

Introduction

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On Saturday, March 24, 1984, the 28th annual meeting of the Kroeber Society convened, its principal theme being studies in international migration and resettlement.

This focus for the Society's meetings is related to the emergence of strong interests and programs at Berkeley and to the impressive recent developments in the field of migration. At Berkeley, a vigorous group of students and faculty from various disciplines initiated Migration and Resettlement Studies (MARS) in 1980. During the same period the Graduate Group in Demography has focused increasing attention on these phenomena in its teaching and research. Demography and the social sciences more generally have witnessed a quickening of work on migration, both theoretical and methodological, and applied. These local and international developments have in large measure been responses to the present drama of worldwide migration.

Migration and resettlement are phenomena so prevalent in the twentieth century that we have almost come to take them for granted. Their social, cultural, economic and political implications have been enormous. On the international level, many millions of refugees have often moved huge distances in space or in social integration. Millions more international migrants have been pulled about dramatically by the labor market. Internal migration has been no less spectacular. Such factors as development (or the lack of it) leading to rural-urban migration, the formation of new states and war, have resulted in the massive movement of people. Yet despite its obvious importance, migration and resettlement have only recently begun to receive their due in the demographic literature.

The papers in this collection represent something of the remarkable range and vitality of work in migration and resettlement today. They also point to the new directions which migration studies are taking.

Lydio Tomasi begins the collection with a survey of principal research approaches. He reminds us of the centrality of California in international migration to and resettlement in the U.S., the scale and complexity of which are major forces changing our society. Relationships between population increase, migration and development constitute a basic dynamic calling forth new concepts and theories. Tomasi credits the United Nations Population Division with developing knowledge about the structure and dynamics of international migration as well as about national policies and programs. Beyond statistics and policies, new qualitative research is describing how migration is changing economic and social relations and places it within its proper context of domestic and foreign policy, trade, and labor markets. Yet, with recent advances in concepts and theories, Tomasi's discussion reminds us that current research does not easily break with established conceptualizations and the tendency to pursue fads.

Dennis Gallagher's paper deals with a significant category of migrants to which new concepts and theories have been applied. As Director of the Refugee Policy Group in Washington D.C., he describes its efforts to improve the quality of data and analysis so as to inform public policy concerning refugees. The paper revolves around two problems:

first, the implications of refugees' status as "victims" and second, the difference between program design for resettlement and that for assisting the adjustment of refugees.

The remainder of the papers describe the circumstances and the strategies of specific migrant groups in three continents.

Eugene Roosens describes and analyzes the circumstances of guest workers in Belgium, a society with a history of ethnic struggle. After 1946, migrant workers from countries of the Mediterranean basin began providing labor for the recovering economy. Many stayed on, creating a series of home cultures in Belgium which actively maintained close links with their origins. By contrast, through education, their children assimilated, thus distancing themselves from their parents. Leaving school, they experienced rabid discrimination. Roosens' description of strategies in the face of such rejection is vivid and suggests parallels with such circumstances elsewhere in the world.

Roy Bryce-Laporte, himself an immigrant, writes of the history of Caribbean migration as it contributes to the peopling of the U.S. He traces the significant linkages between migration waves, contemporary politics, and the emergence of immigration laws (including the Simpson-Mazzoli Immigration Control and Reform Act). The paper discusses the dynamics of the current new wave of Caribbean immigration, patterned discrimination in policy and implementation of the law, and the escalation of ethnic competition which has resulted in the reduction of earlier "invisibility."

Comparisons are implied in all studies of migrants. Steven Gold provides an explicit comparison of the styles of ethnic community and political organization employed by activists in their efforts to mobilize refugee Soviet Jews and Vietnamese. The result is an insightful description and analysis of two groups recently arrived in the San Francisco Bay Area. Gold finds that while specific community issues and activists' concerns vary, in both communities a common appeal to ethnicity and the use of their own intermediary roles emerge as principal tactics of refugee activists.

Jaqueline Desbarats takes up the theme of the macro-micro relationship between government resettlement policies, at federal and state levels, and the social and economic considerations which underlie processes of Indochinese refugee decision making regarding their actual secondary migration choice. The paper documents the extent of secondary resettlement despite initial placement efforts. It documents as well the power of state refugee assistance policies and programs to influence ultimate distributions. Finally, Desbarats examines the consequences of regionally unbalanced refugee distributions.

In a paper focusing on sending population and immigrant perceptions of the host country, Kelsey Clark Underwood describes some Tamil self-identities and their images of the U.S. She holds that Tamil films and other media project stereotypes about the U.S. and other modernized and highly materialistic societies of the West. Most Tamil migrants to the U.S. are high caste, well educated and motivated, who are resentful of Indian government efforts to abridge their traditional economic and political privileges. The paper discusses the processes by which certain Tamil cultural identities are translated and negotiated by migrants to the San Francisco Bay area.

M. T. Cooke's paper deals with the temporary international migration for purposes of trade of one of the most impressive trading groups in the world, the Nisyang of Nepal. The paper documents major features in the historical development of Nisyang trading operations and organization. It discusses the present extent of this long-distance trade network and how it functions. Cooke provides evidence which shows how trading activities of the Nisyang link villagers with Nepalese urban centers and with urban places throughout South and Southeast Asia.

In the last substantive paper of the collection, Jonathan Habarad asks some hard questions about policies which engender dependency and about ultimate responsibilities for effective resettlement. Habarad reminds us that resettlement is an adjustive process which is as old as our species and characteristic of it. He argues that what is uncharacteristic about current refugee resettlement is the dominance of state-level intervention in the process. These circumstances actually reduce the options and the resources of refugees. The paper discusses the way in which externally imposed options have limited Iu Mien refugee economic and sociocultural responses in the early phase of integration into American life, thereby perhaps handicapping them for a long time to come.

A short essay by Elizabeth Colson written for discussion of the papers as they were read at the conference does a superb job of placing the conference itself and the specific contributions in context. Colson's inspiration and guidance indeed were central to the development of several of the papers. Her remarks, although brief, as usual raise for the reader some tantalizing thoughts for future consideration.