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THEORIES AND TYPOLOGIES OF MIGRATION: AN OVERVIEW AND A PRIMER

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Whilst the literature on international migration expands at a seemingly exponential rate, significant statements about the theorisation of migration are much less common; probably they are hindered by the increasing diversification of types of migration. This paper first reviews the various types of migration, and emphasises the need for an interdisciplinary approach to the study and theorisation of migration. In the main part of the paper I provide a personalised overview of theories of international migration, divided into the following sections: push-pull theory and the neoclassical approach; migration and development transitions; historical-structural and political economy models; the role of systems and networks; the 'new economics' of migration; and finally approaches based on the 'transnational turn' in migration studies. In the conclusion I point up some future challenges to theorising migration: the need to embed the study of migration within global processes of social, economic and political transformation and within the biographies of migrants' lifecourses; the importance of also explaining why people do not migrate, and the notion of access to mobility as a differentiating factor of class and inequality; and the relevance of existential and emotional dimensions of migration. The paper is explicitly aimed at a student audience and is intended as a primer to understanding some of the complexities and challenges of theorising migration.

Keywords: international migration, theory, mobility and immobility, types of migration, interdisciplinarity

Introduction

At the London Paralympics of September 2012 there was a single Albanian athlete, Haki Doku, who competed in the hand-bike race (for riders who can only propel the specially designed bike by their arms). There is a migration back-story to this event. Haki, like hundreds of thousands of his compatriots, migrated to Italy in the 1990s, working in the informal labour market on construction sites. One tragic day, he fell off a scaffold and irreparably damaged his spinal cord, becoming a paraplegic. Aided by friends and charities, in both Italy and Albania, he rehabilitated himself as a competitive cyclist, purchasing a specialist recumbent tricycle costing 7000 euros, persuading the Albanian authorities to register with the International Paralympic Committee, and acquiring an Albanian flag for his solo appearance at the opening ceremony.[1]

This story says many things about contemporary migration: the apparent need of 'mature' economies for cheap migrant labour; the insecurity and danger inherent in such tough manual work carried out in the informal sector; the difficulties of being a long-term foreigner from a poor country (Haki did not have Italian citizenship despite living in Italy for 15 years); and the continued international isolation of a country like Albania on the fringes of Europe.

Why is migration important?

There are two ways of responding to this question, depending on which side of the 'migration coin' – migration or immobility – one looks at. One side stresses the fundamental historical role of migration as part of human experience from the remote past to the present and on into the future (McNeill and Adams 1978). The roving instinct, it is said, is intrinsic to human nature: the need to search for food, pasture and resources; the desire to travel and explore; but also to conquer and possess. Population movements have been the carriers of innovation from one region to another. This historicist narrative on the everlasting role of migration has recently been given a new twist. For the past twenty years Stephen Castles and Mark Miller have been telling us that we live in the 'Age of Migration' (Castles and Miller 1993, 2009): a period during which international migration has accelerated, globalised, feminised, diversified and become increasingly politicised (2009: 10-12). Writing from a different perspective John Urry has argued that the static or 'sedentarist' structures that traditionally defined western society – social class, static residence and stable employment –

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1 See 'Paralympics 2012: Albania's first time', *Osservatorio Balcani e Caucaso,* 11 September 2012.

have been replaced by a new defining characteristic, mobility (Urry 2000, 2007). Everyone, it seems, is now 'on the move' (Cresswell 2006). And the latest figures from the United Nations Population Division inform us that, as of 2010, there are 214 million international migrants in the world – that is to say, people residing in a country different from that of their birth. If all these migrants were put in a country of their own, it would be the fifth largest in the world.[2]

The other side of the migration coin yields a different perspective. The 'stock' of 214 million international migrants in the world today represents only fractionally more than 3 per cent of global population; in other words, 97 per cent of the world's population are *not* international migrants.[3] It is true that this migrant stock has almost tripled from 75 million in 1965 and more than doubled from 105 million in 1985, but since global population has grown almost as fast, the percentage share has only increased by a modest amount (it was 2.3 per cent in 1965 and 2.7 per cent in 1985). What Gunnar Malmerg (1997: 21-22) calls the 'immobility paradox' focuses our attention on the vast majority of people who do not migrate despite the economic models, based on 'push' and 'pull' factors of wage and unemployment differentials, which predict that they *should* go.

The immobility paradox raises a further set of questions. Why has such a large proportion of the world's population not migrated? Is it because they do not want to, or do not have the need to? Is it because their 'moorings' are holding them firmly in place – their family ties, jobs, culture, familiarity and simply feeling 'at home'? Or could it be that many millions would want to migrate, but are prevented from doing so, either by their own poverty which isolates them (they do not have a passport, and/or cannot pay for the ticket to travel) or because of the political and institutional barriers to their movement? It is one of the ironies of globalisation that whilst goods, capital, knowledge, entrepreneurship and the media are free to flow across borders, labour, that other crucial factor of production, is not. In fact, on the whole people are less free to migrate now than they were a hundred years ago.

Hence, the otherwise attractive notion of the 'age of migration' needs to be qualified: migration for some, but not for others. Fine if you are white, from a wealthy country in Europe, North America or elsewhere in the

2 After China 1.3 billion, India 1.1 billion, USA 304 million and Indonesia 228 million.

3 Though some may have been in the past, and return-migrated to their country of origin. My discussion of numbers here also does not take into account internal migration within countries, estimated at 740 million by the UN Population Division in 2009. It is also the case that many international migrants are also internal migrants, either before or after their international moves. See King and Skeldon (2010) for a full exposition of the distinctions (and the false dichotomy) between internal and international migration.

developed world, or if you have money to invest or valuable skills to deploy. But if you are from a poor country in Africa, Latin America or parts of Asia: forget it. Basing his analysis on the empirical example of Cape Verde, an island country with a long tradition of emigration to various parts of the world, Jørgen Carling draws attention to the separation between Cape Verdeans' widespread *aspiration* to migrate, and their current *inability* to do so. For them, the 'age of migration' has become the 'age of involuntary immobility' (Carling 2002).

Some final remarks about migrant numbers. The UNPD's figure of 214 million can be regarded as a 'best estimate' but it obscures two major statistical problems. First, the criteria for defining who is a migrant vary from country to country, the chief difference being between *citizenship* and *birthplace* or *prior residence*. Naturalisation converts foreign-born immigrants into citizens and thus removes them from the migration count if citizenship is the criterion of measurement. Conversely, people born in the host country to immigrant parents – the so-called 'second generation' – can remain classified as non-citizens on the *ius sanguinis* or 'blood' rule and thus be counted as part of the 'foreign' or 'immigrant' population, even though they themselves have not immigrated.

The second problem is the – by definition unknown – quantity of 'undocumented' or 'irregular' immigrants, often branded 'illegal immigrants'. This group is thought to be increasing faster than the rate of growth of legal migration.[4] Migrants' irregular status is a product of structural forces rather than a 'natural' state of being. In particular it results from the interplay with borders, visa rules and other exclusionary policies towards migrants based on who is allowed 'in' and who is not (Jordan and Düvell 2002: 7). Bimal Ghosh (1998: 34-35) locates the primary reason for the occurrence of irregular migration in the economic supply-demand mismatch between emigration pressures in the countries of origin with too few opportunities for legal entry in the countries of destination. This can be seen as a variation on the classical 'push-pull' model of migration which we shall consider in more detail presently.

Numbers apart, migration is important because of the way it shapes and re-shapes societies, making them more diverse and complex. But it also creates sharp divisions between those who accept the need for migrants and welcome the economic and cultural contributions they make, and those

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4 Estimates of irregular migration are difficult not only because of the unregistered nature of these migrants but also because of the constantly fluctuating flows and status of such migrants. Ghosh (1998: 9-18) offers some estimates for selected parts of the world, but these figures are now dated. King et al. (2010: 74-75) provide a map of the main routes of irregular migrants.

who oppose them. The latter group, politically motivated, often exaggerate the numbers of migrants, employ repeated use of prejudicial terms such as 'illegal immigrants' and 'bogus asylum-seekers' and tend to scapegoat migrants for the ills of the society they seek to join – like crime, drugs and unemployment. These anti-migration discourses need to be confronted by a more objective analysis of the process of migration, starting with a recognition of the diversity of the phenomenon.

My aim with this paper is not to survey all types, issues and theories of migration: an impossible task in a single, abbreviated account. Rather, my objective is to offer, mainly for a student readership, an overview and synthesis of the key conceptual and theoretical frameworks, limiting myself to international migration. The increasing diversification of migration types and processes, and also their increasing spontaneity of occurrence in the globalised, ever-more interconnected world of today, makes it difficult if not well-nigh impossible to envision a single, overarching theory of migration; or to review within the scope of a single paper the wide range of theoretical formulations that would be necessary to mobilise in order to generate a complete picture. Hence I aim at a kind of meso-level resolution, by providing an account which both restates some enduring fundamentals of migration theory, and points to the new challenges and trends which respond to the diversified and changed nature of migration in a post-industrial, globalised world.

Types of migration

Migration unfolds in time and space (Malmberg 1997) and is therefore defined against thresholds of distance and 'time in migration' (Cwerner 2001). For international migration, a nation-state border obviously has to be crossed, although this is not so straightforward as may appear at first sight, since such borders can come and go (as in the former Soviet Union or ex-Yugoslavia), and can be of varying 'thickness' and therefore be 'open' or 'closed' borders to migration (for instance the internal borders within the EU versus the external border of the Schengen area). Time-wise, the threshold for the statistical recording of migration (as opposed to other forms of mobility like tourism) is usually set at one year in the host country, but beyond this lie enormous variations: from migrants on one-year contracts to those staying for, say, five or ten years, to permanent settlers. Temporary migration leads sooner or later to return migration, whilst permanent migrants may make return visits to their home country from time to time. Note that the one-year threshold leaves out seasonal migrants, who are vital to certain economic sectors such as agriculture, tourism and construction.

A further complication is that the above description assumes that migrants move between two countries, A and B: migrants either settle

for good in B, or return at some point to A, or maybe shuttle back and forth between them. Other trajectories are also becoming evident: onward migration when a move from A to B is succeeded by a move to country C; and transit migration when migrants aiming to move from A to B spend substantial amounts of time moving through, or getting stuck in, one or more intervening countries. Morocco, Libya and Turkey have functioned as transit countries for sub-Saharan migrants aiming to enter Europe (see, e.g., Suter 2012). Collyer (2007) has written of West Africans' 'fragmented journeys' to Europe, first across the Sahara, then across the Mediterranean. A good example of onward migration is the way that Somalian migrants with their refugee status in the Netherlands or the Nordic countries onward-migrate to Britain to join more established Somali communities there (Liempt 2010).

Cohen (1996: xi-xiv) and King (2002: 90-91; 2012: 136-138) offer further typologies of migration, mainly based on what they variously call migration binaries, dichotomies or dyads. They also stress that these dualities need to be blurred and deconstructed. Several have been referred to already: internal vs. international, temporary vs. permanent, and regular vs. irregular migration. Another important, yet problematic, divide is that between voluntary and forced migration, for instance 'economic' migrants vs. refugees. All these categorisations are useful up to a point, but can break down in practice. Many migrants move both internally and internationally, one type of move followed by the other. Intra-EU migration can be classified as both internal mobility within the free-movement space of the EU, and as international, eg. from Italy to France. Temporary migration can morph into permanent settlement, as migrants who intended to stay for a limited period of time continually postpone their return until it never happens – like the 'guestworkers' in Germany and Switzerland who ended up 'here for good' (Castles et al. 1984). Irregular migrants can become legalised through special schemes for regularisation, such as those periodically implemented by the southern European countries of Spain, Portugal, Italy and Greece (see Fakiolas 2003 for a detailed study of the two main Greek regularisations of 1998 and 2001). Conversely regular migrants can lapse into irregularity after their permits expire or because of the bureaucratic obstacles and delays they face in renewing them (again, see Fakiolas 2003 on Greece). Finally the forced/voluntary divide is seen often to be too simplistic in practice. Sales (2007: 47) critically notes that the theoretical distinction between refugee migration and 'voluntary' economic migration neglects the fact that conflicts can produce economic devastation which forces people to leave who do not satisfy the 1951 UN Convention on Refugees which stipulates a well-founded fear of persecution due to race, religion or political beliefs. The same author goes on to point out that 'conflicts are increasingly related

to the breakdown of state structures which makes economic and political reasons for emigration strongly intertwined' (2007: 75). A case in point would be post-1990 emigration from Albania, where the collapse of both the political and the economic system created what Barjaba and King (2005) called 'economic refugees'.

Summing up, three 'core groups' have dominated the study of migration in the past and still do so to some extent: temporary labour migrants, settler-migrants, and refugees. The 'age of migration' has seen a proliferation of new types of migration and international mobility which form important elements of the increasingly complex global map of population movements (King 2002; King et al. 2010; Martiniello and Rath 2012). Post-fordism, space-time compression, and the embeddedness of migration and mobility in the forces of globalisation and the New World Order have introduced new mobility forms where none existed before. Hence we find new globe-spanning migrations which have no historical precedent (a good example would be Bangladeshi migration to Italy; Knights and King 1998); local-scale cross-border shuttle migration, such as occurred in the wake of the dismantling of the Iron Curtain (Engbersen 2001; Morawska 2001a); 'residential tourism', extending tourist stays to several months (see Myklebost 1989 on elderly Norwegian 'snowbirds' who over-winter in Southern Spain and the Canaries); and new forms of circulation based on business visits and work contract migration (Salt 1992). We also find international migrations connected with family reunion and childcare, marriage migration, student migration, retirement migration, high-skilled migration and brain drain, environmental and climate-change migration, and human trafficking and sexual exploitation – this is by no means a complete list.[5]

The study of migration has been enriched by the introduction of new conceptual frameworks such as mobility (the 'mobilities turn'; Urry 2007), transnationalism (see Glick Schiller et al. 1992 for the foundational statement), and diaspora studies (Cohen 2008). All this typological and terminological complexity makes migration studies a challenging field for the social sciences, and opens up the following short discussion of disciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches to migration research.

The need for an interdisciplinary synthesis
As Clifford Jansen (1969: 60) wrote more than forty years ago, the subject-matter of migration has been claimed by many social-science disciplines. Geographers, sociologists and economists (including economic historians)

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5 For a useful recent survey of recent types of migration, with a European focus, see Martiniello and Rath (2012).

can probably assert the longest engagement, but many other disciplines have also been involved, such as social psychology, political science, anthropology, history, demography, law and, moving across to the humanities, literary, media and cultural studies. Much research on migration has been conducted within narrow disciplinary boundaries, reinforced by the academic and institutional landscape of most universities which are departmentalised into discipline-based degree and research programmes. Each discipline tends to bring its own epistemological orthodoxy, scale of analysis and privileged types of data; paraphrasing Bourdieu (1984), its own academic habitus.

Many authors have challenged this disciplinary blinkeredness. Castles (2000: 15-25) argued that disciplinary and paradigmatic closure are the enemy of an effective and sympathetic study of human migration, and Arango (2004: 15) stressed that limiting enquiry to single disciplines reduces our understanding of the full complexity of migration processes, and in particular has held back the building of theory. Recent essays (for instance Favell 2008; King 2002; 2012) argue strongly for an interdisciplinary[6] approach, and some textbooks have tried to achieve this, notably the pioneering book edited by Hammar et al. (1997) and, more recently, books by Brettell and Hollifield (2008) and Samers (2010).

These books are effective to varying extents. The Hammar et al. volume was the most original given the time when it was published, but in focusing on migration, immobility and development, it remained anchored in a spatial-economic framework, with the exception of a chapter on gender (Bjerén 1997). The book is notable for the way it opens up a detailed analysis of the multi-scale relational nature of migration decision-making, with an important discussion on what Thomas Faist (1997a) calls the 'crucial meso-level', interposed relationally between the micro-level individual motives to migrate (or not) and the macro-scale structural opportunities and constraints, mainly related to (lack of) development in different migrant sending and receiving contexts (see also Faist 1997b).

Michael Samers' book blends the spatial approach of the geographer with political economy and critical sociology frameworks to produce a persuasive and broad-ranging analysis of international migration. Labelled

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6 Sometimes the terms cross-disciplinary, multidisciplinary or postdisciplinary are used as well. This is not the place for a fine-grained philosophical discussion of the differences between all these terms. Very briefly, and to my way of thinking, cross- and multidisciplinary implies two or more different disciplines working alongside each other, in parallel so to speak; interdisciplinarity implies a fusing of disciplines in an integrated analysis; and postdisciplinarity implies a remapping of knowledge and research around important issues and fields of study, with the traditional disciplinary boundaries and identities more or less forgotten.

an 'advanced introduction' to migration for undergraduates, it is the closest textbook currently available to an interdisciplinary synthesis, although it is weaker on the anthropological and cultural frameworks for understanding migration.[7]

The Brettell and Hollifield edited book does not really achieve the 'talking across disciplines' that its subtitle promises. 'Migration is a subject that cries out for an interdisciplinary approach', the editors proclaim in their preface (2008: vii), but nearly all of the book consists of single-discipline chapters which review migration as studied and theorised by, in turn, historians, demographers, economists, sociologists, anthropologists, geographers, political scientists, and legal scholars. No interdisciplinary conversations are created, and the references are mostly to the US immigration experience. All this changes in the final chapter, by Adrian Favell (2008), in which he 'reboots' migration theory from an explicitly inter- and postdisciplinary perspective, as well as delivering a stinging critique of the rest of the book!

General textbooks on (international) migration continue to proliferate. Recent offerings include Uma Segal et al. (2010), *Immigration Worldwide*; Andrew Geddes and Christina Boswell (2010), *Migration and Mobility in the EU*; as well as proselytising titles such as *Migration: Changing the World* (Arnold 2012) and *Exceptional People: How Migration Shaped Our World and Will Define Our Future* (Goldin et al. 2012). This is just a sample of recent books on migration. However, most of these texts are not explicitly theoretical. They add to our store of knowledge about migration by providing updated statistics and trends, and fresh arguments and polemics. But they do not add much to established theory.

Overview of theories of migration

It should be clear from the foregoing that migration is too diverse and multifaceted to be explained in a single theory. This has led some to claim that migration is only weakly theorised (e.g. Arango 2004). It is true that early theorisations were rather rigid and disconnected from each other, but more recent attempts to blend deductive with inductive reasoning have led to a variety of middle-range theorisations which resonate more closely with the realities of migration today. However, given the multiplicity of types of migration, there is insufficient space to go through the varied theorisations which have been applied to, for instance, highly skilled migration, or retirement migration, or populations displaced by climate change and environmental disaster. Instead I will follow the main thrust of the canonical

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7   It has also been pitched above its target market, with very long chapters and sometimes hard-to-understand text.

literature, which attempts to describe, model and explain the most important migrations in recent world history: those from poor countries to richer ones.[8]

Neoclassical economics and push-pull theory

Any review of migration theory must acknowledge, if not pay homage to, Ravenstein's (1885, 1889) 'laws of migration'. Opinions vary on the status of the laws in the historiography of migration. Samers (2010: 55-56) describes them as 'economically deterministic', 'methodologically individualist' and 'dreadfully antiquated'. Rightly he points out that they are not really laws but empirical generalisations, based on Ravenstein's calculations from the British and other censuses of the time. As such, they were more about internal than international migration. Here they are, heavily summarised and paraphrased from the original wordy text:

1. Migrants move mainly over short distances; those going longer distances head for the great centres of industry and commerce.
2. Most migration is from agricultural to industrial areas.
3. Large towns grow more by migration than by natural increase.
4. Migration increases along with the development of industry, commerce and transport.
5. Each migration stream produces a counterstream.
6. Females are more migratory than males, at least over shorter distances; males are a majority in international migration.
7. The major causes of migration are economic.

Given Ravenstein's disciplinary and professional background (he worked as a cartographer at the British War Office), his 'laws' have been most appreciated by geographers. White and Woods (1980: 6) wrote that they have formed the 'cornerstone of geographical thought on migration'; and Boyle et al. (1998: 59) that they 'provided the hypotheses upon which much future migration research and theorisation was built'. In the listing above, law 1 prefigured the gravity model of migration whereby, following Newtonian physics, the volume of movement between two places is directly proportional to the product of their masses (i.e. populations) and inversely proportional to the square of the distance between them (White and Woods 1980: 39). Laws 2 and 3 are about rural-urban migration and urbanisation, historically the main forms of population change in most countries of the world, including many

8 This approach follows in the footsteps of other attempts to synthesise the theoretical literature on the causes and circumstances that frame migration, notably the landmark paper by Massey et al. (1993), subsequently republished in the book *Worlds in Motion* (Massey et al. 1998: 17-59), as well as Arango (2004), Morawska (2007), and Fussell (2012).

still today. Law 4, relating migration to development, anticipated Zelinsky's (1971) famous 'hypothesis of the mobility transition' by nearly a century; we come back to this presently. Law 5 opened up the study of two-way migration dynamics, net migration, and return migration. Return migration was only picked up for detailed study in the 1970s and 1980s and remains an under-researched component of migration. Law 6 was even more pioneering: the gendering of migration remained ignored for almost the next hundred years. Finally, law 7 states a fundamental truism of most forms of migration.

The ancestral lineage of Ravenstein's laws which, in their unspoken way, combined individual rational-choice theory with the broader structures of rural-urban and developmental inequalities, is found in the much-vaunted push-pull framework. This simple, indeed simplistic, model conceives of migration as driven by a set of push factors operating from the region or country of origin (poverty, unemployment, landlessness, rapid population growth, political repression, low social status, poor marriage prospects etc.), and pull factors operating from the place or country of destination (better income and job prospects, better education and welfare systems, land to settle and farm, good environmental and living conditions, political freedom etc.). In Lee's (1966) version of this model, there is also a set of 'intervening obstacles' which have to be overcome; examples are physical distance, cost of making the journey, cultural barriers such as language and different ways of life, and political obstacles such as international borders and immigration restrictions. Personal factors also play a role in Lee's theorisation of migration: different people will react differently to various combinations of pushes and pulls, according to their economic status, life-stage and personality. To give a typical example, a single, unemployed young adult will respond more directly to job and income factors and be less concerned about the education system of a destination, which would be more relevant to the decision-making of a family with children.

Push-pull models dominated much migration thinking during the mid-twentieth century, until the 1960s if not later, and reflect the neoclassical economics paradigm, based on principles of utility maximisation, rational choice, factor-price differentials between regions and countries, and labour mobility. As Massey et al. (1998: 18-21) point out, the neoclassical model works at both the macro and the micro level. Macroeconomically, migration results from the uneven spatial distribution of labour vis-à-vis other factors of production, above all capital. In some countries and regions labour is plentiful and capital is scarce, so the wage level is correspondingly low. In other countries the opposite pertains: abundant capital, labour shortages and high wages. The result is that workers move from low-wage to high-wage economies. In doing so, however, they change the dynamics of supply

and demand for labour in both places, leading ultimately to the elimination of wage differentials, and therefore of migration too.[9]

At the micro level, migration is the result of decisions made by individual 'rational actors' who weigh up the pros and cons of moving relative to staying, based on abundant information about the options. Sjaastad (1962) interpreted the results of this cost-benefit calculus as a decision to migrate based on returns to the individual's investment in his or her human capital; this analysis was later extended to the 'international immigration market' by Borjas (1989).

Critical commentary on the neoclassical approach has been extensive. On the one side it is recognised that this theoretical stance has its own internal logic and elegant simplicity (Malmberg 1997: 29). On the other hand, the determinism, functionalism and ahistoricism of this approach rendered it, in some critics' eyes, unworkable and remote from a migration reality which was itself changing in the post-oil-crisis years of the late 1970s and beyond. According to Arango (2004: 19-20), the Achilles heel of neoclassical theory was its failure to explain, first, why so few people actually migrate, despite the apparent incentives to do so; and second, why some countries have high rates of out-migration whilst others, with the same structural economic conditions, have very low rates. Its manifest failures – to consider personal, family or socio-cultural factors; to acknowledge a political reality of multiple barriers to international movement; to pay attention to the varied histories of colonialism that linked certain countries together and not others; and to take on board the systemic structuring of the world economy in terms of dependency and underdevelopment – all encouraged scholars to look for other theoretical frameworks. These developed in several fields and directions, leading to a period of theoretical fragmentation as Marxist political economy, historical developmentalism, systems theory and the 'new economics' of migration all jostled for attention in the 1970s and 1980s.

Migration, transitions and development
Very different from the individual-level rational-choice decision-making of 'neoclassical' migrants are the broad-sweep historical generalisations

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9 The macro interpretation of the push-pull model draws on W. Arthur Lewis's famous dual-sector model of development with unlimited supplies of labour, whereby the urban-industrial sector expands fed by labour migrating from the overpopulated and hence zero marginal productivity agricultural sector (Lewis 1954). C. P. Kindleberger (1967) deployed the dual-sector theory to explain North-West Europe's postwar growth, driven by supplies of cheap, 'surplus' labour from the Southern European and Mediterranean countries. King et al. (1997) extended this analysis in time to the 1970s-1990s to explain how the Southern EU countries such as Italy, Spain and Greece turned from a labour-exporting to a labour-importing region after the 1970s.

of Wilbur Zelinsky's 'hypothesis of the mobility transition' (1971). This is migration theorising on a grand scale, linking changes in migration and mobility behaviour to different stages in the modernisation process; parallels are evident both with demographic transition theory and with W.W. Rostow's (1960) 'stages of growth' model. The key statement undergirding Zelinsky's model is that 'there are definite patterned regularities in the growth of personal mobility through space-time during recent history, and these regularities comprise an essential component of the modernization process' (1971: 221-222). These migration and mobility patterns were expressed through a five-stage model, based on the historical experience of Europe:

1. Pre-modern traditional society: very limited migration, only local movements related, e.g., to marriage or to marketing agricultural produce.
2. Early transitional society: mass rural-urban migration; emigration to attractive foreign destinations for settlement and colonisation.
3. Late transitional society: slackening of both rural-urban migration and emigration; growth in various kinds of circulation, e.g. commuting.
4. Advanced society: rural-urban replaced by inter-urban migration, mass immigration of low-skilled workers from less developed countries; international circulation of high-skilled migrants and professionals; intense internal circulation, both economic and pleasure related.
5. Future superadvanced society: better communication and delivery systems may lead to a decline in some forms of human circulation; internal migration is inter- or intra-urban; continued immigration of low-skilled labour from less developed countries; possibility of strict controls over immigration.

Although Zelinsky saw his model merely as a provisional and heuristic device, it was taken up by several scholars and adapted to fit different situations (e.g. Skeldon 1977 on Peru). In many respects it was visionary. It anticipated the current debate on migration and development (or at least one version of it, namely that development produces migration); it integrated various forms of migration and mobility into a single framework and thus prefigured some aspects of the post-2000 mobilities paradigm; and it foresaw the role of advanced communication technology in substituting some forms of mobility. But in other respects it was backward-looking, and wedded to an outmoded conceptualisation of development which applied only to the historical experience of the advanced countries. To his credit, Zelinsky later acknowledged the shortcomings of his model and in a frank reappraisal ditched modernisation theory and instead invoked dependency theory to

affirm that migration patterns in the less developed world are contingent on the decisions and policies of governments and large corporations in the rich countries (1983: 25).

Historical-structural models

Grouped under this heading is a family of loosely related theoretical models inspired by the Marxist interpretation of capitalism, (under) development, and the structuring of the world economy. Such models see the causes of international migration as lying within the realm of historically formed macro-structural forces, and stress the inherently exploitative and disequilibrating nature of the economic power shaping global capitalism (Morawska 2012: 55). Three models have a direct bearing on the historical-structural theorisation of the causes of international migration: dual and segmented labour markets, dependency theory, and world systems theory. I consider each in turn.

In his influential book *Birds of Passage*, M. J. Piore (1979) argues that international labour migration is primarily driven by pull, not push factors. It is the structural power of demand for certain types of cheap and flexible labour that is the dominant force. This is linked to the presence in advanced industrialised countries of a *dual labour market*: a primary labour market of secure, well-paid jobs for native workers; and a secondary labour market of low-skill, low-wage, insecure and generally unpleasant jobs in factories and the service sector, filled mainly by migrant workers because such jobs are shunned by local workers. Indeed, the very presence of migrant workers reinforces the undesirability of these secondary-sector jobs for the local labour force, which in turn enables employers to drive down wages and working conditions even more. Foreign workers accept these poor and deteriorating labour niches because they have no bargaining power (especially if they are undocumented) and because such wages and jobs are still preferable to the poverty and unemployment that await them at home.[10] To the extent that the secondary labour market may be split into employment subsections according to gender, race or nationality, it becomes

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10 This corresponds to what Boris Nieswand (2011) terms 'the status paradox of migration' – the transnational status inconsistency between a migrant's status in the country of origin and in the country of destination. Sending money home, communicating frequently and making visits home during which the migrant can visibly demonstrate his or her 'wealth' and 'success' enable status to be maintained and enhanced in the eyes of the home community. All of which contrasts with the miserable life and status in the host country. Basing his analysis on a study of Ghanaian labour migrants in Germany, Nieswand observes that the status paradox is mainly valid for migrants who are neither perceived to be skilled in the country of destination nor unskilled in their home country (2011: 2).

segmented. On the whole, the creation of these jobs *precedes* the migrants who fill them (Samers 2010: 65).

The segmented labour market pattern is found throughout the advanced and newly industrialised countries. Early immigrants are recruited into these jobs by employers and labour agents, but often subsequent recruitment is network-based from within the immigrant community itself as entrepreneurs, including 'ethnic' businesses, recruit co-nationals to join the ethnic enclave economy (Fussell 2012: 28).

If Piore's argument refers mainly to the Fordist era of mass industrial production and its immediate aftermath, the analysis is progressed to a subsequent stage by Saskia Sassen's work on *global cities* (1988, 1991). The primary engine of growth of global cities in the post-industrial era has been the clustering there of corporate headquarters, financial centres and related producer services. London and New York are the archetypes. The social and income structure of such cities takes on an hour-glass shape, with 'bulges' of high-income and very low-income inhabitants, the latter geared to serve the needs of the former. Working in restaurants and hotels, cleaning offices and houses, taking care of children and the elderly: these are the low-end jobs mainly undertaken by immigrants from poor countries.[11]

The insistence of both Piore and Sassen on the demand-driven nature of immigration into industrial and post-industrial societies, and that such immigration is intrinsic to their continued growth and development, links directly to the *dependency school*, an interpretation of migration which is diametrically opposed both to the neoclassical paradigm and to the modernisation school which underpins the mobility transition model of Zelinsky.[12] Whereas the neoclassical model sees migration as self-correcting, leading to a new equilibrium where migration no longer occurs because wage rates are equalised, neo-Marxist dependency theory argues that migration is self-perpetuating, reproducing inequality through the mechanism of *cumulative causation* (Myrdal 1957; Petras 1981). And unlike the developmentalist framework, where migration is positively linked to development (see de Haas 2001a for a review), dependency theory sees international migration as part

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11 These migrant workers form a large part of what Guy Standing (2011) has recently labelled *the precariat*, an 'emerging class' of people facing lives of insecurity, moving in and out of dead-end jobs that give little meaning to their lives because they are low-paid, physically draining and demeaning, and involve long and unsocial hours.

12 Dependency theory was influential especially in Latin America in the late 1960s and 1970s, linked to André Gunder Frank's notion of the 'development of underdevelopment' (see Frank 1969, 1978). Nowadays its most influential exponent, in terms of theorising the ongoing dynamics of Latin American, especially Mexican, migration is Raúl Delgado Wise: see Castles and Delgado Wise (2008).

and parcel of the global geographic division of labour and of the historical process of subordinate incorporation of the underdeveloped world into the major capitalist economies (Morawska 2012: 60). This process dislocates millions of people in poor countries from their traditional way of life: they either migrate to urban areas within their own countries or are involved in international migration in search of the means of survival.

World systems theory, the third of our historical-structural models, emerged in the wake of dependency theory and built up a more complete and sophisticated historical analysis of the development and expansion of the global capitalist system from the sixteenth century on (Wallerstein 1974, 1979). In its colonial guise this world capitalist system reached its apogée around 1900; since the postwar era of decolonisation it has been driven by neo-colonialism and corporate capitalism. Nevertheless, the colonial imprint on these international population flows remains strong because of pre-existing colonial-era ties between past colonial powers and their former colonies, creating transport and communication infrastructures, administrative links, and linguistic and cultural commonalities (Morawska 2007: 3). Wallerstein (1974) classified countries according to their positioning within the global market economy: the dominant capitalist powers (North America, Europe, Japan, Australia and New Zealand) constituted the 'core', upon which the poor countries in the 'periphery' were entirely dependent through asymmetric ties of trade, capital penetration and migration. A 'semi-periphery' consisted of countries intermediate in terms of their wealth and interdependent status within this 'new international division of labour' or NIDL (Froebel et al. 1980).[13]

The NIDL drew out the labour and migration components of world systems theory which was initially mainly concerned with trade and capital. Several mechanisms were at play. Capitalist penetration into peripheral areas involves agribusiness and export processing zones, both of which dislodge rural labour and traditional patterns of employment and economic survival, creating potentially mobile pools of labour available for migration. This production and reproduction of a 'reserve army' (to use a classic Marxist term) enabled core countries to 'call up' this labour wherever it was needed: to sustain a period of business-cycle expansion or to fill the 'underclass' of the

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13 At the time Wallerstein was writing, typical countries of the semi-periphery were Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Turkey, South Korea and Taiwan. Interestingly such countries have sometimes been major exporters of labour (notably Mexico and Turkey), or have become transit countries (Morocco, Turkey), or have switched to immigration countries (South Korea, Taiwan). Parts of post-1990 Eastern Europe could also be regarded as semi-periphery. Of course the rise of China, India and Russia as global economic powers makes Wallerstein's tripartite classification somewhat outdated.

low-wage, low-status labour sectors of the global cities described by Sassen above. Writers like Robin Cohen (1987) and Lydia Potts (1990) deployed the notion of the historically continuous global market for labour to stress the relentlessness of capitalism's demand for exploitable slave-like workers.

By their very nature, historical-structural models of migration have a common fundamental flaw: they regard migrants as 'little more than passive pawns in the play of great powers and world processes presided over by the logic of capital accumulation' (Arango 2004: 27). Like Rostow's stages of growth and Zelinsky's mobility and migration transitions, but in a different ideological frame, dependency and world-systems approaches offer their own respective versions of historical determinism: 'univocal, reductionist interpretations of history in which all countries pass through… as if following a grand script' (Arango 2004: 27).

Three further weaknesses can be observed when we look at 'real-world' outcomes. First, migration flows are not all channelled along the pathways of capital penetration. Migration develops in ways that are much more spontaneous, patterned by geographies of perceived opportunity as they pop up in different parts of the world. Second, the agency of migrants is denied. Of course, very many millions of migrants are exploited, brutalised, overworked and underpaid; but others make progress, succeed, and prosper, as evidenced by the many successful ethnic business specialisms in North American and elsewhere. Third, surprisingly little attention has been paid, by all the models reviewed thus far, to the role of the State in patterning migration flows. The incorporation of the state is made more explicit in the latest version of the historical-structural family of macro-models, the *political economy* approach. At the risk of stating the obvious, this model combines the economic power of labour-demand theory with state or supra-state political mechanisms which generate (or control) international population movements. The political economy approach sees the immigration policies of receiving states (or supra-national bodies such as the EU) – quota and admission systems, regulations of entry, duration of stay, work permits, citizenship rights etc. – as directly shaping the volume, dynamics and geographical patterns of international migration flows. In Ewa Morawska's *hegemonic stability* version of this model, the global economic system rests on the political and military power of a group of dominant nations (2007: 4). In its current form, the neoliberal economic order enables hegemonic receiver-states to regulate global trade, finance, and international migration.

Castles and Miller's *Age of Migration* (1993) adopted a broad political economy perspective on the phenomenon of global migration, although in the book's later editions the favoured conceptual frame became an explication of the growing connectivity between migration, globalisation and what they

called 'social transformation' – 'major shifts in dominant [global] power relationships'. According to Castles and Miller (2009: 54), the recent massive shifts in global economic, political and military power dynamics represent just such a transformational change (see also Castles 2010). But Castles and Miller also acknowledge the way that international migration challenges the hegemony of the state and fundamentally retextures national societies: the growth of 'transnational societies' as well as the activities of more historically embedded diasporas has blurred formerly distinctive spheres of state authority and decision-making (2009: 12).

Systems and networks

A systems approach has been widely hailed as a fruitful and comprehensive framework for studying migration, largely because of its multiple analytical focus on structure, linkage and process. It is regarded as a potentially 'scientific' approach (its rigour deriving from general systems theory) and flexible in scale and ideology, ranging from village migration systems (Mabogunje 1970), inter-urban migration (Poot 1986), the European labour migration system (White and Woods 1980: 49-55), to the global migration system (Kritz et al. 1992) or the world systems theory of Wallerstein (1979). The attraction of a system approach is that it enables the conceptualisation of migration to move beyond a linear, unidirectional, push-pull movement to an emphasis on migration as circular, multi-causal and interdependent, with the effects of change in one part of the system being traceable through the rest of the system (Faist 1997a: 193). Hence systems can be self-feeding (like chain migration), self-regulating (correcting themselves in response to a 'shock' to the system) or self-modifying (e.g. shifting to a different destination when one is blocked off).

Mabogunje's (1970) seminal paper on a systems approach to rural-urban migration in West Africa described a model with five elements:

1. The environmental setting: economic conditions, government policy, social and community values, and the availability of transport and communications.
2. The migrant: the energy travelling through the system.
3. Control subsystems, which determine, for instance, who goes and who stays.
4. Adjustment mechanisms reacting to the departure and arrival of migrants, both in the village and in the urban context.
5. Feedback loops, such as return visits, which calibrate the system either to continue and expand (positive feedback) or to diminish and close down (negative feedback).

Kritz et al. (1992) argued for the application of Mabogunje's model to international migration, pointing to the ability of a systems approach to integrate various theoretical approaches and scales of analysis. Yet, the approach has failed to progress beyond the descriptive identification of various national and regional systems, such as the 'apartheid migration system', the 'Gulf migration system' and so on (Boyle et al. 1998: 77-79). Problems of data availability and research design largely explain the failure to operationalise a systems approach to the full extent demanded by Mabogunje's clarion call, whilst critics of the systems approach point to its mechanistic, positivist nature and to its neglect of the personal and humanistic angles.

This last criticism is answered by the voluminous research on *migration networks*. Joaquín Arango, who is otherwise critical of the weak and fragmented theorisation of international migration, is enthusiastic about networks: 'The importance of networks for migration can hardly be overstated… [they] rank amongst the most important explanatory factors for migration' (2004: 28). In a nutshell, migrant networks are sets of interpersonal ties that connect migrants, non-migrants and former migrants in webs of kinship, friendship and shared origin. They can be considered a form of social capital stretched across migrant space, and therefore facilitate the likelihood of international movement because they provide information which lowers the costs and risks of migration (Massey et al. 1998: 42-43). Indeed, in Charles Tilly's memorable phrase, 'it is not people who migrate but networks' (1990: 79).

Personal and social networks, which are self-evidently relational, constitute the 'crucial meso level' between micro and macro formulations of migration, helping us to move beyond the impersonal mechanics of gravity and push-pull theories of migration and to connect individual and socio-structural reasons for migrating (Faist 1997a; Goss and Lindquist 1995). Migration networks contribute three further important insights into theorising the migration process: they contribute to understanding the dynamics of *differential* migration; they help to predict *future* migration, since networks 'reproduce' migrants through time; and they contribute to resolving a major theoretical distinction between the initial *causes* of migration and its *perpetuation* and its *diffusion in time and space* (Fussell 2012).

Migrant networks have long been present in migration research. They were implicit in one of the most important migration 'classics' – *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America* (Thomas and Znaniecki 1918-1920); and they were fundamental in early studies of chain migration (see MacDonald and MacDonald's 1964 paper on chain migration from Italian villages to the

'little Italies' of American cities). More recently, migrant social networks have taken a more 'transnational turn' (Brettell 2008: 125) – a point I return to later.

Whilst a lot of empirical research has focused on the strength and density of family networks and other close personal ties in reproducing migration, Granovetter's (1973) notion of the 'strength of weak ties' has also been shown to be instrumental in facilitating migration. Weak ties, based on (perceptions of) common cultures or ethnicities, or even fleeting friendships between migrants in vulnerable positions, can generate a sense of mutual trust or empathy and thereby result in bonds being formed and help being given (Tilly 2007). According to Boyd and Nowak (2012: 79-83), there are three main types of migrant networks: family and personal networks, labour networks, and illegal migrant networks. These authors also highlight the gendered nature of all networks, and the often active role of women in developing and sustaining personal networks (2012: 83-86).

The dominant view of social networks in the migration literature is that they have the positive functions alluded to above: by providing information and contacts, they direct migrants to particular destinations where help regarding accommodation, finding a job, financial assistance and other kinds of support are available. Hence migrant networks tend to have a multiplier effect and to perpetuate migration (Arango 2004: 28). However, like social capital, networks can also be exclusionary; moreover, they must, sooner or later, decline in strength and extent, since they cannot go on expanding indefinitely. Little research has been done on how networks dissolve. A final perspective highlights networks' darker side. In this context, Samers (2010: 87-93) draws attention to the phenomenon of smuggling and trafficking networks, halfway between social networks and (criminal) business networks for transporting migrants across borders, and subsequently (in the case of trafficking) exploiting them by holding them in a bonded and indebted state, notably sex-work.

The 'New Economics of Labour Migration'

Combining family decision-making with neoclassical orthodoxy, the so-called 'new economics' of migration has made a major impact on the theorisation of migration since the 1980s. Its leading exponent has been Oded Stark (see Stark 1991; for two landmark papers see Lucas and Stark 1985; Stark and Bloom 1985; and for an excellent review article, Taylor 1999). There are two main innovative aspects of the New Economics of Labour Migration (NELM). The first is to recognise that migration decisions (who goes, where to go, for how long, to do what etc.) are not individual decisions but joint decisions taken within the ambit of the household, and for different members of the household. Sometimes the scale of the decision-making unit moves

further into the meso scale of extended families and wider communal groups (Massey et al. 1998: 21). The second is that rational-choice decision-making is not only about wage and income maximisation but is also about income diversification and risk aversion. Risk reduction is particularly appropriate in poor sending countries where 'market failures' (for instance, crop failure due to drought or hurricane, or sudden unemployment) cannot be compensated by savings, insurance or credit (because none of these are available).

Taking these two perspectives together, it can be seen that families and households are in an appropriate position to control risks to their economic well-being by diversifying their income-earning and livelihood resources into a 'portfolio' of different activities, spreading their labour resources over space and time. Different family members can thus be allocated to different tasks: one or more on the farm, another perhaps engaged in internal migration, and others in international migration. One of the key benefits of international migration to a wage-labour destination is that some of the income earned can be sent back in the form of remittances. This monetary return can be used to hedge against other activities failing, to cover the basic costs of everyday life (food, clothing, children's education etc.), or to invest in some new project such as a house, land or small business.

It is interesting to see the different *return migration* outcomes of the neoclassical vs. the new economics models. Neoclassically-framed migration does not predict return, which can only take place by people who have miscalculated the balance of costs and benefits in migration: hence returns are movements of 'failure'. In NELM theory, on the other hand, returnees are considered 'successes'. These are people who have achieved their 'target' in migrating and then return home with their accumulated savings, perhaps to be used as an investment 'nest-egg' (Cassarino 2004).

NELM is not without its critics (eg. Arango 2004: 23). It is limited to the supply side of labour migration, and seems best when applied to poor, rural settings in places such as Botswana and Mexico (to quote two classic locations where research has been done on it). It assumes, moreover, that intra-household relationships are harmonious, leading to unanimous collective decision-making. In other words, the family or household is treated as a black box without acknowledging the tensions or conflicts that are contained therein – such as patriarchal practices or inter-sibling rivalry for example – which might lead to 'distorted' decision making. Finally, it does not apply to the common situation where the entire household migrates.

Current status of migration studies

The previous discussion has attempted to distil the main approaches to theorising the causal stimuli for (international) migration. It has been demonstrated that, despite the relatively long tradition of research on migration, there is no single theory that captures the full complexity of migration, and nor will there ever be. Nicholas Van Hear (2010: 1535) has written that the appetite for searching for an overreaching theory of migration has waned along with the increasing diversity of migration flows in the new global political economy of the New World Order. He speaks of 'mixed migration': the mixed nature of migration flows, and the mixed motivations in many individuals' embodiment of migration, such as the migrating student/worker, the tourist/migrant, the wandering migrant/trader, and so on (2010: 1535).

Two very broad trends can be noted in the recent writings about migration by some of the most influential scholars in the field such as Stephen Castles (2010), Thomas Faist (2010) and Alejandro Portes (2010). The first is an attempt to reinscribe migration within the wider phenomena of social change and social transformation, so that migration is not studied and theorised in isolation. Indeed, not only is migration affected by broad dynamics of national and global social change, but it is part and parcel of that change. A contrast in emphasis is apparent here between Castles and Portes. The latter sees the changes generated by migration on receiving societies such as the United States as significant but not deep; they leave the existing social order more or less intact; indeed, Portes argues that to some extent they buttress the fundamental constitutive elements of the host society (2010: 1556). For Castles, on the other hand, migration is a part of the process of transformation of social structures and institutions, and of the entire global political economy. He makes the case that 'migration studies' needs to be embedded in broader social theory, drawing on the full repertoire of social science disciplines. He asserts, as I have done earlier in this review, that 'migration embraces all dimensions of human experience, and therefore demands an interdisciplinary approach' (2010: 1596).

This leads to the second broad trend which can be observed. Since the early 1990s, if not before, the study of migration, and by implication some aspects of its theorisation, has been heavily influenced by new perspectives arising from qualitative sociology, anthropology, human geography and cultural studies. Many of these new insights and approaches reflect the widespread 'cultural turn' in the social sciences, which was particularly notable, for instance, in the way that human geography research on migration switched from quantitatively inclined population geography to qualitatively-minded cultural geographers (Blunt 2007; King 2012). This epistemological shift

did not so much re-make theories of the *causes* of migration as enrich our understanding of the migrant *experience*. This same trend also witnessed a confluence of narrative and analytical styles, so that the same kind of article or monograph could have been written by a researcher with a background in anthropology, sociology, human geography, cultural studies, and so on.

If there is one 'new' analytical theme that has dominated the field of migration studies over this period it is the framing of international migration as a *transnational* process. The two foundational studies for the transnational paradigm were *Towards a Transnational Perspective on Migration* (Glick Schiller et al. 1992) and *Nations Unbound* (Basch et al. 1994); other influential voices include Portes (1999; also Portes et al. 1999) and Vertovec (1999, 2004). Portes (1999) offers a much-quoted definition: transnationalism involves migrant activities 'that take place on a recurrent basis across national borders and that require a regular and significant commitment of time by participants… These activities are not limited to economic enterprises [such as sending and receiving remittances, or setting up a business 'back home'], but include political, cultural and religious activities as well'.

There is a danger of exaggerating the importance of the transnational approach to migration and assuming that all international migrants lead 'transnational lives' or occupy 'transnational social spaces' (Faist 2000). Portes (2003: 876) himself points out that this applies only to a minority of migrants, and to give the opposite impression has resulted from 'sampling on the dependent variable', that is, carrying out research only on those migrants who are 'transnational'. If the transnational approach has a value in reformulating migration theory, it is that it questions the linear, push-pull, no-return model; it builds on theories of migration networks; and it also places a big question-mark over the extensive body of literature devoted to the integration/assimilation of migrants in host countries – a literature that lies outwith the scope of this paper.

Future Challenges

This paper has reviewed the main theories of (international) migration over the hundred years or more between Ravenstein's 'laws' of migration and the 'transnational turn' in migration studies. I have stressed the 'double embeddedness' of migration (King 2002): on the one hand the internal dynamics of migration based on migrants' social networks and the way that migration is imbricated in migrants' lives (alongside and interwoven with family, relationships, residence, work, leisure etc.); and on the other hand the way that, at a macro scale, migration is part and parcel of the contemporary world's social transformation (Castles and Miller 2009: 47).

Despite the current global recession, migration is likely to continue to be important in the future, because of continuing strong pressures for global integration, capitalism's demand for certain types of labour, and people's desire to migrate in order to improve their life-chances.

What are the future challenges for building migration theory which is both more robust and more nuanced? They are many. Arango (2004: 30-34) gives us some leads. First, in explaining why people move, we have taken our eyes off the crucial counterfactual question: why do so many people *not* move? Hence, to the classic pairing of push and pull factors should be added another pair: 'retain' and 'repel'. This implies a redirected focus on the social, family and cultural structures of (non-)migration at the micro- and meso-scales, and on the (geo-)political dimensions of international relations and migration control on the macro level. Except for macro-scale political economy, politics and the state are usually missing from theories of migration, and it is time to bring them in (Hollifield 2008), without falling into the trap of 'methodological nationalism' and inscribing all international migration behaviour within the container-space of the nation-state (Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2003).

Second, we need to be more aware of the social structures of mobility and migration and not be carried away by the over-celebrationary 'hype' of mobility. Access to mobility is one of the fundamental axes of class division both on a global scale (between countries whose inhabitants can freely migrate and those where this is not a realistic possibility for most people), and within countries according to wealth, status and 'connections'. Kaufmann et al. (2004) advance the notion of 'mobility capital' or 'motility' – the capacity of individuals to be mobile in social and geographic space. I suggest that access to mobility – to possibilities to travel, migrate, circulate and return – will become a more fundamental differentiating factor within societies in the future.

Third, my main focus on labour migration in this paper reflects the theoretical convergence in the literature on this dominant type of migration. This overlooks the increasing relevance of other migration types, such as family reunion, marriage migration, student migration, brain drain, lifestyle migration and 'mixed-mode' migrations. Some of the theories reviewed in this paper have relevance to other types of migration, including internal migration: social network theory is a particular case in point. Other types of migration require a more specialised tailoring of theory. Refugees in particular are a tangential field of migration spawning its own, small theoretical literature (Kunz 1981; Richmond 1988). This leads to a fourth point: the value of comparative migration studies at a time when there is such a proliferation of individual case-studies of this or that migrant group in this or that country.

A fifth challenge is to consolidate the positioning of gender in migration theory, much of which has been 'gender-blind' or, perhaps even worse, has assumed that 'men migrate and women stay behind'. One hundred years after Ravenstein pointed to the differences in migration propensities for men and women, Mirjana Morokvasic (1984) stressed that 'birds of passage are also women', cleverly reprising the title of Piore's (1979) famous book. Numerous studies over the past thirty years have demonstrated the various ways in which gender relations – notably patriarchal family structures – fundamentally condition the migration process and the decision-making behind it (see, inter alia, Mahler and Pessar 2006; Pessar and Mahler 2003; Silvey 2006).   To cite one typical example, Gunilla Bjerén (1997: 226) stressed the *gender relationality* of migration: in her words 'the mobility of men will be misunderstood if not seen in relation to the [im]mobility of women' – and also, of course, vice versa. Whilst men and women often migrate for fundamentally different reasons and under different conditions, it is also important to understand to what extent, if any, migration itself reshapes gender relations. Migration can lead to a measure of empowerment for women, but it depends on the particular migration context they are embedded in. Despite considerable progress in 'bringing gender into the core of migration studies' (Mahler and Pessar 2006), much remains to be done, not least in moving beyond the 'gender equals women' mindset and inscribing into gendered studies of migration the neglected angle of masculinities and migration.

Sixth and finally, another way of approaching an understanding of the experience of migration – what it is to *be* a migrant, to live in a state of 'migrancy' – is to engage in the kind of postmodern enquiry favoured by writers such as Ahmed et al. (2003), Chambers (1994), Papastergiadis (2000) and Rapport and Dawson (1998). These authors write from an anthropological or cultural studies perspective, an optic also taken up by cultural geographers (Blunt 2007). In one of the earliest essays on the cultural approach to studying migration, geographer Tony Fielding (1992) explored two main 'cultures of migration': the '*stairway to heaven*' (migration as freedom, new beginnings, going places, opting out etc.); and the *rootlessness and sadness* of migration (migration as exile, displacement, rupture, sacrifice, failure etc.). Fielding's 'narratives of migration' foreground a conceptualisation of migration as 'existential': in Ghassan Hage's words, about the feeling of 'going somewhere (or nowhere) in life'. Hage (2005: 471) describes the feelings which often lead up to migration: 'it is when people feel that they are existentially "going too slowly" or "going nowhere", that they are somewhat "stuck" on the "highway of life", that they begin contemplating the necessity of physically "going somewhere"'.

Conclusion

For sure, migration stirs the emotions, not only of migrants but also of students and researchers. And also, as we have seen, it generates controversy: is migration a 'good' thing or 'bad'? But I also want to reaffirm the importance of studying it from a 'scientific' perspective. I round up with two specifications that underpin most migration theory. The first is to appreciate that there is a division between those theories that address the *causes* of migration, and those that account for its *perpetuation*. In other words, how does migration initiate, develop and diffuse in time and space through a kind of life-cycle of migration, and then, possibly, fade away? (cf. de Haas 2010b; Fussell 2012). The second requirement is to develop theories that integrate human agency with state and other structures (cf. Massey et al. 1998: 281; Morawska 2012: 65-70). It is true that there is a strong current trend in the literature to recognise the agency of migrants, to see them almost as heroes or as the footsoldiers of globalisation; but we need to recognise, along with Sassen (1998: xxi, xxxi), that, particularly in this neoliberal age, migration is produced and patterned by decisions taken in government offices, in military headquarters, and in corporate boardrooms.

Explicitly or implicitly, the interplay between the agency of the individual actor and the structural context within which that actor manoeuvres is at the heart of most studies of migration. The blending of human agency with the often unyielding power of state and other structures presages the structuration approach pioneered by Giddens (1984) and taken up by a number of migration theorists with varying degrees of enthusiasm (Goss and Lindquist 1995; Morawska 2001b; and Bakewell 2010 for a more cynical view). It also enables me to dialogue with other papers in the Willy Brandt series. In her 2007 paper, Eva Morawska made a powerful plea for the application of the structuration model to the theorisation of migration. She summarises the structuration model as follows. Long-term and macro-scale configurations and forces constitute the 'upper-structural layers' which set the 'dynamic limits' of the 'possible' and the 'impossible' within which people act. Lower down the time-space scale are the more proximate social surroundings within which individuals 'evaluate their situation, define purposes and undertake actions' that may, or may not, in turn affect these local-level structures and, over time, potentially the larger-scale structures too (2007: 12). For human agency, Morawska follows Emirbayer and Mische (1998) and defines agency as the everyday engagement of individuals with different structural environments which, 'through the interplay of habit, imagination, and judgement, both reproduces and transforms those structures in interactive response to the problems posed by challenging situations' (Morawska 2007: 12).

Morawska judges the structuration model outlined above as particularly suited to the interpretation of migrations which take place between different environments and which thus impel migrants to confront new structures and circumstances which they have to accept and adapt to, or perhaps change. Interpreted in this framework, migrants' activities are neither the deterministically manipulated 'products' of structures, nor are they simply 'agentic volitions'; rather they are the ongoing and constantly changing outcomes of time- and place- specific contexts, and of the interactions between structures and agentic actions (2007: 13). Morawska goes on to argue that the amount of agentic power that individuals can deploy depends, firstly, on their socio-cultural resources, and secondly is contingent on the influence of various structural elements which vary spatially and temporally. Amongst such forces are the dynamism or stagnation of the economy (highly relevant at the present conjuncture); the fluid or segmented nature of the labour market, and its degree of regulation; the openness and restrictiveness of state policies for migration; and the civic-political pluralism or exclusiveness of the host society (2007: 13).

Yet the application of the structuration approach to migration also has its critics. Bakewell (2010) argues that, despite its intuitive beguiling nature, the structuration model has failed to offer any significant advances for migration theory, largely because of the empirical difficulties of operationalising the theoretical dualism inherent in structuration. In order to overcome what he calls the 'structure-agency impasse', which 'prevents the development of coherent migration theory' (2010: 1691), Bakewell argues for a critical realist approach based partly on a modified form of grounded theory[14] and partly on Archer's (1982, 1995) notion of morphogenesis. According to Archer (1995: 89-92), the morphogenetic approach to disentangling the relationship between agency and structure operates over a three-stage time-scale: the consequences of past actions contribute to structural conditions that have a causal influence over subsequent social actions and interaction; this social interaction then sets in motion 'structural elaboration' which modifies the previous structural properties and may introduce new ones. And yet Bakewell is forced to admit that 'it [is] impossible to track down one

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14 Modified in the sense that the concrete data produced by research subjects' narratives is not a sufficient basis *in itself* for the production of theory. If research categories and conclusions are established solely on the basis of what respondents say, the analysis tends to revert to individualism or at best, to a kind of 'collective anecdote' or 'received wisdom', and the emergent properties of structural factors may be overlooked. In other words, what is missed is the researcher's ability to develop theory on the basis of analytical abstraction from the empirical data provided by respondents (Bakewell 2010: 1705, quoting Pratt 1995 and Yeung 1997).

study [on migration] which explicitly draws on a critical realist perspective' (2010: 1704).[15]

It is interesting to ponder how the structure-agency mechanism of structuration (or the more iterative morphogenetic approach) maps on the fundamental divide observed by de Haas (2010b), Fussell (2012) and Massey et al. (1993, 1998) between theories that attempt to explain the *initiation* of migration (neoclassical push-pull theory, 'new economics' approaches, dual and segmented labour markets, and world systems theory), and those that strive to explain the *perpetuation* of migration once started (systems and networks, cumulative causation and dependency theory). De Haas (2010b) concentrates a major part of his analysis on why migration theory fails to take into account, let alone predict, the *decline* of a migration stream or system once it becomes established and grows. Cumulative causation contains an obvious internal logical flaw – it cannot proceed *ad infinitum* – and even the established work on migration systems says remarkably little about how networks dissolve, as I noted earlier.

Both de Haas (2010b) and Fussell (2012) see the evolution of a migration process through the lens of diffusion theory, producing either a bell-curve whereby the migration rate (migrants per thousand resident population of the sending country/region) rises, reaches a peak, and then falls; or an S-curve as the early pioneers lead initially to a mass adoption ('herd effects', cf. Epstein 2008) and then saturation, when all the available supply of potential migrants has been used up, at least under prevailing economic, social and technological conditions.[16] Social capital can also play a key role in this diffusion process, both as a means of mobilising migration, and preventing it via exclusionary mechanisms (de Haas 2010b: 1589-1590, 1601-1603). Furthermore it is important to recognise that the causes driving migration and the contextual circumstances surrounding it can, and often do, change over the course of development of the migration stream. These changing circumstances can manifest themselves in different ways at different time-scales – for instance between different historical or genealogical generations, or over an individual's life-span. Migration is not always, by any means, a one-off event which ends in settlement, but an ongoing process that is re-evaluated several times over the life-course.

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15 Though since Bakewell's paper was published such studies have started to emerge – see for instance Iosifides (2011) and Vathi's (2011) prize-winning doctoral thesis which drew explicitly on Iosifides' formulations (this thesis won the 2012 Maria Baganha prize for the best thesis produced on a European migration topic).

16 For an application of this 'growth and decline' process to the case of Swedish migration to North America 1850-1915, see Ackerman (1976).

My final point relates to scale: not so much to the macro-, meso- and micro-scale analytical levels referred to in earlier parts of this paper, but geographic scale. In my brief discussion on transnationalism and migration, I noted the dangers of 'methodological nationalism' which reifies the nation-state as the main 'container-space' for migrants' transnational mobilities. Brickell and Datta (2011) have made a convincing case for the term 'translocal spaces' to reflect the real-world links that transnational migrants have to particular places, such as their villages of origin and the urban neighbourhoods in which they settle in the host society. These are the spaces which constitute their migration life-worlds, not the entire territories of the countries they move from and to. In their Willy Brandt paper of 2007, Glick Schiller and Çaglar similarly draw attention to the importance of locality in migration studies. These latter authors fully acknowledge the power of global forces in structuring flows of people and enabling them (or not) to integrate into their reception settings and to develop new identities and subjectivities; but they are also alive to the ways in which migrants' experiences and livelihoods are in many respects detached from the respective national sending and receiving contexts, and expressed and inscribed within particular time-spaces, usually within the city and neighbourhood locality.

Thus we begin to get an idea of the challenges facing migration theorisation. Most authors writing about the topic eschew the possibility or desirability of any kind of 'grand' or 'complete' theory of migration. Rather, what we have, and what I have attempted to synthesise, are a range of interlocking theoretical perspectives which, assembled in various combinations, lead us towards a greater level of understanding of the nature and complexity of migration than earlier simplistic theorisations. Stephen Castles (2007, 2010) and Alejandro Portes (2010) have repeatedly argued for the value of a 'middle-range' theorising of migration, and Bakewell (2010: 1703) coins the term 'theoretical brick' to help to build a more solid corpus of theoretical ideas about migration. I see this as the way forward: a middle path between the general theories which make too many assumptions and have tenuous links to the messiness of reality, and the myriad case-studies which claim to have general relevance but often achieve this only in a narrow empiricist sense.

Acknowledgements

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