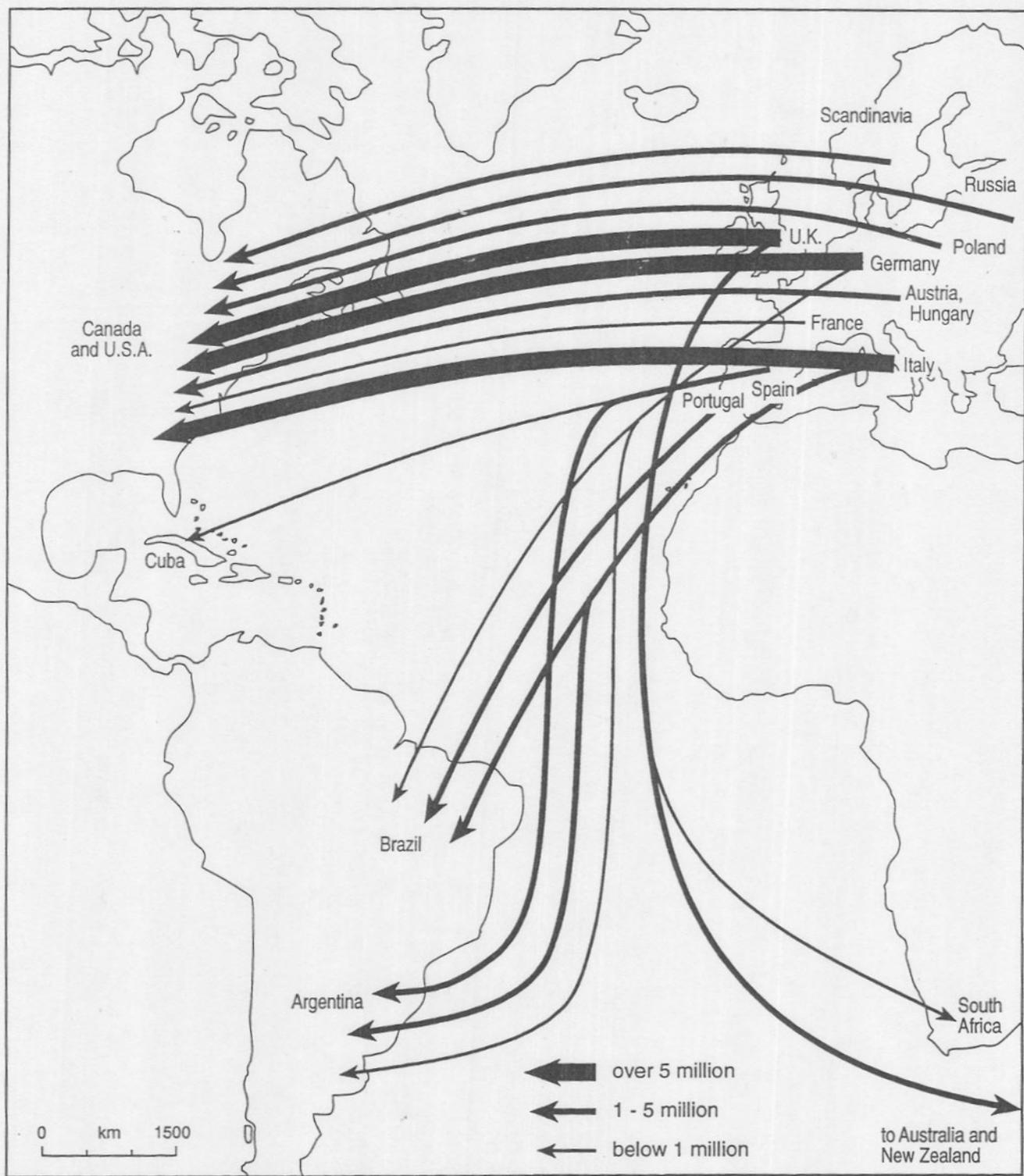


Figure 1. European transoceanic migrations 1815-1914  
 Source: Based on data in Baines (1991)

Return migration is the great unwritten chapter in the history of transatlantic migration. From the US end return was scarcely considered because of the ideology of the immigrants being settlers and, ultimately, 'Americans'. Even the majority who stayed on engendered mild disappointment on the part of the 'assimilationists' because of the way the migrants clung to their family traditions and settled in 'ethnic districts' of American cities in tightly-packed replications of their village societies back home. These ethnic quarters such as the famous 'little Italies' were an expression of the power of nostalgia for the 'old country', and an indication of the mechanism of chain migration and the strength of kin and social networks in sustaining the migration process, especially for those migrants who were outside the Anglo-American culture area. The strength and persistence of the ethnic identities that the migrants brought with them prompted the famous Chicago School of Sociologists to study the ethnic mosaic of American cities like New York, Boston and Chicago (eg. Zorbaugh, 1929), whilst the Chicago anthropologists went off to research some of the predominantly rural, peasant cultures that the migrants came from (eg. Redfield, 1930).

Mechanisms of return migration were in fact highly variable. As well as the failures who simply could not stay, despite the cocooning effect of ethnic enclaves, there were also other returnees. Some migrants were seasonal or temporary migrants anyway, especially those from southern and south-eastern Europe. Hence they returned after a year or two, perhaps to re-emigrate later for another spell. Then there were those who returned home because they had become (in their own terms) successful: they nearly always returned to their home villages, bought land, built new houses and became *nouveaux riches*. We will pick up their story presently.

The final major phase of world migration I want to look at in this historical survey is the postwar labour migration of Western Europe that reached its apogée in the twenty or so years between the early 1950s and the first oil crisis in 1973/74. As with the other migratory movements mentioned already, I think there are several approaches or frameworks one can use to analyse this postwar European migration.

The first is to link it with a particular historical-economic mode of production, just as slavery and indenture were linked with colonial plantations and transatlantic migration with free trade and the opening-up of 'empty lands'. Tony Fielding (1993) has emphasised the link between postwar European migration and the 'golden age' of Fordism in which the migration of 'mass collective workers' was the demographic corollary of mass production for mass markets, accompanied also by 'mass society' and 'mass culture'. In this way the extraordinarily strong growth in the output of manufactured products geared to the satisfaction (and eventual saturation) of a rapidly expanding postwar consumer market could only be sustained by the extra supplies of labour - maybe 8 million workers - furnished by mass migration during 1950-73, either from within the boundaries of Europe (Ireland, Spain, Italy etc) or from colonies and ex-colonies outside (Algeria, the Caribbean, South Asia etc). This approach stresses the positive economic impact of immigrant workers on European development trends in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, an interpretation which has been given considerable substance by the recent publication of some detailed studies on Germany (Spencer, 1994).

Another slant, not far removed from the first approach above, is to view European postwar migration from the standpoint of neoclassical economics and regard Western Europe and some of its outer peripheral territories as a geographically extensive labour market in which spatial imbalances in the supply, demand and price of labour are evened out by migration. This involves, in more detail, assembling data sets to prove that labour migrated during this period from regions and countries of labour surplus (high unemployment, low wages, strong demographic growth)

to areas of labour deficit (low or zero unemployment, high wages, labour force stagnation or shrinkage). In general terms, the data and resultant migration flow patterns confirm this equilibrium-tending model. Each of the major growth economies of industrial Europe during the two or three postwar decades has drawn on supplies of surplus labour from those countries which are geographically (and also usually culturally) closest: Britain from Ireland; France from Spain, Portugal and Algeria; Switzerland from Italy; Sweden from Finland; and West Germany from a group of countries in the south-east sector of Europe - Italy, Yugoslavia, Greece and Turkey. All in all, a neat, symmetrical, periphery-to-core geographical pattern (Figure 2). Within the six EEC countries this movement was reinforced institutionally by the Free Movement of Labour provisions which came into force in the early 1960s and allowed Italians, especially, to migrate to France and Germany and find more remunerative work there. Outside the 'Common Market for labour' bilateral agreements between pairs of sending and recruiting countries provided the institutional lubrication for movements which quickly became substantial - none more so than that between Turkey and Germany.

A third approach to the study of European labour migration is the neo-Marxian one of viewing migrants as part of a reserve army of labour exploited by capital at the lowest rates that can be imposed. This thesis maintains that it is part of the function of capital to search for the cheapest supplies of labour it can find, rather than pay indigenous workers higher wages. Moreover the importation of cheap foreign labour willing to undercut indigenous wage levels splits working-class solidarity and hence enhances the power of capital over labour. Given that the source countries have borne the costs of feeding, clothing and educating the migrant workers and that they reassume the tasks of caring for workers who are discarded by ill-health, industrial injury, redundancy or retirement, this form of labour migration represents a 'gift' of human capital and a form of development aid in reverse, donated by the poor to the wealthy countries.<sup>3</sup>

This argument, too, has a good deal of empirical evidence to support it. All around the world the main centres of capital accumulation - mainly industrial powers but also primary producers such as the Gulf (for oil) and South Africa (mining) - have fed off supplies of migrant labour, initially from the rural hinterlands of the same countries, then from adjacent countries, then from further afield. West Germany provides a good illustration of this in the years up to 1973, drawing labour initially from rural East Germany up to 1961 and the erection of the Berlin Wall, then from Italy, then Yugoslavia and Greece and finally Turkey, the hinterland of supply extending progressively outwards to the south-east. West Germany was also the classic exemplification of how migrant labour was used in its flexible reserve army function: brought in when industry was expanding, but rotated on short-term contracts so that it could be laid off in the event of a recession, as in 1966-67 and 1973-74, when millions of migrants returned home. This was the strategy of *Konjunkturpuffer*: using migrants as a buffer against conjunctures or economic cycles. It was a system that functioned effectively, from a German point of view, partly because migrants were denied many of their citizen rights: they were merely *Gastarbeiter* or 'guestworkers' and given no encouragement to integrate in German society. Even today Germany officially denies it is a country of immigration despite the *de facto* presence of around 6 million immigrants, many of whom have been there for more than thirty years and have children, even grandchildren, born there. These offspring, like the primary migrants, are generally denied the opportunity of becoming German citizens or even having dual nationality because they lack 'German blood'. Yet, in practice, the 'guestworkers' have become settled immigrants and a multi-ethnic society has evolved.

There is a fourth way of approaching the study of migration - by focussing on the migrants themselves. Neoclassical theory is unrealistic because it depends on the complete rationality of

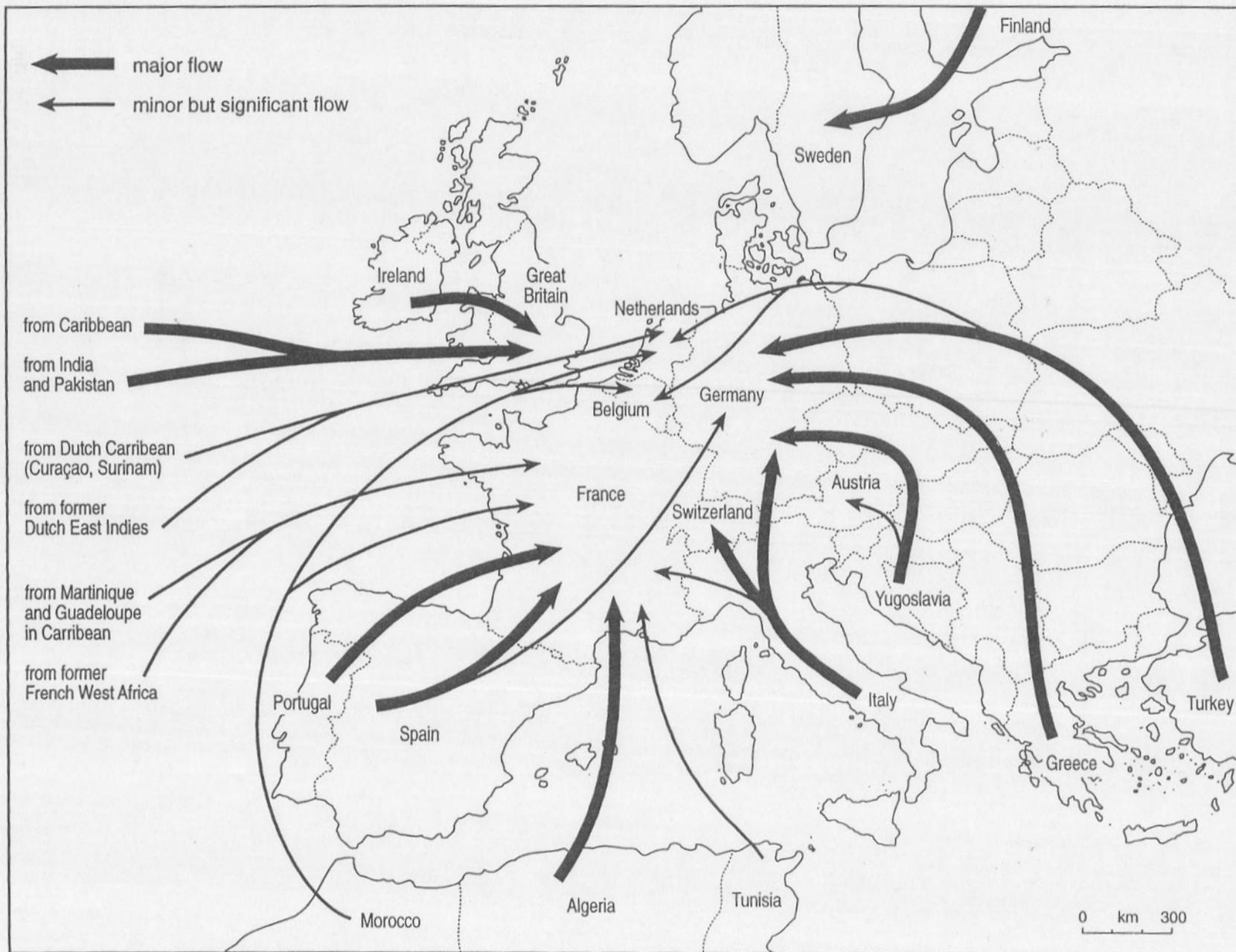


Figure 2. Labour migration into European industrial countries, 1945-73

human beings - the myth of 'economic man' (*sic*) who has perfect information about job opportunities and wages in all market locations, and is ready and willing to move at the drop of a hat. The Marxian view implies the opposite extreme, reducing human beings to mere pawns in the capitalist system with little free choice. A migrant-centred view steers a middle course, recognising that migrants do have choices but also constraints on those choices. It also allows a greater emphasis on individual characteristics such as personality, ambition, and fear of the unknown. It acknowledges the practical relevance of social factors such as family circumstances, friendship networks and the operation of chain migration. It implies, of course, an entirely different approach: economic theory and the analysis of census data (often of dubious value anyway because of their inaccuracy and paucity of relevant variables) are replaced by primary social research involving questionnaires, interviews, oral histories, participant observation and other forms of ethnographic fieldwork. Above all it is necessary to get access to the voices and opinions of the migrants themselves, recognising that migrants, nearly always, are an extraordinarily diverse set of individuals who are not always easy to categorise and objectify: indeed it may well be a mistake to try to do so.

All of these approaches have their contributions to make. I am not an out-and-out free marketeer any more than I am an unreconstructed Marxist: yet I recognise that both equilibrium theory and Marxism have value when studying migration - a value which is both intuitive and has some empirical verification. Equally the historical and cultural specificity of migration epochs and events, and of individual migrants, must be acknowledged: each migration is embedded in a specific historical and geographical setting which also must be studied to appreciate the full motivation and character of the flow.

What we can learn from this very brief historical survey, in which I have only picked out the main phases of long-range migration, is perhaps three things.

First, migration is an early form of globalisation. Globalisation is often talked about as a phenomenon of the late 20th century, but migration has been an expression of globalisation and of the functioning of the global labour market for around 500 years.

Second, migration has nearly always been linked to processes of economic development. It has been functional to the development of the world capitalist economy, and often associated with the regionalised mass production for a world or colonial market of specific products ranging from sugar, cotton and oil to steel and motor cars. The relationship between migration and uneven development is, however, more difficult to express a generalisation about. In some cases migration does seem to follow the equilibrium model and be an agent of the redistribution of people from labour-rich (and hence low-wage) to labour-poor (hence high-wage) regions, to the benefit of all. In other cases migration remains as part of the very structure of inequality, functioning to perpetrate the dependent and unequal relationship between sending and receiving areas and perhaps even to enlarge the economic divide between the two.

Finally migration involves a multiple and fascinating engagement with the concept of place. The notion of place is held in particular ways in the mind of the migrant: places left behind and 'remembered', perhaps idealised and viewed with nostalgia; and places settled anew which are often recreated in the image of the place of origin, sometimes even given the same name (Bianco, 1974). This reshaping of place is part of the transformation of place wrought by migrants when they leave, arrive, and return. This is the subject of the next part of the paper.

## Migration, landscape and place

Migration is an inherently spatial process. Depending on the scale of analysis and measurement, it is human movement between countries, regions, localities, even individual addresses. The spatiality of migration explains the great attention paid to the subject by geographers who have suggested many frameworks for analysing the process, its causes and effects (Ogden, 1984; White and Woods, 1980). Push-pull theory, the gravity model and its many variations, systems analysis and behavioural studies are just some of the model-based approaches which have been adopted by geographers to 'explain' migration. In this section of the paper, however, I am less concerned with the causes of migration than its impacts on places and landscapes. Although migrations are usually measured statistically as aggregate flows (gross or net) between countries or regions, a closer analysis usually reveals a more spatially concentrated pattern whereby particular districts or localities stand out as the key origins and destinations. If we stay with Europe as our main area of analysis, and look again at the two major migration waves (the 19th and early 20th century overseas movement, and the postwar intra-European phase), we find it was overwhelmingly rural areas which were the main sources, and urban-industrial areas which were the main destinations. Moreover emigration was usually most intense from *particular* rural areas: those with the greatest population pressure; those where land tenure structures were particularly oppressive; those where the physical environment put constraints on agricultural productivity because of the harsh climate, poor soils or rugged topography; and those where alternative sources of employment outside of unrewarding farming were especially limited (King, 1993). And the local-scale patterns of migrant destinations have been equally distinct: a preference for major capital cities such as London, Paris or New York where a wide variety of employment opportunities were to be found; a strong link also to certain industrial cities where migrant labour was in demand for factory work; and within all cities of destination a concentration in areas of cheap accommodation, often in the inner-city areas being abandoned by the indigenous population (White, 1984, pp. 74-150).

Let us look at these various migration phases in a little more detail, helped by some illustrative examples. The initial outmigrations from peripheral regions of Europe such as Ireland, Portugal or southern Italy were usually sharply patterned. For instance, work that I carried out with Alan Strachan on modelling net migration by commune in Sicily and Sardinia during 1961-71 - the decade of maximum migratory loss - revealed that outmigration was statistically related to high levels of agricultural employment, low levels of formal education amongst the population, location away from the coast and hilly or mountainous topography. Low levels of net outmigration, or the presence of in-migration, were, accordingly, correlated with coastal location, the availability of industrial and tertiary employment, higher levels of education and zones of irrigated farming (King and Strachan, 1980a; 1980b).<sup>4</sup> For another part of southern Italy Paul White (1985) demonstrated the importance of tourism and tertiary employment in 'holding' the population *in situ*; his analysis was unusual because it was carried out at the sub-municipality level, helped by the detailed Italian census records. Field-based studies too reveal the micro-scale patterns of abandonment caused by emigration. Usually it is the marginal land which is abandoned first - hillside terraces and remote fields, but not valley-bottom meadows and vegetable gardens - and it is the isolated farmsteads and upland hamlets which lose population more rapidly than the larger villages and market towns. These micro-scale patterns are often well documented by studies of islands which historically have had an intense experience of migration (King and Young, 1979). Finally, selective abandonment of dwellings and land is matched by human selectivity, it being mainly the young adults who depart, leaving behind a distorted residual population consisting mainly of the very old and the very young. Taken together, the various

processes of departure and abandonment constitute a kind of social desertification in which many aspects of rural life decline. On the other hand the fallowing of fields and the collapse of dry-stone walls and terraces may be associated with progressive ecological processes including the recovery of the natural vegetation and wildlife populations.

The question of whether this kind of rural emigration is a 'good thing' cannot be easily answered, for it depends on local circumstances. In many overcrowded districts emigration has been necessary to retain stability, avoid poverty and starvation and rein back over-exploitation of the land which can lead to erosion and permanent environmental damage. In other cases, however, the outmigration has developed a momentum of its own, leading to wholesale abandonment; emigration takes over as the only alternative to an impoverished and socially isolated existence as a non-migrant or 'stayer'. A downward spiral of emigration and abandonment takes rural communities beyond the point where they can function as viable entities.

As rural life is drained away by emigration in the sending areas, so some aspects of it are remade in the destination cities. This is a long-established process. The literature on immigration in North America is replete with examples of urban ethnic neighbourhoods, such as the 'little Italies' noted earlier. In cities on both sides of the Atlantic there were, in addition, (and sometimes still are) Jewish ghettos, Irish quarters, 'Chinatowns' and many more. Richard Lawton (1955), for example, has provided a detailed geographical study of the Irish in nineteenth-century Liverpool, and Lynn Hollen Lees (1979) a fine book of the Irish in Victorian London. The postwar period, particularly the 1960s and 1970s, saw the process of ethnic neighbourhood formation repeated and intensified in most European industrial and capital cities. Once again, there are alternative interpretations of this process. One approach interprets ethnic clustering as due to structural factors of the housing market and of the receiving society. Hence migrants are perceived as victims squeezed by the social geography of the city and by the gatekeeper functions of housing administrators and mortgage lenders into specific areas of low-grade accommodation whose desirability becomes even less because of the immigrant presence. The immigrants, meanwhile, wish (or are forced) to cut themselves off from mainstream society because of the perceived cultural gap between the two groups, reinforced by prejudice, racism and even physical harassment from the host society. A somewhat less extreme variant of this view stresses the innate tendency of immigrant groups to stay detached from the host society - a kind of voluntary non-participation (cf. Dahya, 1974) - related partly to a wish to preserve cultural identity in the anticipation of an eventual return to their home country - a return which takes (or will take) place only in a minority of cases.<sup>5</sup> A more straightforward and pragmatic explanation of ethnic clustering is the wish to be near certain facilities such as places of worship, ethnic shops and community centres.

Whilst not denying the relevance of any of the above processes, a more positive interpretation sees immigrants and ethnic minority populations as contributing a great deal of value to urban economy and society. Above all, they are the driving-force behind the formation of multicultural urban societies where different ethnic groups are able to mix freely and learn from each other, notably, for instance, within the education system where children of many ethnicities, linguistic backgrounds, colours and cultures are able to study together in the same class. And rather than blaming immigrants for the downgrading of inner-city districts, an alternative analysis sees them as rescuing and rehabilitating such areas, bringing life and a sense of community to areas of housing which otherwise would fall into disuse and decay. Much the same goes for business premises too: ethnic businesses are able to take over vacant factories and workshops which thereby function as nurseries for ethnic enterprise (Waldinger, Howard and Ward, 1990). The opening of ethnic shops and catering outlets is another positive aspect of the immigrant experience:

founded initially to service the ethnic community, they may also attract custom from the host population, as did Italian, Chinese and Indian restaurants in the 1960s and 1970s, some of which now market their 'exotic' food mainly to host society clientele. Indeed in some cases such businesses have been able to trade on their ethnicity and flourish in an increasingly specialised and segmented consumer market - within Britain Italian restaurants, Chinese take-aways and Indian curry-houses are some obvious examples. But there are also other businesses which become established within the ethnic economy: travel agents, lawyers, accountants, garages, estate agents, and shops of all kinds. These ethnic businesses are one of the main channels of socio-economic mobility for minority populations, a theme I shall return to in the final part of the paper. Finally, here, it is important to recognise the cultural impact of immigrant populations, especially the cultural energies in the form of festivals and street carnivals. These can be enjoyed not just by the ethnic groups themselves but also by people of all backgrounds.

A third phase of landscape change takes place with return migration. Different migrant groups have different propensities to return, and returns take place for different reasons and at different stages of the life-cycle. Distance may also be a factor; returns are less likely from overseas 'settler' destinations such as North and South America or Australia (for Europeans) than from destinations which are closer at hand (eg. Britain for the Irish or Switzerland for south Italians). Returns which take place when the migrant reaches retirement age will be different in their social and economic effects from returns which take place when the migrant is still economically active, perhaps bringing back young children to the village or region of origin. Another highly relevant factor controlling the type of return and the return impact is the length of time spent away and the degree of integration and assimilation made by the migrant into the destination country's society. The Italian sociologist Francesco Cerase (1974) has proposed an interesting model based on his research into mid-20th-century Italian emigration to the United States and the consequent returns of the 1950s and 1960s. Four types of return are proposed each based on a different relationship to American society. The 'return of failure' takes place after a few months or a couple of years and reflects a failure to cope with America or perhaps some personal tragedy such as an illness. Its effect on the society of origin is negligible. The 'return of conservatism' reflects several years of absence but a minimal accommodation to American values and norms: the orientation remains to the society of origin, and post-return behaviour reflects that orientation. The 'return of innovation' is when the emigrant has become, to a certain extent, 'American' so that when the return takes place new norms and values are taken back with the migrant. Finally, the 'return of retirement' is self-explanatory - a chance to live out one's final years on one's 'native soil'.

Despite these variations noted above of timing, motivation, country of destination etc., the effects of return migration seem to be remarkably uniform (Gmelch, 1980; King, 1986a). Within the European international migration arena, returns were particularly numerous in the late 1970s and early 1980s, following the oil-price recessions of 1974 and 1981. However, it is important to note that these returns built on earlier phases of return migration from overseas destinations in North America and elsewhere, so that patterns of returnee behaviour codified in the earlier phase came to be repeated subsequently. The 'return ideology' is of leaving poor and returning rich and triumphant; to move up in the local social hierarchy and to enjoy a life of comparative leisure after all the years of sacrifice abroad. Above all this is achieved by extensive modifications to and enlargement of the village house, or, better, the construction of a lavish new dwelling. Thus the village is renewed, transformed and enlarged by new housing investment, expanding outwards by the addition of new migrant-financed areas.

In this way an impressive cosmetic development takes place in which housing standards are improved and, within the houses, *nouveau riche* lifestyles flourish with the purchase or importation of the latest furnishings and consumer durables (Rhoades, 1978). Such modernisation may not reflect the best of tastes, but it should not be judged too harshly. Sometimes the modernisation and development go further. Village infrastructure may be upgraded because of emigrant donations: new schools, churches, roads, community facilities. A generous donation to a local cause is one way of the returnee 'buying' improved social status. Return migration goes some way towards restoring the demographic structures distorted by emigration, especially if children are brought back or born after the return. Many parts of peripheral Europe saw their populations start to increase in the 1970s after the emigration-induced losses of the 1950s and 1960s.

The attainment of real sustainable development through return migration is more elusive. The outcome depends on two things: the types of investment made by returnees (and, allied to this, their entrepreneurial flair); and the possibilities for development in the regions to which migrants return. If those areas have changed little since the migrants departed, remaining poor, remote, degraded upland environments, then it will be difficult for return migrant initiative and investment to progress from the cosmetic to the productive stage. If, on the other hand, there is development potential, for instance in agriculture through irrigation schemes, in tourism (coastal development, rural or mountain tourism), or in the development of local industry, then returnees are generally not slow to seize the opportunities, as a number of studies have shown (King, 1986b). In fact there are some regions such as the Indian Punjab, or north-central Portugal where return migrants' capital and business activities have been critical in local economic revival.

### **New migrations, new models, new methods**

Our earlier historical account ended with the Fordist mass migrations of the 1960s and early 1970s into industrial Europe, and then followed some of these migrants back home with the return migrations of the 1970s and early 1980s. Since the 1980s, and through the 1990s, new types of migration have emerged, and the world map of immigration has changed. In the first part of the final section of this presentation, I want to explore some of these new migration types and patterns.<sup>6</sup>

First, at the end of the 20th century, migration is *accelerating*. There are not always figures to support this trend, but all the signs are that, practically everywhere around the globe, more and more people are on the move: in flight, in hope, to realise an ambition. They flee wars, poverty, overpopulation, natural disasters and deteriorating environments; they seek better lives and opportunities elsewhere. One significant change now compared to the migrations of the 19th century and the first three-quarters of the 20th century is that the main force driving migration emanates from the sending countries: 'push pressures' have replaced the 'pull' of labour demand or settler migration. Because of the increasing desire of the rich countries to 'control' migration inflows, a substantial proportion of modern migration is clandestine, 'illegal' in the eyes of the destination countries, and therefore difficult to quantify. Nevertheless the fact remains that the USA will take more migrants in the 1990s than during any decade in its history.

Second, we can speak of the *globalisation* of migration. Whilst globalisation seems to be one of the unifying paradigms of late-20th-century social science, we saw earlier that international migration was itself an early expression of globalisation. Now globalisation produces a new intensity, diversity and often spontaneity of long-range movement. Although it may be difficult to understand exactly what is meant by the term 'global migrant', it is true that countries of

immigration are faced with a greater diversity of migrant origins than before. And migrants, for their part, are often faced with a greater choice of destination than before partly because of new opportunities constantly opening up on the global labour market and partly because previous historical phases of migration create a complex geography of diaspora which can also welcome new additions to established communities.

The opening up of migration options around the world in this way does not imply that migrants can move more freely now than in the past. In fact quite the reverse: people are probably less free to migrate now than they were 100 years ago, a point I shall return to shortly. Rather what we have is the *commodification* of migration whereby each migration act, each route and each destination, has its price. The price is paid in two ways, by a monetary cost and by an acceptance of a variable level of risk. Of course, the history of the world labour market ever since the days of slavery has always accorded migrants an economic price, but whereas before it was the migrants' labour after arrival in the destination country which was the main resource to be costed and for employers to make a profit out of, nowadays it is the migrants who bear the cost of migration, and the act of migration which carries the price, set by agents and smugglers who are experts at crossing borders. In other words, we have a kind of 'migration plc' in which the economics of migration are articulated through the economic functioning of the migration process itself, not through the calculation of the benefits of migration to the sending and receiving countries.<sup>7</sup>

The fourth trend I would point to is that of the *regionalisation* of international migration flows. At first sight this would seem to contradict somewhat the globalisation trend noted earlier. Well, yes and no. Whilst it is true that some of the new migrations of the late 20th century are truly globe-spanning and, moreover, do not represent former colonial relationships, the majority of migrations are structured around the major global poles of economic power in North America, Europe and Japan, with subsidiary poles (and migration systems) in the Gulf and Australia. Hence the regional migration systems that now dominate the world map of international migration are based on the United States (from Central America, South America and the Caribbean), Western Europe (Eastern Europe, Africa), Japan (East and South East Asia) and the Gulf (South Asia, the Middle East). This regionalisation shows particularly sharp migration pressures evident across what I would call migration fault-lines where geographically adjacent countries or sets of states exhibit completely different standards of living. This is the Rio Grande principle, except that there are now several Rio Grandes in the world - the extension of the real one across the northern Caribbean (with Cuba and Haiti on one side and Florida on the other), the Mediterranean Rio Grande between North Africa and southern Europe, and the Adriatic Rio Grande between Albania and Italy.

The fifth trend, by definition more complex to describe and analyse, is that of the *diversification* of migration flows. Contemporary migration flows have become not only more diversified with respect to patterns of origin and destination, but more importantly with regard to cause, character and motivation. Within Europe, for instance, the great era of labour migration, when industrial countries actively recruited migrant workers, has long since passed: it ended in 1973, largely because of the recession but also because of more complex social and political factors (White, 1986). And yet people have continued to move internationally both within Europe (facilitated by the Free Movement provisions and, latterly, by the Schengen Accords) and from outside.

Labour migration has given way to a multiplicity of means of migration and modes of entry. First, migrations of family reunion continued the flows beyond the 1973 threshold. Closely-related family members - usually wives and children - were allowed to join primary migrants

who had been working in the European countries for some time. This enabled *Gastarbeiter* to evolve quickly into more or less settled ethnic communities. Family reunion was the 'quiet migration' that has been little studied as a specific process.<sup>8</sup>

Second, the migration streams of economically-active persons that were allowed to function were increasingly dominated by highly-skilled migrants (Salt, 1984; Salt and Findlay, 1989). Many of these involved 'brain exchanges' between the highly developed industrial (and post-industrial) countries of Europe and reflected the increasing internationalisation of production and services activities and the role of multinational capital. Given the emerging nature of the global economy in the 1980s these high-skill migration flows also involved migration exchanges with North America and Japan. But there were also elements of 'brain drain' as highly-educated migrants moved in largely uni-directional flows to the richer, larger and stronger economies from the economically weaker peripheral states such as Ireland and Greece, from former colonial territories such as India and Sri Lanka, and, after 1989, from Eastern European countries. Some of these flows were driven by incredibly wide income differentials. In 1991 a Russian professor told me that, for a two-hour lecture in Stockholm, he earned the equivalent in hard currency of his entire annual salary at the University of Moscow. This kind of East-West earnings divide explains the phenomenon of 'brain waste' whereby highly-educated migrants from Eastern Europe migrate temporarily (and often clandestinely) to the West to take menial jobs as babysitters, garage attendants or window-cleaners and still earn much more than they could as teachers, scientists and technicians at home.

The example of skilled migration and brain drain raises interesting questions about the nature of migration and how these new movements (some of which, it is true, are not so new) are to be analysed. John Salt (1988) has suggested that skilled international migration can be interpreted in terms of career path analysis in which personal mobility is linked to career progressions, often within the same transnational enterprise. In this example, the promotion ladder within the corporation's hierarchy almost inevitably involves periods spent abroad in various branches of the multinational structure. Thus, for this kind of highly-trained labour, periodic migration becomes the norm rather than the exception. Increasingly, however, Salt and Ford (1993) note a trend to shorter-term business visits rather than medium-term placements: hence migration is being replaced by mobility, and the distinction between the two concepts of 'migration' and 'business travel' becomes blurred. A similar conclusion about the blurring of the migration/mobility continuum derives from an examination of the character of contemporary East-West movement. Restrictions on the immigration and employment of non-EU citizens makes it difficult for them to acquire work permits and become settled migrants: the result is that many come in on tourist visas and simply take jobs in the informal economy until their visas expire or, often, overstay for a further period in order to prolong their earning capacity. Analysis of travel data from countries like Poland and Bulgaria indicates a considerable number of overstayers or non-returnees (Okolski, 1992). The use of tourist visas for work creates a kind of 'labour tourism' which has its parallels in the West with students and other young people taking extended working holidays - for example spending a summer fruit-picking in France, or working in an American summer camp, or spending six months on an Israeli Kibbutz (King, 1996b). This is 'emigration as walkabout' (Shuttleworth and Kockel, 1990, pp.30-31), a kind of adventurer migration which young people see as a *rite de passage* before settling down to a more stable job.

Two further interesting points emerge from this discussion. The first is that the trend towards more mobility (and possibly less migration as conventionally defined) represents the latest, post-modern phase of Zelinsky's (1971) famous hypothesis of the mobility transition whereby each successive stage of economic development and the modernisation process leads to a different

set of patterns of mobility. This increased mobility is also facilitated by the more flexible living and working relationships of post-industrial society: by careers which involve multiple and simultaneous linkages to many places, and by multiple-location households where partners work in different locations, even different countries. Hence the 'old' notion of migration as being a long-term, semi-permanent residential transfer from one fixed point in space to another is being replaced by more complex mobility patterns involving plural allegiances to many places.

A second major trend to note is the switch from migration being overwhelmingly linked to production - to the desire or need to find work and a higher income - to new motivations for migration linked to consumption - to recreation, leisure, the search for new environments. Kockel's (1988) research on 'countercultural migrants' in the west of Ireland, Hoggart and Buller's (1995) work on British migration to rural France, and research on retirement migration to the sunny, warm, southern United States (Wiseman and Roseman, 1979) are some examples of the concept of long-term migration as a desirable and enjoyable life experience.

In focusing attention on migrations of recreation and consumption rather than of production and income, we should not overlook one final important type of migration which has dominated public debate in Europe over the last ten years: the migration of asylum-seekers. After the closure of formal labour recruitment migration, and for migrants without family members to migrate to join, this remained as the major mechanism for migration into Western Europe in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Numbers grew rapidly from 100,000 applications for asylum in Europe in 1984 to 700,000 in 1992. In the last couple of years the numbers appear to have peaked and started to decline, although the extent to which this is a reflection of much harsher regimes of judging and processing applications remains an open question, as does the debate over the proportions who are genuine refugees as opposed to economic migrants in disguise. Certainly the hardening of EU policy towards asylum-seekers as a result of the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Convention can have little other affect than to encourage migrants to seek alternative modes of entry, and thereby often place their own lives at risk to a significantly greater extent (Miles and Thränhardt, 1995).

The new forms of migration and long-range spatial mobility suggest both new research questions and employ or demand new methods to study them. A whole series of research questions surround the essential *embeddedness* of migration - the multiple ways in which migration reflects and conditions a variety of fundamental social, cultural, economic, demographic and geopolitical processes. The potential for discussion on these issues is virtually endless, so let me look at a few major pointers for further research.

First there is the nature of migration as an *economic process*. The debate on migration and uneven spatial development was referred to earlier. Enlarging this to the global perspective, migration is both an expression of unequal globalisation, and a cause of it. The interesting research challenge here is to understand the role of migrations in contemporary processes of global and regional economic restructuring. Recent work on global cities has shown how they have become the targets of migration from poor countries in response to the demand for low-skill, low-wage job sectors. These jobs are not in the large factories which created labour migration flows in the 1960s, but are allied to the growth of various services in the 'command centres' of the new global economy. The function of the recent immigrants is to provide the personal services demanded by the wealthy, often two-income professional and service classes - gardeners, child-minders, house-cleaners, dog-walkers, security personnel, office-cleaners, restaurant and hotel-workers. Contemporary international migration thus brings poor but ambitious people from the

developing world into close juxtaposition with the world's richest classes; hence Los Angeles becomes a 'Third World city'.

Within the 'global city', there are many channels of mobility, both upwards and downwards. Downward social movement in particular affects the long-term unemployed who are the fall-out from the Fordist crisis - many of them earlier immigrants who were recruited specifically to work in the big factories. Amongst both the earlier and recently arrived migrants avenues of progress - what Fielding (1992) calls 'stairways to heaven' - are found particularly in the formation of small businesses, perhaps within the ethnic economy as noted earlier. In the United States the success of Korean and other Asian businesses is well-known. In the UK too there are many examples: Indian business success has been well researched (Modood, 1991; Robinson, 1988), and high rates of self-employment are also recorded for other ethnic groups such as Pakistanis, Italians, Cypriots and Chinese (but not for Irish or Caribbeans). The business success of first-generation immigrant Asians is followed by the educational attainments of the second generation who have achieved high rates of entry into universities and thence into the professions. Afro-Caribbeans have been conspicuously less successful here. For them greater success (but only for limited numbers) can be observed in the fields of sport and musical entertainment. Hence there are interesting questions to be asked with regard to interactions between ethnic background, employment and socio-occupational mobility. Whilst some of these channels of progress would appear to be almost ethnically defined (why are there no Indian-origin footballers in the Premier League or Pakistani-origin sprinters?), the role of stereotyping should not be overlooked for this can heavily promote or discriminate against individual ambition and talent.

These are some of the ways in which migration interacts with *social mobility*, is embedded in social structures yet makes them at the same time more fluid, based on achievement rather than class inheritance and stereotypes of immigrants as inferior 'others'. But it would be a mistake to comment on migrants' social class position and mobility solely with reference to the destination country. It should be remembered that many migrant groups have powerful links to their home societies, and they see themselves (and are seen by their relatives and friends back home) as members of the society of origin. Migrants may be resident abroad for much of their working lives, but socially they are anchored at home. Their social relations may be stretched across the world. Hence their aspirations, and their behaviour in the destination country, are shaped accordingly. They may, for instance, be content to be members of the European or American 'underclass' if this is the route to membership of the middle class back home, or if the ultimate objective is the purchase of some land, a new house, a dowry for a daughter or a university education for a son.

Third, I wish to examine the *demographic contexts* of migration. Although migration is part of demography, the study of population, the systematic links between migration and other demographic parameters such as population growth remain poorly researched. It is true that migration has historically involved movements of population from over- to under-populated areas, ever since the colonisation of Magna Grecia or southern Italy by the ancient Greeks, and not forgetting the migrations from 'overcrowded' Europe to 'empty' America and Australia in the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries. It is also true that more recent studies of the fertility behaviour of immigrant populations in different European countries such as Britain, the Netherlands and France has shown that although immigrants bring their high-fertility behaviours with them, pretty soon this normalises to become increasingly like the host society (this is the experience of Irish and Caribbean migrants in Britain, for instance, who have been settled here since the 1950s). More recently-arrived immigrants, such as the Bangladeshis in Britain or the

Turks and Moroccans in Belgium and the Netherlands, have fertilities which are intermediate between their home countries and the destination countries. In France, Italian immigrant fertility is actually lower than that of the French.

Where population scenarios become particularly important is across the demographic/economic fault-lines that I mentioned earlier. The Mediterranean provides some illuminating data here (Montanari and Cortese, 1993). Whilst countries like Italy and Spain now have the lowest fertilities ever recorded in the world (average of 1.2 children per woman in the early 1990s), the states of North Africa still have very high fertilities - ranging from 4.1 in the case of Tunisia to 5.4 for Algeria (1991 data). Based on UN median scenario data, it can be calculated that there will be a growth in working-age population of more than 80 million in North Africa between 1985 and 2020; the working-age population will grow by more than 33% during the 1990s alone. Historically unprecedented economic growth would need to be achieved by these North African countries if all the new additions to the labour market are to be found jobs. Migration or vastly increased unemployment (leading possibly to increased political instability) would seem to be the only alternatives. As European populations (and especially Southern European populations) age and shrink over the next few decades, the 'space' would seem to be there for some migration (also to provide pension support for the elderly), but social and political resistance may be too great to support mass immigration much beyond that which has already taken place (more than 2 million immigrants in Italy, Spain and Greece). Meanwhile a fall-off in the rate of population increase in North Africa is on the horizon, with Tunisia and Morocco leading the way. Their fertilities are showing signs of falling quite significantly as urbanisation, modernisation, female education and birth control become more widespread (King, 1996c).

Finally in this sequence of key research questions reflecting the embeddedness of migration, it is vital to appreciate that migration has become a critical component of contemporary *geopolitics*. In his controversial book *The End of History and the Last Man*, Francis Fukuyama (1992, p.277) suggests that international migration will become perhaps the key point of friction in the interface between the 'post-historical' and 'historical' worlds - between the old First World on the one hand and the newly restructuring Second and still-poor Third Worlds on the other. All around the developed world, and nowhere more so than in Britain and Europe, politicians are resorting to a language of war, of siege and defence, epitomised by the term 'Fortress Europe'. The key theme is control: how to control immigration (Cornelius, Martin and Hollifield, 1994). There is an interesting little anecdote to tell here. In the 1850s some Indian braves asked their chief what had been the biggest mistake of his generation. His answer was simple: "we failed to control immigration". Given the shameful destruction of the Native American peoples, their way of life and the appropriation of their lands, one may have considerable sympathy with this view. But when the same words are uttered by Enoch Powell or Jean-Marie Le Pen a very different sympathy is generally evoked, and a moral dilemma emerges. The answer to this dilemma is equally simple, however: it depends on where the *real* power to control migration lies, and this nearly always resides with the powerful, which may be either the receiving (now) or sending country (then).

There are several important issues surrounding the geopolitical debate on migration. One is that, quite apart from the inflammatory use of terms like 'armies' and 'floods' of migrants, there is a danger that an over-exposure of discussion on migration will 'talk up' the issue to a kind of heightened fever pitch which it does not deserve and which will only diminish the chances of more socially responsible and humanitarian policies being put into place. A second issue is the way in which the hardening of EU policies towards asylum-seekers, with the idea of blocking access to Europe for economic migrants in disguise, has overspill effects on genuine asylum-seekers and even on established immigrants. Meanwhile the gates of the fortress remain wide

open for Japanese businessmen, American basketball players and Colombian football stars. The issue of control is hence closely allied with the process of selectivity which does not correspond exactly to the EU national/non-national divide. Overall, however, there is a clear stress on a certain undefined 'Europeanness' (white, Christian, European language-speaking etc.) in order to marginalise outsiders whose 'otherness' is couched purely in terms of their deviation from core European cultural traits. If attributes are applied to the outsiders, these usually stress their 'Third Worldness' or their non-Christian religion (especially if it is Islam). These cultural categories, falsely homogenised, are translated into the politics of inclusion and exclusion.

Even those who are inside the fortress, either by right or *de facto*, are subject to a bewildering variety of granting and denial of rights. In a recent essay Marco Martiniello (1995) has suggested four categories of citizenship status to be observed in Europe: those with full citizenship and political rights (generally only the nationals of the country qualify for these); EU citizens resident in another EU country, who enjoy virtually full rights, except some voting rights and the ability to get jobs in certain sectors of the civil service; those established immigrant groups from outside the EU, such as Turks in Germany or Moroccans in Belgium, who have some rights (eg. to health care, pension schemes - but these rights vary from one destination country to another); and 'illegal' immigrants who have almost no rights whatsoever. Tomas Hammar (1990) has suggested that the third group, in particular, receive a more standardised intermediate status - he proposes the term *denizenship* - to reflect, on the one hand, their settled status as workers and residents, but, on the other, their cultural distinctiveness (and their desire to preserve their cultural identity) and their likelihood of returning home at some stage.

### **Conclusion: towards a more creative study of migration**

This paper has shown, I hope, that migration has contributed to much that is fascinating in the world. Migration has been shown to be a deeply historical process, contributing to the creation of hybridised cultures which, in Stuart Hall's (1995) words, cannot be undone: they are "hybridised beyond repair". The processes of intermarriage, cultural fusion and expanding multiculturalism are irreversible, although some politicians and societies seem frightened by this prospect and react defensively (and also aggressively) by barring further immigration.

Such a reaction is undoubtedly prompted by a fear of the unknown, by a cultural myopia in which the 'otherness' of migrants is overstressed. Social scientists who study migration are in danger of falling into the same trap, of 'being on the outside looking in', exoticising migrants and judging them according to Western or falsely objectified social science standards. I remember that my own first serious piece of field research on migration was carried out nearly 20 years ago on Maltese migrants who had returned from abroad (King, 1980). I designed what I thought was a perfectly good and thorough questionnaire and showed it to a local colleague, a Maltese sociologist. He returned it to me a few days later with a single comment: "It's a very British questionnaire". The danger of questionnaires and of the philosophy that lies behind them is that they tend to objectify migrants and place them in categories which are not of their own making. Analyses of migrants based on official statistics such as censuses or registration data can be even worse, for they are limited by the nature of the data which was not collected by or for the researcher.

This is of course an old debate in the social sciences and is all about the strengths and weaknesses of quantitative versus qualitative research. Both have their respective strengths and weaknesses. Quantitative studies are necessarily limited to easily measurable characteristics such as age, sex, education, place of departure, place of arrival, length of absence, employment and so on. But

even these apparently easy-to-measure variables may conceal more than they reveal. What does educational background really tell us about intelligence, ambition, creativity or motivation? And how do departure and arrival statistics cope with complex patterns of movement such as step migration, repeat migration etc? Qualitative studies on the other hand may offer more detailed insight but cannot cover a large and statistically representative population, and so may end up studying atypical cases.

A similar dichotomy in migration studies can be observed between theoreticians or model-builders on the one hand and empiricists on the other. The human complexity of migration means that model-builders tend to make falsely unrealistic assumptions and end up with predictions or general statements which can either be regarded as self-evident or, being a-historical and a-geographical, have limited applicability across time, space and culture. Empiricists, on the other hand, often produce findings which are fascinating but impossible to generalise. Part of the challenge in migration study is the search for understanding which bridges the gap between too-generalised theory and the local case-study.

The answer to this challenge lies in comparative studies and in a mixed-method approach which brings me back to migration as a fundamentally interdisciplinary field of study. Recently I was asked to respond to the question of whether migration was cross-disciplinary, multi-disciplinary or inter-disciplinary. I am far from sure I understand the differences between the three but if by cross-disciplinarity is meant an approach spanning two disciplines, if by multi-disciplinarity is meant an approach from many disciplinary angles, and if inter-disciplinarity is meant a joining together of two or more disciplines in a parallel approach on some common ground, then the study of migration is all of these - but also more. All of these approaches involve the preservation of disciplinary identities and therefore boundaries. At its ultimate, the study of migration can involve the fusing of approaches which melts disciplinary boundaries and becomes, in a sense, unidisciplinary, a field of study in its own right.<sup>9</sup> Such an approach recognises the trend towards increasing mutual intelligibility in history and the various social sciences and also bridges the 'megadisciplinary' divide from the social sciences into the humanities.

In this way the study of migration ranges from econometric modelling to the reading of poetry written by or about migrants. The humanities approach - the study of the migrant experience through oral testimonies, art and literature - enables a deeper and more subjective (in the sense of subject-based) analysis of the migrant condition, of migrancy as a state of being. The literature of migrants which enables them to speak with their own voices ranges from 'pre-literatures' such as letters and diaries through informally-published ethnic newsletters to autobiographies, songs, poetry and novels, and also to the more complex literatures of diasporas and post-colonialism which are in a sense the literatures of post-migration (King, Connell and White, 1995, pp. x-xiii). Of course such literary forms must be critically evaluated, not so much for their literary style (in fact it is the 'naive literatures' which offer most as value-free testimonies of the migrant experience) but more for the representativeness and accuracy of their insight - and this is where the social science comes back in.

Literature gives voice to migrants, including female migrants. There is a strong tradition now of female, including feminist, literature which expresses the specificity (and variety) of women's migratory experiences, which have been so overlooked in the past. It is too often forgotten (or not even realised) that half of all migrants are women. In fact many migration streams have had a female majority. In the long history of Irish emigration women have nearly always been in the majority, and often migrated independently of men. Studies of Irish migration consistently ignore this fact, treating women migrants as mere appendages or followers of male migrants whose

work in factories or in the construction industry always received prime attention (Jackson, 1963). Contemporary refugee flows, such as those out of Bosnia, have also had a clear majority of women, and yet studies of refugees, and refugee policy-makers, rarely adopt a gender-sensitive stance.

Above all, literature allows us to come closer to an understanding of the emotions of migration - of fear, loneliness, nostalgia, sacrifice, but also of tenacity, ambition, success, fulfilment - and to its significance in the history and the future of the world. Migration is a fundamental and recurrent process of human mobility and mixing; "a love-song to our mongrel selves". Migration has changed us all: "we are other than what we would have been if we had not crossed the oceans, if our mothers and fathers had not crossed the skies in search of work and dignity ..." (Rushdie, 1988, p.414).

\* \* \* \* \*

## Notes

- 1 This story, slightly embellished, comes from Priland (1968, p. 19).
- 2 For useful, and sometimes moving, compilations of evidence and case-studies on women's migration see Buijs (1993), Phizacklea (1983), Schwartz-Seller (1994).
- 3 This, stated in its starkest terms, is the thesis of Castles and Kosack (1973) in their pathbreaking study which, incidentally, was compiled largely out of their Sussex DPhil theses.
- 4 Of course, the problem of ecological fallacy has always to be borne in mind. The fact that emigration is highest from communes of high rurality and high unemployment does not mean necessarily that the 'leavers' are all or even disproportionately made up of unemployed farmers.
- 5 This is the well-known 'myth of return', analysed in detail for Pakistanis in Britain by Anwar (1979).
- 6 Whilst what follows is very much a reflection of my own observations of the changing world migration scene, some of these trends are discussed in more detail in Castles and Miller (1993).
- 7 The 'marketisation' of migration has recently been explored with respect to Bangladeshi emigration by Knights (1996).
- 8 Probably the best analysis is Castles, Booth and Wallace (1984); even this says relatively little about the *process* of family reunification migration.
- 9 See also the arguments presented by Cohen (1995, pp.7-8).

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