
**A Main focal topic in
social geography: Migration
of the rural people**

Ph. D. Abdelrahman Saud Al-Blehed
Associat professor Dept. of Geography
College of Arts King Saud Univ.

مجلة الإقطاب والعلوم الإنسانية
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Introduction

There is a vast literature on the migration of people, reflecting the growing awareness that migration is a major symptom of social change. A community may grow by an inflow of people or it may decline by an outflow of its members, and it is now recognised that migration is usually the most important factor in differential population trends. Differences in natural increase, indeed in birth-rates and death-rates, between communities are often smaller than differences in migration rates. If such movements are selective in terms of age, sex, economic or social attributes, then they will determine the differences in the demographic and socio-economic composition of communities. Moreover, the migrant can initiate further change in the host community by the introduction of new ideas, values and techniques.

Such movements of individuals and groups is as old as mankind; but during recorded history migration not only has increased in volume, but also the distances involved have steadily lengthened. From the late eighteenth century industrialisation in Europe and North America concentrated employment and led to a distinctive rural-to-urban migration. Such migration is still prevalent in the developed countries, but a number of new trends are also discernible since the Second World War. For example, in England and Wales between 1951 and 1971 the conurbations and major cities experienced a net outward migration whilst conversely the smaller cities and rural districts received a net inflow of migrants. Such

trends reflect not only an increasing divorce between place of work and residence, but also residential mobility consequent upon the stages of family formation and retirement as well as the decentralisation of industrial and office employment.

In contrast, migration in the developing countries, despite a certain degree of industrialisation and a rapid population growth, involves only a small proportion of their population. For example, between 1955 and 1960 an estimated 4 per cent only of Thailand's population changed their place of residence.¹ Urbanward migration, mainly to the capital, Bangkok, and rural-rural migration, particularly involving the agriculturally rich Upper Chao Phyo Plain, are of equal significance (Fig. 1). However, recent rural-to-urban migration has involved a greater share of the migrants, both permanent and seasonal, the latter often representing a circular movement from village to city and back to village. Similarities as well as differences in the movement of people in the countries of the developed and developing world indicate considerable consistency and order in the migration process.

Any review of migration quickly reveals a number of false or inadequate conceptions concerning the nature of the process, which have given rise to weakly-developed typologies of the patterns of migration.² However, since it is conceived within the overall context of human movements, one of the most meaningful typologies of migration is the adaptation by Roseman³ of Cavalli-Sforza's *Morphological Classification of Human Movements*.⁴ Such a classification argues that human movements may be classified into two broad categories. The first, called reciprocal movements (Fig. 2A), begin at the home, proceed to one or more alternative locations, and return to the home. The second category, migratory movements, are distinguished from the first in that they are predominantly uni-directional and permanent. Migratory movements represent the removal of the centre of gravity of the reciprocal movements, the home, to a new location. This, in turn, can take two forms: first, total displacement migration, involving residential changes

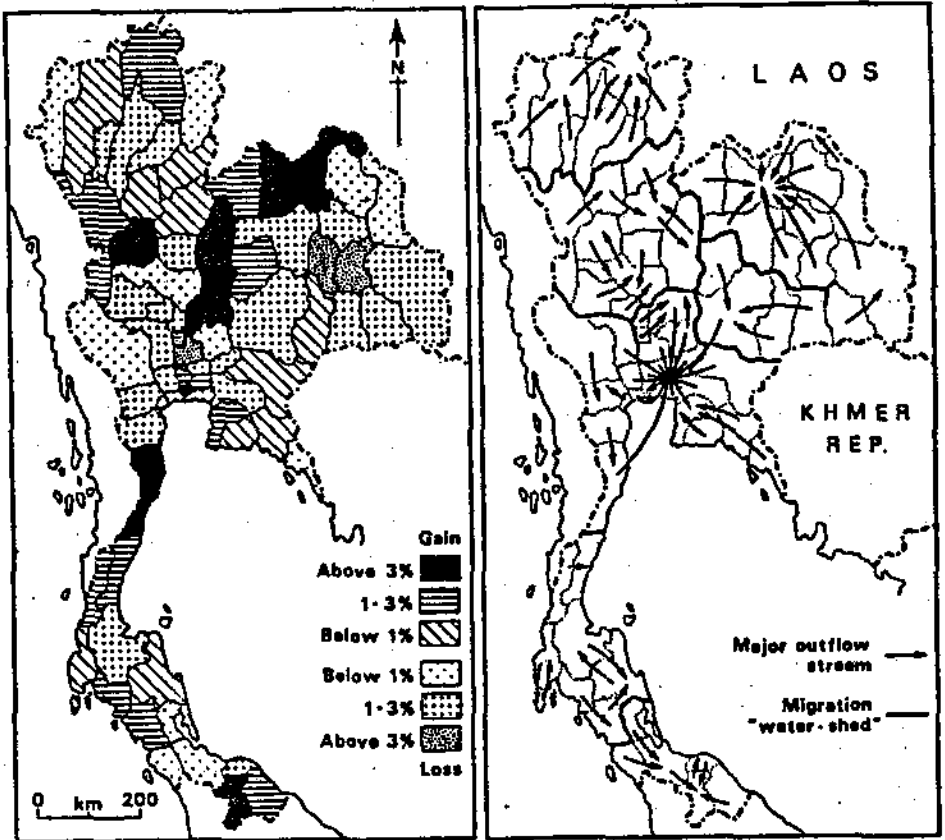


Figure 1. Migration in Thailand, 1955-60: (left) percentage population change by net internal migration; (right) major migration outflow from each province. (Source: Ng, R. C. Y., 'Recent Internal Population Movement in Thailand', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 59, 1969, pp 710-30)

whereby a completely new reciprocal movement cycle is created by a movement to a new area (Fig.2B); and secondly, partial displacement migration, which displaces only part of the reciprocal movement cycle: although the location of the home changes, the location of some of the other activity modes still remains the same (Fig.2C). Such a distinction has a wider significance than simply providing a more meaningful spatial perspective to migration, since total and partial displacement migration may be conceived as being broadly analogous to innovative and conservative migration respectively. According to Petersen 'some persons migrate as a means of achieving the new. Let us term such a migration innovating. Others migrate in response to a change in conditions, in order to retain what they had; they move geographically in order to remain where they are in all other respects. Let us term such migration conservative.'⁵ Pryor has utilised this distinction in his conceptualisation of the relationship between modernisation and the migration of people in the developing countries.⁶ Within these countries innovative and conservative migration involve differential movements between the traditional and the modern sectors, and between the core and the periphery (Fig.3).

In recent years there has been an increasing awareness among geographers of the need to view migration as a process as well as a pattern. This shift of focus is most clearly exemplified in Mabogunje's conceptualisation of rural-to-urban migration in Africa within a systems framework⁷ (Fig. 4.). This approach 'enables consideration of rural-urban migration no longer as a linear, uni-directional, "push and pull" cause-effect movement, but as a circular, underdependent, progressively complex, and self-modifying system in which the effect of changes in one part can be traced through the whole of the system'.⁸ In this system the rural communities are experiencing a break-up of their isolation and self-sufficiency as a result of economic development. The potential migrant is encouraged to leave the rural village by stimuli from the environment, and the decision as to whether to migrate or not is

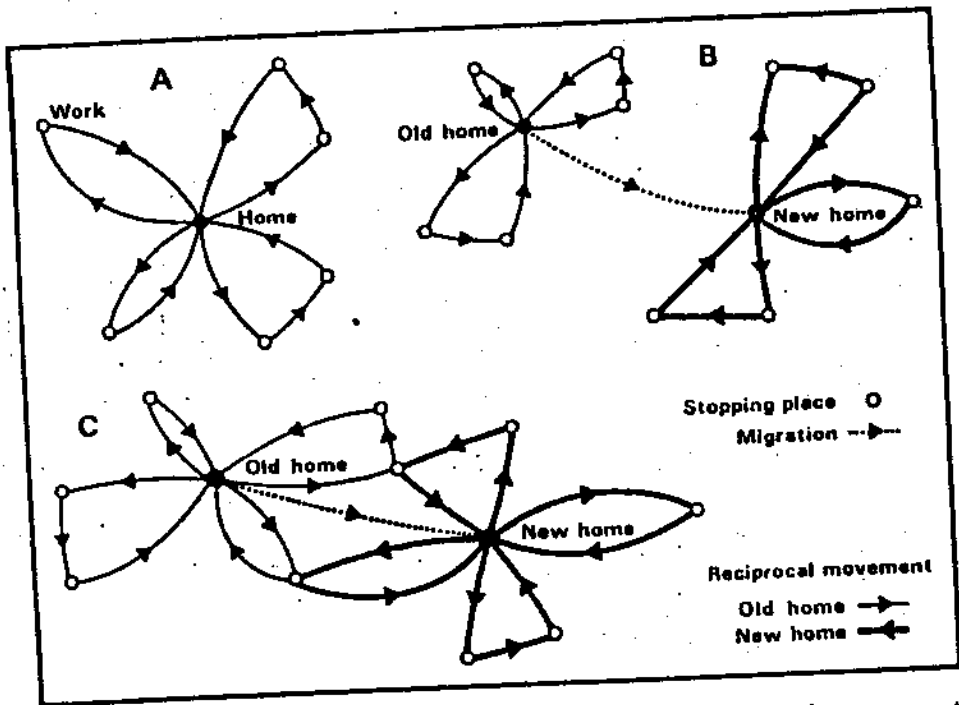


Figure 2. A typology of human movements: A—reciprocal movement; B—total displacement migration; C—partial displacement migration. (Source: Roseman, C. C., 'Migration as a Spatial and Temporal Process', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 61, 1971, pp 589-98)

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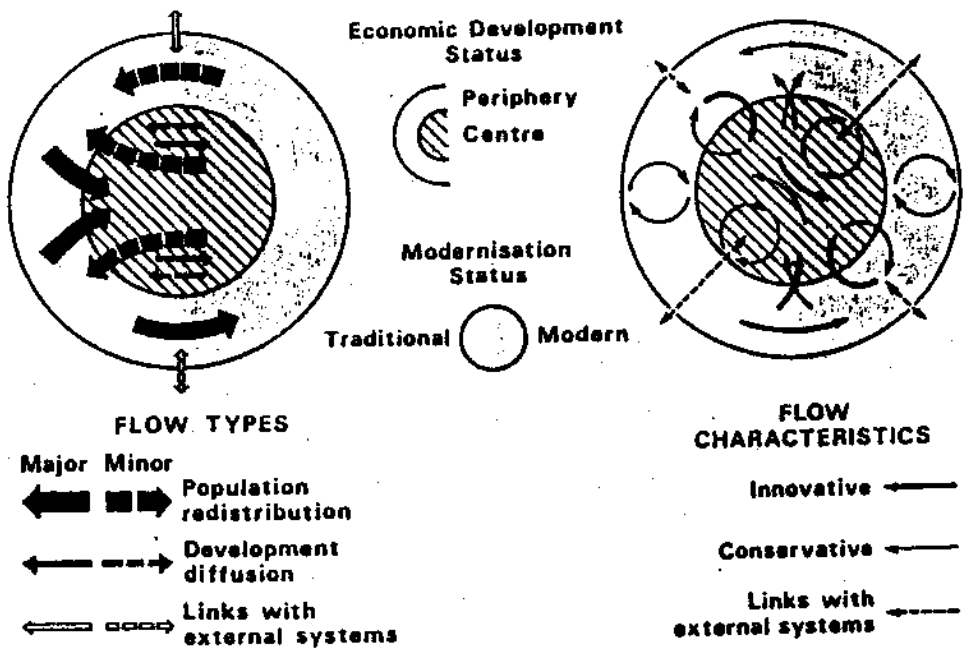


Figure 3. Migration and the process of modernisation: (left) the spatial structure of urbanisation; (right) an internal migration paradigm. (Source; Pryor, R. J., 'Migration and the Process of Modernization' in Kosinski, L. A. and Prothero, R. M., *People on the Move*, Methuen, 1975, pp 23-38)

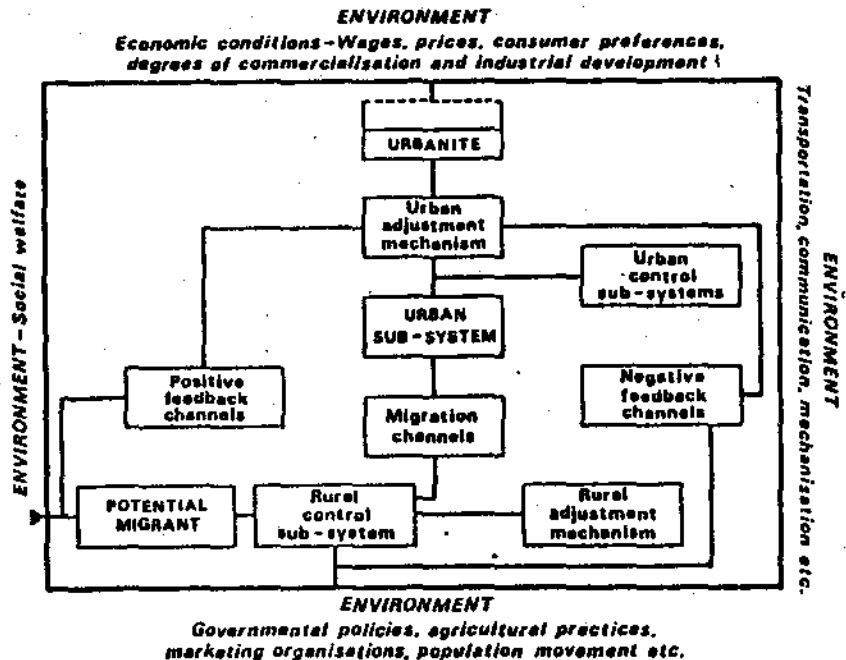


Figure 4. A rural-urban migration system. (Source: Mabogunje, A. 'Systems Approach to a Theory of Rural-Urban Migration', *Geographi Analysis*, 2, 1970, pp 1-18.) © 1970 by the Ohio State University Press

influenced by a rural control system (family ties, local community) and an urban control system (occupational and residential opportunities, degree of urban assimilation). Once a rural dweller has migrated to the city his role in the system does not end because, by means of a feedback of information to his original village, he can either enlarge or attenuate subsequent migration. All systems contain a driving force, or energy, and in this system it is 'related to the degree of the integration of the rural economy into the national economy, to the degree of awareness of opportunities outside the rural areas, and to the nature of the social and economic expectations held by the rural population'.⁹ Although Mabogunje's migration system is designed specifically for Africa, it does reveal that rural-urban migration is 'a continuous process occurring in most countries all the time at different levels of complexity. In this respect the systems approach also serves as a normative model against which one can seek to explain obvious deviations.'¹⁰ In addition, such a system emphasises the need to be concerned not only with why people migrate, but with all the implications and ramifications of the process. Basically, at least four questions are raised by such an approach: (1) why do people migrate? (2) where do people migrate to? (3) who are the migrants? (4) how do people decide to migrate? It is on the resolution of these questions within a rural context that attention is now focused.

Reasons for migrating

Motives for migrating can be explained only in terms of the relative attractiveness of different locations (or place utilities). In 1938 Herberle¹¹ conceptualised the forces underlying the motive to migrate into those which encourage an individual to leave one place (push) and those which attract him to another (pull). According to Lord Eversley the vast exodus of labourers from the rural districts into the towns of England and Wales during the nineteenth century was due not only to 'the greater prosperity and the general rise of wages in the manufacturing and mining districts',¹² but also 'to a growing disinclination to farm work among labourers in rural districts, to the absence of opportunities for them of rising in their vocation, and to a desire for the greater independence and freedom of life in towns'.¹³ Within this listing of the factors explaining migration two undifferentiated sets of forces appear to exist. On the one hand, there are the stimuli to migrate created by changes within the environment, and on the other, changes in the personal motives of the individual.

Changes in the environment can be interpreted as flows from one area to another because of prolonged disequilibria of particular kinds. The most easily recognisable disequilibrium is that created by variations in economic opportunities. Often studies at an inter-regional or inter-county scale have analysed the significance of such factors within a framework provided by the Lowry model.¹⁴ Using a regression analysis, Andrei Rogers,¹⁵ for example, found that the model's four variables—distance, non-agricultural employment, unemployment, and hourly wage rates—accounted for 90 per cent of the variation in inter-county migration in California in 1961. A whole series of similar multiple regression analyses in different parts of the world have upheld the significance of the economic factor in predicting variation in inter-regional and inter-county migration, although the explanatory levels of a number were considerably lower than those recorded for California.¹⁶ For example, Allan Rodgers discovered that

economic variables failed to explain fully the variation in out-migration from southern Italy between 1952 and 1968.¹⁷ However, by adding social variables to the data set and subjecting it to a principal component analysis a first component, which accounted for 37 per cent of the variance, identified levels of socio-economic health. A simple regression between net out-migration ratios and the scores on this first component revealed that nearly two-thirds of the variance in migration levels in southern Italy was accounted for by spatial differences in socio-economic health (Fig. 5).

In the studies cited above the apparent reason for migration was inferred from the patterns revealed and the attributes of the areas involved. The actual reasons why people migrate, however, can only be derived from detailed questionnaire survey. Despite the problems of getting valid answers to questions about past decisions, some idea as to people's motives in migrating can be derived from a number of case-studies.

Among such studies there is considerable support for the hypothesis that economic considerations are the major determinants of rural migration. Hannan, for example, stresses the significance of limited local employment in the intentions of young adults to migrate from western Ireland. Overwhelmingly, these intentions were determined by 'beliefs about one's ability to fulfil "economic type" aspirations locally'.¹⁸ Similarly House and Knight's survey of rural north-east England revealed that 72 per cent of those who left the area did so for employment reasons, whilst another 25 per cent migrated upon marriage and 3 per cent moved for educational purposes.¹⁹ Cowie and Giles, in a study of farm labourers' mobility in Gloucestershire in 1950, revealed that 40 per cent of the respondents listed 'long hours' and 'low pay' as their prime reason for leaving agriculture, and this figure rose to 60 per cent among those aged between 16 and 25 years.²⁰ This, of course, is the age when marriage is being contemplated, which heightens the consideration of long-term prospects in agriculture.²¹ Also in the developing countries the role of the economic motive in rural migration has been shown to be

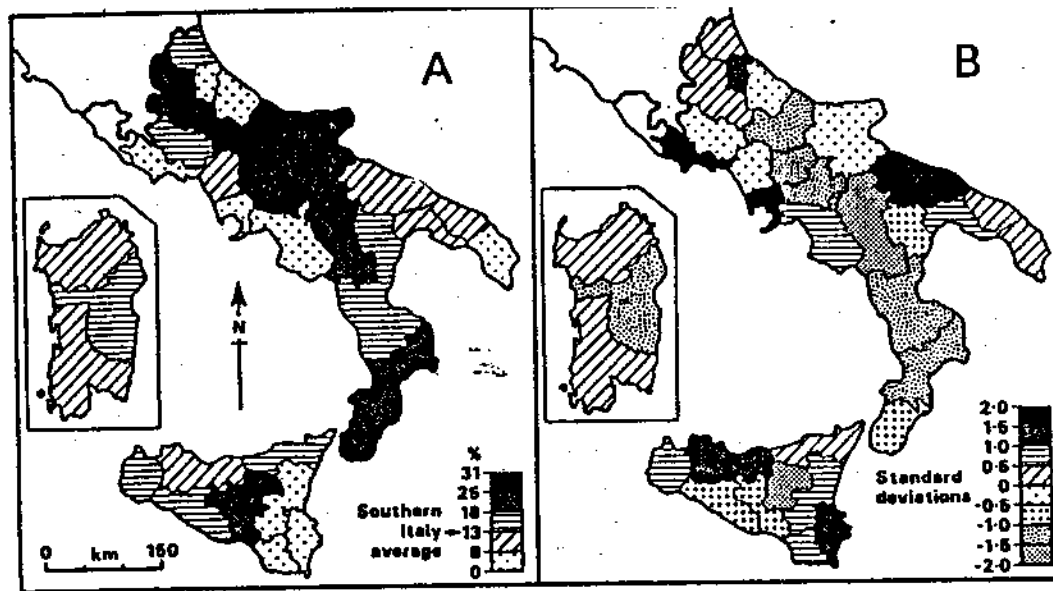


Figure 5. Migration from southern Italy: A—net out-migration, 1952–68, as a percentage of 1960 population; B—socio-economic health (principal component 1). (Source: Rodgers, A., 'Migration and Industrial Development: the Southern Italian Experience', *Economic Geography*, 46, 1970, pp 111–35)

significant. For example, according to Prothero 52 per cent of the seasonal migrants leaving Sokoto Province in Nigeria migrated to 'seek money', and another 24 per cent to carry out trade.²² Among the Mossi from the Upper Volta, Skinner has claimed that so much emphasis is placed upon the economic motive in labour migration that no other reason was mentioned in a major survey.²³

Despite considerable evidence from both developed and developing countries of the economic factor in determining rural migration, other studies have warned against overstressing it. In less isolated rural communities, where the outlook and activities of the people have been affected by urbanisation, the motives for migration are increasingly related to psychosocial factors. An investigation carried out by Imogene in the new town of Sapele, in mid-western Nigeria, and in a nearby but isolated village of Jesse, tends to support this hypothesis.²⁴ It has also been claimed that rural migration motives vary with the direction of the movement. In a study of migration in the Welsh Borderland between 1958 and 1968 the present author identified variations in the proportions of the motives of those moving into and out of the region²⁵ (Table 1). Among the out-migrants economic motives were predominant, clearly reflecting the limited employment opportunities available locally, whilst greater social motivation among the in-migrants probably points to a growing residential function in parts of the region. A number of studies have emphasised the significance of 'housing' and 'community life' in the urban-to-rural flow of migrants in areas adjacent to the cities.²⁶ Sternstein has revealed a similar pattern of variation in the migration motives of those individuals moving into and out of Bangkok, although it should be pointed out that the greater proportion of these migrants are seasonal.²⁷

In addition, it is wrong to assume that wherever the flow of migration is small all the needs of the people are being satisfied. It is now well established that there are a number of forces which may prevent an individual from migrating, even when *there are high levels of dissatisfaction. Caldwell has shown*

that many illiterate villagers in Ghana find it difficult to move from conditions of limited opportunities because they lack skills and training for other forms of employment whether in another rural area or in the cities.²⁸ Of those who had no schooling, less than one-quarter migrated from rural to urban areas, whereas two-thirds of those who achieved secondary education had migrated. More specifically, it has been estimated that over 21 per cent of the residents of the Welsh Borderland in 1968 wished to migrate.²⁹ These potential migrants were frustrated from achieving their desires by (in order) failure to find suitable alternative employment, family ties, uncertainty and fear of the unknown, cost of moving, and lack of suitable housing elsewhere.

TABLE 1. *Motives for migrating in the Welsh Borderland, 1958-68*

<i>Motive</i>	<i>Out-migrants</i>	<i>In-migrants</i>
	%	%
Occupational	32	13
Income	29	9
Social	19	36
Community	12	18
Personal	8	24

After: Lewis, G. J., *A Study of Socio-geographic Change in the Welsh Borderland*, unpublished University of Leicester PhD thesis, 1969

Size and direction

Although the motives discussed in the previous section may initiate a desire to move, they do not determine the destination, which can only be achieved by reference to the location of available opportunities and the degree to which the migrant is constrained by factors such as movement costs. Such a framework was identified in the 1880s by E. G. Ravenstein in his 'Laws of Migration'³⁰: after more than eighty years most of these laws are still valid. In a study of migration in upland

Wales, H. R. Jones was able to confirm the existence of a significant distance-decay, the absorption of migrants in a leap-frogging fashion, a predominant out-migration partially counterbalanced by an in-migration, and the attraction of those classed as long-distance migrants to the cities of the Midlands and south-east England.³¹ In the developing countries, too, there is considerable evidence of both step-wise migration and direct re-location to cities. Examples of the latter include the vast migration into Bombay from its hinterland, as outlined by two independent surveys,³² and the movement into Nairobi and Mombasa by the Kikuyu, Embu, and Meru peoples from the Kenya highlands, central Nyanza, and the coastal belt.³³ A good example of the former is the migration into the Akim cocoa-growing zone of Ghana by the Krobos tribe. According to Hunter a family purchases a plot of land some days' journey from its present home, and after successful cultivation moves farther west.³⁴ The independence of these two processes in the developing world has been partly corroborated by Riddell and Harvey in a study of migration preferences in Sierra Leone³⁵ (Fig. 6). The sparsely populated and poorly connected interior regions exhibited a perfect stepwise pattern (1, 2, 3, 4), whilst a certain degree of short-circuiting in the direction of the larger interior cities characterised the pattern of the arboriculture and diamond-mining areas (1, 3, 2, 4). Preference for migration to the capital, Freetown, was restricted to its hinterland, thus reflecting the attenuating effect of distance and the presence of localised employment centres and regional capitals. However, it should not be thought that migration in developing countries is uni-directional; for example, a study of the Matlab district of Bangladesh provides some interesting details on migratory counter-streams.³⁶ Of those who left the district between 1968 and 1969, 64 per cent migrated to towns and cities, and were replaced by migrants, 48 per cent of whom originated from urban areas. However, the adequacy of the 'laws' as a description of migration flows in the developing countries is weakened by their failure to take into account two distinctive features. The first of these is the re-location of large

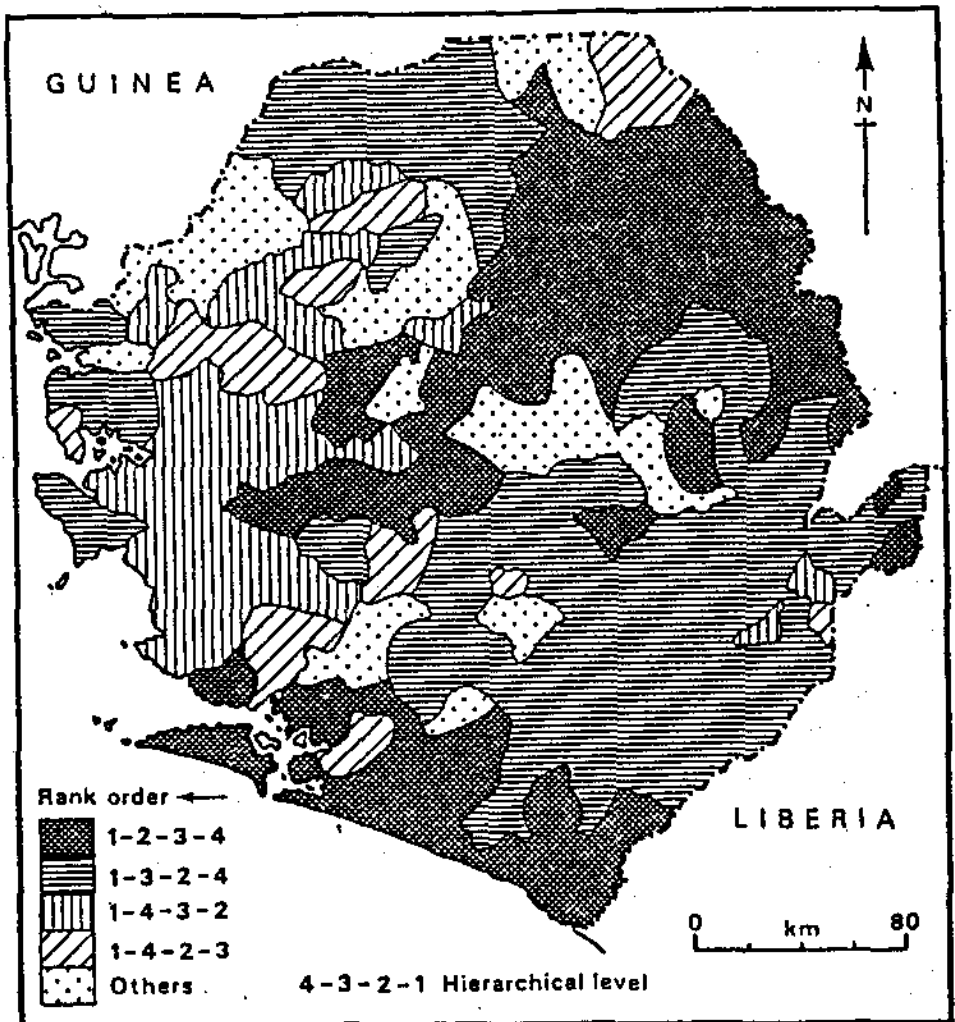


Figure 6. Migration preferences in Sierra Leone; numbers indicate urban(1)–rural(4) continuum. (Source: Harvey, M. E. and Riddell, J. B., 'Development, Urbanization and Migration: a Test of a Hypothesis in the Third World' in Kosinski, L. A. and Prothero, R. M., *People on the Move*, Methuen, 1975, pp 51–65)

numbers of migrants over long distances within the rural areas: for example, the major migratory flows in India during the last two decades were the influx of farmers from Bengal into Assam and the large-scale permanent migration to the canal colonies within the state of Punjab.³⁷ Secondly, widespread seasonal or short-term migration exists in West Africa, where migrants 'leave home to seek work between late September and November, at the beginning of the dry season after the harvest has been taken; they return home again in the following April and May to cultivate their farms with the onset of the rains'.³⁸

However, since Ravenstein's seminal work, a number of studies have developed his suggestion that the friction of distance reduces migration contact between areas. Zipf argued that the attraction of a place does not only decline with simple linear distance from a second place but is also dependent upon the size of the places involved.³⁹ This has been formalised into what is usually called the Gravity Model, whose validity is evident from a number of inter-regional migration studies.⁴⁰ But within the majority of these studies it is apparent that a good deal of the variation in the migration still remains unexplained. According to Stouffer this weakness is due to a failure to take into account the fact that 'the number of persons going a given distance is directly proportional to the number of intervening opportunities'.⁴¹ Once again this hypothesis has only partially been substantiated; see, for example, Isbell's study of inter-county and intra-county migration in Sweden between 1921 and 1930⁴² (Fig. 7). As a result of these discrepancies between the 'expected' and 'observed' relationships between migration and intervening opportunities, Stouffer refined his theory by introducing an additional variable which he called 'competing migrants'.⁴³ His revised model postulates that the total number of individuals migrating from A to B is an inverse function of the number of opportunities intervening between A and B, as well as of the number of other individuals competing for opportunities at B.

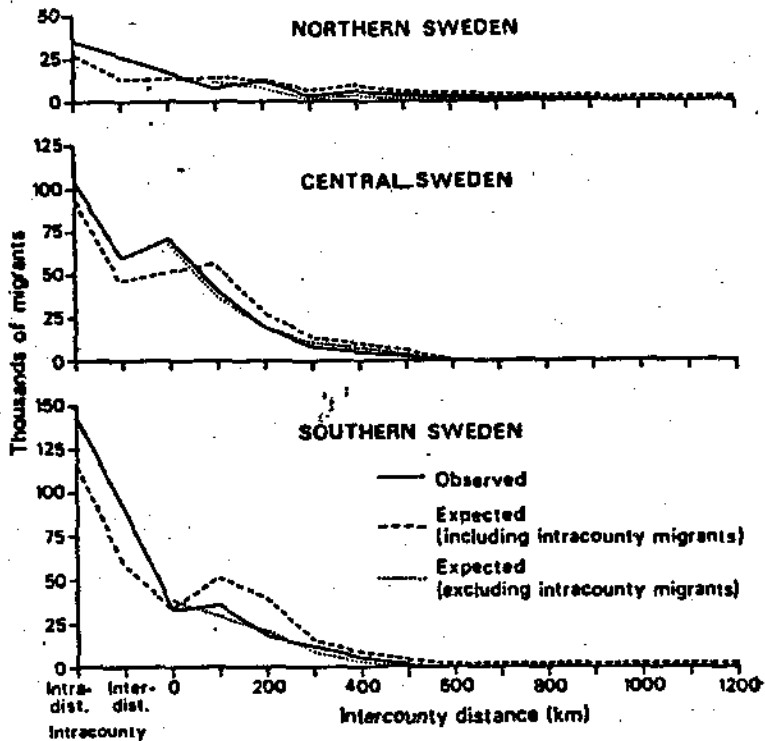


Figure 7. Observed and expected male intercommunity migrants in Sweden, 1921-30, by region of origin and distance of last migration. (Source: Isbell, E. C., 'Internal Migration in Sweden and Intervening Opportunities', *American Sociological Review*, 9, 1944, pp 627-39)

Basically, all such postulates about the size and direction of migration are only refinements of Ravenstein's 'laws'. Even Lee's elaborate attempt to incorporate all the constraints upon migration under the all-embracing concept of 'intervening obstacles' is simply a more detailed expression of what has long been recognised, confirming that the size and direction of migration are guided by distance and intervening opportunities within the context of the individual's aspirations and his ability to overcome a series of intervening obstacles.⁴⁴ Clearly, such forces will not operate uniformly for all potential migrants, and hence there is a tendency for a degree of migrant selectivity to exist. It is to the determination of such differential migration that we must now turn.

The selection of migrants

Two of Ravenstein's seven 'laws' of migration indicated the existence of a certain degree of differential migration: that females are more migratory than males, and that the natives of towns are less migratory than those of rural parts of a country. Since the publication of Ravenstein's 'laws', a number of studies investigating the selective nature of migration have been carried out. By far the most significant has been the wide-ranging review undertaken by Dorothy S. Thomas⁴⁵ in 1938. Using the evidence produced by Thomas and others, Beshers and Nishuira⁴⁶ were able to postulate a series of generalisations concerning migration differentials. These generalisations are: that young adults are the more mobile segment of the population; that males tend to be more migratory than females; that unemployed persons are more likely to move than employed persons; that (within the USA) whites move more than non-whites; and that professional people are among the most mobile groups of the population.

Detailed study of the available empirical evidence on selective migration involving rural areas suggests that not all these hypotheses are upheld in every situation. At an inter-regional scale, studies of the United States, England and Wales, and

France⁴⁷ show that age differences are largely responsible for migration differentials, and that factors such as income, education, sex, family size, and marital status operated essentially within a life-cycle dimension. Indeed, Friedlander and Roshier went as far as to claim the existence of two distinct mobility streams associated with family formation in England and Wales in 1960:⁴⁸ first, a migration out of rural areas before marriage, and secondly, a movement, predominantly after marriage, out of urban areas (Fig. 8).

In a study of the Welsh Borderland it has also been shown that the life-cycle dimension differs between migrants moving into and those moving out of the region.⁴⁹ Those leaving the Welsh Borderland between 1958 and 1968 were predominantly young adults (aged 15-30 years) and were only marginally differentiated on income, education, sex, and marital status, whilst middle-aged migrants (30-45) were both fewer and more selective, consisting mainly of married couples with higher income and more schooling. In direct contrast, the in-migrants were overwhelmingly of the older age-groups (over 45 years), with nearly 40 per cent in the retirement category, and once again tended to be from the higher income and educational groups. Such migration selectivity reflects the social and economic conditions typically associated with a rural environment. The Welsh Borderland fails to provide sufficient job opportunities, so young adults, even if seeking unskilled jobs, have to leave home. On the other hand, as families retire to the area or buy a 'home in the country' the demographic and social structure of the rural communities is being markedly changed.

Of all the rural dwellers in Western Europe and North America the least mobile are the farming population. According to Gasson⁵⁰ the small farmer in the Fens and Hertfordshire is reluctant to leave farming because his present income is adequate, or he foresees difficulties in finding satisfactory alternative employment or has a strong preference for remaining in his present occupation. The farmers are often dissuaded from

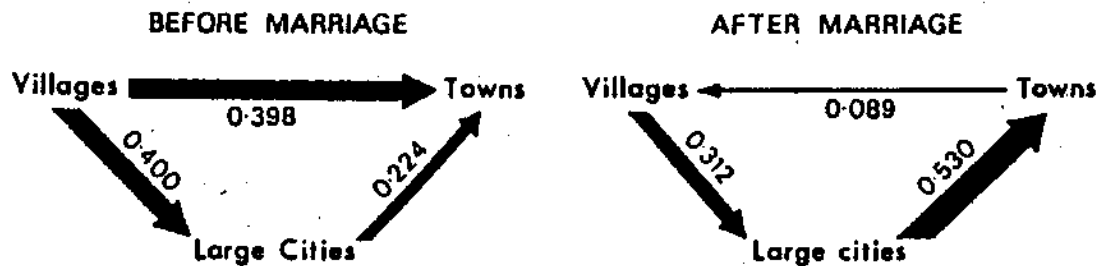


Figure 8. Migration balances between urban and rural areas in England and Wales, 1960; the net index of migration was calculated on the basis of differences in flows between each pair of places. (Source: Friedlander, D. and Roshier, D. J., 'A Study of Internal Migration in England and Wales, Part II', *Population Studies*, 20, 1966, pp 45-59)

moving by advanced age and lack of alternatives, but even without these constraints farmers show a strong attachment to their job, as among the Pennine hill-farmers of Staffordshire.⁵¹ Since those farmers who could migrate do not and those who would move cannot, the farming population is unlikely to achieve the mobility levels of the other rural dwellers.

The evidence from the developing countries on the selectivity of rural migrants is more fragmentary and inconclusive than that from the developed countries. Despite Herrick's claim that in Chile the rural migrant differs little from the non-migrant,⁵² a number of inter-regional studies in Southern Asia⁵³ and West Africa⁵⁴ have revealed a tendency for the number of male migrants to exceed that of female migrants, especially in long distance and rural-urban streams. However, the complex nature of migrant selectivity in the rural parts of these countries can only be appreciated after a consideration of a number of local surveys. According to three surveys in Ghana,⁵⁵ India,⁵⁶ and Bangladesh⁵⁷ migrants tended to be single young male adults, a feature which reflects the greater independence of males, the temporariness of the migration, and the type of employment opportunities available in the towns. In Ghana⁵⁸ evidence of a reduction in the sex differential in rural-to-urban migration provides additional evidence of a trend toward more permanent migration. The propensity to migrate increased also with the size of the family: for example, in Ghana, the proportion of male migrants rose from 35 per cent among those with one male sibling to 50 per cent among those with five or more male siblings. No doubt this reflects not only chain migration, but also increased pressure on subsistence in rural areas for those in large families. In addition, all three surveys found that a disproportionate fraction of the better educated and members of conspicuously wealthier households were migrants.

Among the rural communities of both the developed and underdeveloped countries Bogue's claim that 'only one migration differential seems to have systematically withstood the test—that for age . . . Migration is highly associated with the

first commitment and acts of adjustment of adulthood that are made by adolescents as they mature³⁹ has considerable validity. This does not mean that other forms of differential migration do not take place, but rather that they vary in character according to the nature of the rural environment and the people involved. However, despite the failure to identify universal differentials in migration, apart from age, it may be concluded that individuals differently located in space and social structure have different degrees of knowledge about, and are able to benefit to differing extents from, opportunities available at places other than those in which they currently reside. The next section will therefore be concerned with how people decide to migrate in the light of such knowledge.

The decision to migrate

Conceptually, the decision to migrate can be sub-divided into three stages: a first stage, in which a decision to make such a change of residence takes place; a second, in which an alternative location is selected; and a third, in which a decision whether or not to stay is made. The decision will in turn tend to consist of two successive steps (Fig. 9). In the first step a decision is made about the desired general area of residence. If the present home and the current job are highly valued, then migration beyond the commuting field of the place of work is unlikely. On the other hand, if a high value is placed upon a better job or a better environment, in another area, then migration may take place. After this first decision has been made, a second has to be made regarding the location of the home within the general area. This decision is based upon a comparative evaluation of the site and neighbourhood attributes of the present home with those of the potential alternative home. If both the general-area and house-site decisions favour the present situation, people are unlikely to migrate. Of the two types of migrant, total displacement and partial displacement migrants, only the former have to change their location as a result of both steps; the latter base their decisions solely on the site and neighbourhood attributes of home.

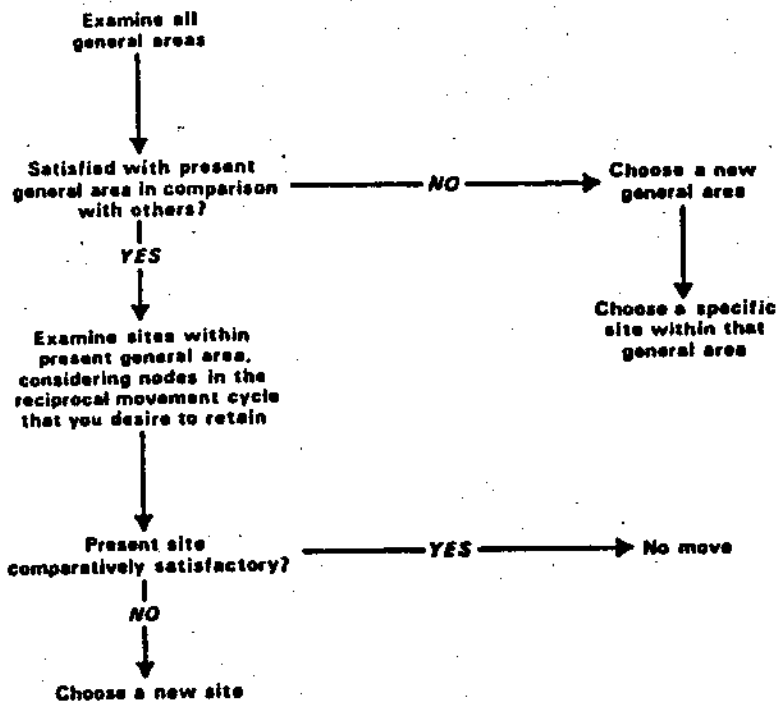


Figure 9. Generalised locational decision scheme. (Source: Roseman, C. C., 'Migration as a Spatial and Temporal Process', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 61, 1971, pp 589-98)

The comparative evaluation of the present location and potential future location is based upon the knowledge a migrant has concerning each alternative. The procedure by which an individual gathers such information is guided by the extent and content of his information field, or the set of places about which he has knowledge. Such a field can be divided into two: an activity space and an indirect contact space.⁴⁰ Activity space is made up of all those locations with which an individual has regular, almost day-to-day contact, resulting in a fairly accurate knowledge of the area involved, although it may be spatially restricted. Such knowledge forms the basis of the partial displacement migrant's decision. In contrast, indirect contact space lies beyond the area of the individual's day-to-day contacts, and partly depends upon information from the mass media and other people about alternative locations. The total displacement migrant's decision is more likely to be based upon this type of knowledge. The nature of such knowledge tends to make his site and neighbourhood decision less efficient than that of the partial displacement migrant's, and so increases the possibility that he himself will make a further partial displacement movement shortly after the initial move.

Within such an information-gathering process there tends to be a decay in the accuracy and content of the information an individual possesses with distance. However, attempts to identify the nature of migration information among rural dwellers are extremely limited. Probably the most meaningful are the preference maps of Gould and White.⁴¹ Implicit within these analyses is a relationship between knowledge and locational desirability. Among schoolchildren in both rural Nigeria and England and Wales a definite preference for their local area and for larger cities was revealed (Fig. 10). However, a tendency among some of the English and Welsh to favour pleasanter coastal and suburban areas emphasises the greater uniformity of the space perception of Nigerian children. Such information will of course play an important role in the decision to migrate and in the selection of likely destinations.

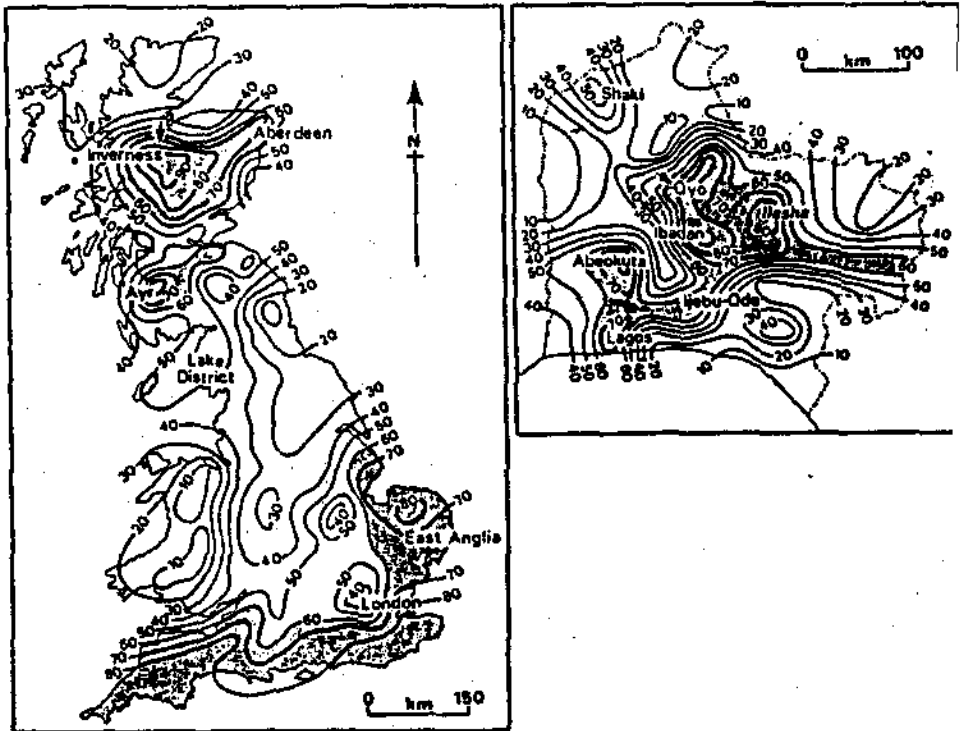


Figure 10. Residential desirability surfaces: (left) as seen by Scottish pupils about to leave school, and (right) as seen by 18-year-old students in Oyo, Nigeria. (Source: Gould, P. R. and White, R. R., 'The mental maps of British school leavers', *Regional Studies*, 2, 1968, pp 161-82; Abler, R., Adams, J. S. and Gould, P. R., *Spätial Organisation*, Prentice-Hall, 1971, p 529)

In gathering information there are a series of biases, principally of an attitudinal and connective nature, which distort the distance decay of information. Attitude biases in information sources are those which result from the values placed on the local rural community as well as alternative locations. According to Hannan⁶² 'the overwhelming majority of the rural youth in western Ireland expected to migrate to get on in the world'. Similarly, there was a tendency in the Welsh Borderland to regard those who remained as 'failed migrants'.⁶³ In both communities, long-established out-migration has created a 'migration mentality' which encourages the young to leave their home in search of 'better' opportunities, even when there are local opportunities. One of the few attempts to measure rural attitudes towards locations is Rambaud's survey in France of the residents' interpretation of the concept of a 'town'.⁶⁴ 'Snap-type' answers revealed that the rural dwellers viewed the town as a place offering plenty of employment and attractive entertainment which contrasted with the quietness, boredom, and the routine of working in the countryside. In contrast, 'thought-out' answers listed educational opportunities as being the most significant, followed by recreational facilities. These responses illuminate most strikingly the way in which rural life is perceived as being restricted whilst that of the town is seen as containing all the advantages.

Connective biases in information sources are those which result from regular contact, irrespective of distance, with friends and relatives. Such contacts provide the potential migrant with considerable information about the home locations of friends and relatives, and this often becomes the basis for selecting a new place of residence. In addition, friends and relatives can assist migrants by contributing to a reduction in movement costs, and can aid the assimilation of the newcomer into a strange community. The effect of such information feedback is to create a distinctive migration stream between two places. Hillery and Brown have shown that 'the southern Appalachians is not a region in the sense of its parts belonging to the same migration system. Rather it is a collection of

fringes, or, as it has often been put, of "backyards"⁶⁵ which are connected to non-Appalachian areas, often distant cities, as a result of migration. 'The kinship structure provides a highly persuasive line of communication between kinsfolk in the home and the new community which channels information about available job opportunities, and living standards directly . . . [to rural] families. Thus, kinship linkage tends to direct migrants to those areas where their groups are already established.'⁶⁶ Similarly, Caldwell found that of those migrants who left his case-study area in rural Ghana for an urban destination, less than one-fifth searched for accommodation on their own.⁶⁷ In addition, the migrants who remain in the towns maintain contact with their families by sending home money even after long absences from their villages. However, there is a tendency within rural migration literature to overemphasise this type of connection at the expense of other information channels. In the Welsh Borderland it has been shown that between 1958 and 1968 the information source upon which a new community was selected depended upon the type of migration.⁶⁸ Since rural-to-rural migration was predominantly local, personal experience was the most significant source. Surprisingly, those who migrated from the rural area to the towns and cities based their information overwhelmingly upon the mass media; the feedback of knowledge by friends and relatives was of little significance. The onset of the mass media seems to have superseded the traditional information source because of its ability to disseminate greater and more detailed knowledge about locational opportunities. The channel of information used in the urban-to-rural migration in the Welsh Borderland was determined by its purpose. Generally, those families who have settled in the region upon retirement based their decision on knowledge derived either from previous residence or holiday visits, whilst those who moved out from the adjacent towns were guided by their personal knowledge. Clearly the manner in which a rural migrant chooses his new home location is as complex as that revealed for the intra-urban migrant.⁶⁹

Conclusion

In this paper migration has been conceived in terms of a simple rural system. Change in one part of the system has a direct or indirect effect upon all other parts. Within such a system migration is a response to social, political, economic and cultural changes. Despite differential responses to such changes, there is considerable order in the ways in which ruralites decide to migrate and in which their decisions are constrained by a variety of obstacles. Although for analytical purposes migration has been viewed as a dependent variable in this chapter, it is quite clear that it can also be viewed as an independent variable affecting change processes. In other words, given a pattern of population movement, it can have social, economic, political, and cultural consequences for the rural communities.

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