

# THEORIES OF MIGRATION

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ANTH 308/Migration and Human Adaptation

## Readings

- Trager [Migration & Economy Introduction](#) (Pp. 1-48)
- Cohen & Sirkeci chapter 2.

## Cohen & Sirkeci chapter 2

- Reality of migration growth is complex.
- Cannot assume that what works in Europe holds true in other parts of the world.
- The demographic structures and cultural practices of various countries & populations are not uniform.
- Economic practices vary from place to place and among the differing strata of a country.
- Mobility did not follow a single recipe.
- Two forces encouraged mobility through 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries:
  1. Agriculture
  2. Industry

## Cohen & Sirkeci chapter 2

- Great Depression (1929-1940) brought a lot of international movement to an abrupt end and forced many repatriations across the globe.
- Growing involvement of the state in migration increased as anti-immigrant sentiment built up during recession and depression.
- Internal mobility shifted from search for opportunity to attempt to escape from insecurity, disaster, danger.
- Forced migration:
  - refugees
  - asylum seekers
  - internally displaced peoples.



Men working in a field

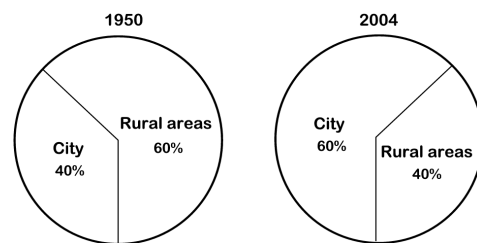
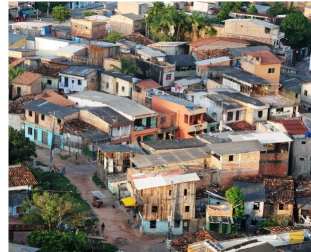


Unemployed men line up for work



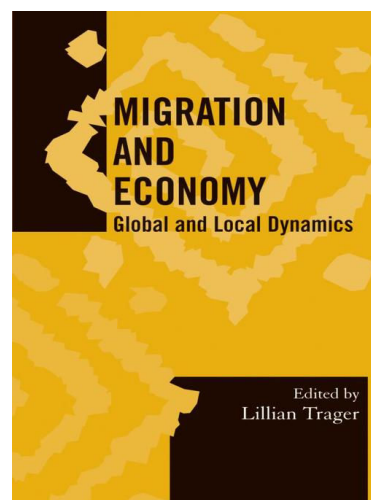
## Cohen & Sirkeci chapter 2

- Beginning in 1960s, rural to urban migration accelerated.
- International migration
  - from Third World to First.
  - From south to north.
  - From east to west.



## Trager's key arguments

1. "Migration" includes a *variety of types of mobility* that should be examined in combination with one another.
2. Theories of migration need to incorporate **both** *macrolevel* forces and *microlevel* institutions.
3. Migration is an *ongoing process* with continuing implications for those involved but also for the people to whom they (migrants) are connected.



## Theories of Migration

- **Two main types of theories** have been used to explain migration:
  - 1) those emphasizing **macroeconomic forces**, especially labor markets.
    - Focus primarily on *causes* of migration, not consequences.
  - 2) those which focus on **individual decisions**
    - Presume that *individuals* migrate with expectation of doing better.

## Middle level theories/models

- Dissatisfaction with both macro-level & individual approaches leads Trager & other anthropologists to suggest need to emphasize *intermediate levels of social organization*:
  - **Family**
  - **Community**
  - **Network**

## Middle level theories/models

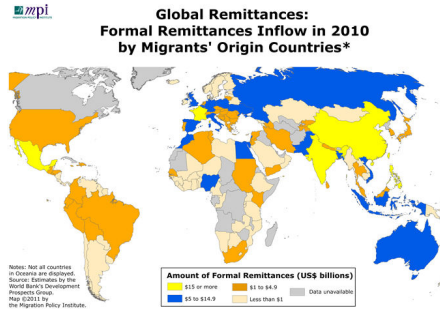
Research on intermediate levels of social organization has contributed to the analysis and understanding of the *long term consequences of migration*. *Migration is not a single event*, of one individual leaving a place and moving to another place. Rather, it *involves ongoing connections* that are formed and maintained among people located in a variety of places. Those *ongoing* relationships have *consequences* for those who move and for those who stay behind; they have *implications for the home community and the destination community*; they lead to the formation of *social networks* that *span specific communities and societies*. (Trager, page 19).

## Linkages

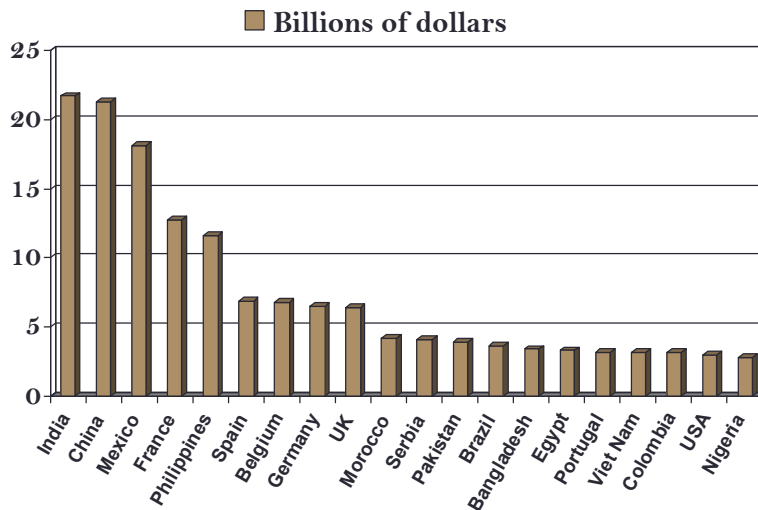
- Relatively little attention paid to movement of citizens within their own countries except where urbanization is viewed as a serious problem.
- ***Rural-urban migration*** creates a system with links between city & country.
  - Particularly true in Africa.
- Multiple dimensions to ***linkages***:
  - Social
  - Economic
  - Cultural
  - Political
- Same principle can also be applied to ***transnational linkages***.

# Remittances

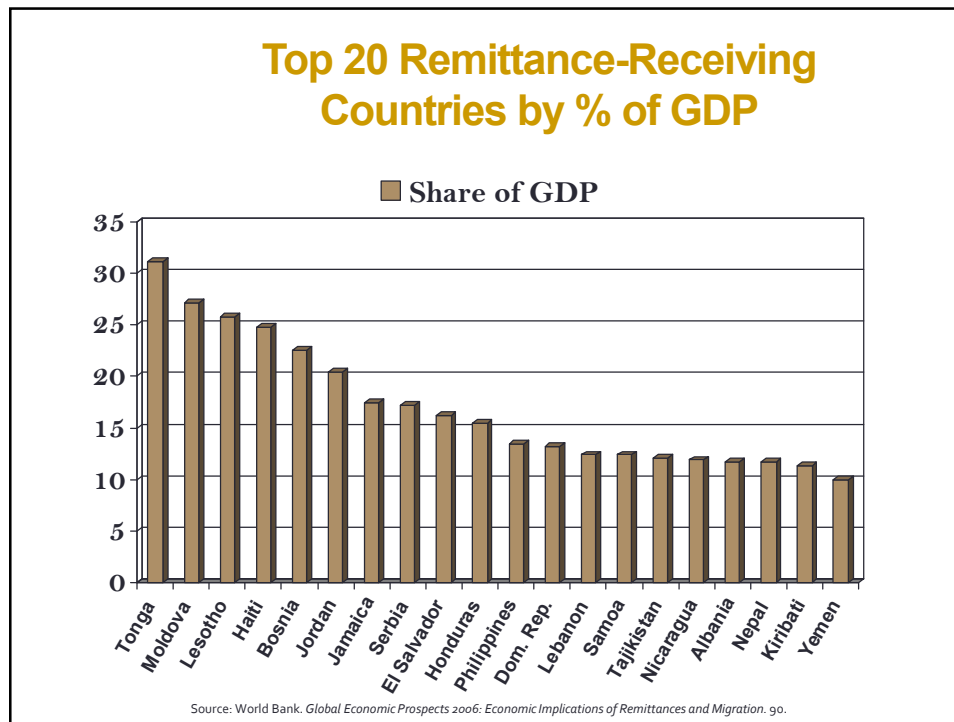
- Money sent home by migrants.
- Occur in variety of ways
- Difficult to get accurate data.
  - Less information on internal migration than international.
- Remittances often not reported.
- Discussions usually focus on the **impact** of remittances.
- Debate about value of remittances in terms of **development**.
  - Do they tend to be used for productive investments?
  - Do they help equalize rural income distribution
  - Or do they contribute to greater inequality?



## Top 20 Remittance-Receiving Countries by \$ amount



Source: World Bank. *Global Economic Prospects 2006: Economic Implications of Remittances and Migration*. 50.



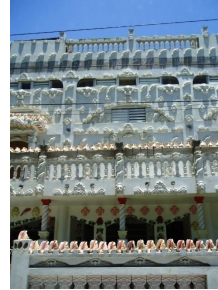
## Remittances

Types of remittance uses (Trager page 25, based on Connell & Conway 2000):

1. Family & dependent *basic needs*.
2. *Savings* strategy.
3. Human capital resource *investments* (e.g., education)
4. Location specific *capital ventures* (land, housing, business property).
5. Diversified micro-economic investments (e.g., shops, transport).
6. Community support, maintenance & sustenance.
7. Migration & remigration investments.

## Remittances

- *Housing* is common way migrants demonstrate *both* their *success* & their *commitment* to remaining connected with their home area.
- Need to go beyond simple economics & recognize *symbolic value* of remittances.
- Consider them in cultural contexts that place high value on *reciprocal obligations*.



Shell house in Puerto Rico



## Multilocality & community

- Discussions of remittances & exchanges usually presume two things:
  1. That exchanges take place between a migrant & others in one other place – the “home”.
  2. That majority of exchanges take place between family or household members.
- Increasingly apparent that *connections are maintained with people in multiple locales & with people who are not only kin but with others of the same “community”*.



## Multilocality & community

- More efficient transportation & communication systems make it possible to move & communicate over great distances
- **Multilocality** will become the norm for increasing numbers of people.
- Trager – rather than become “rootless”, migrants are in some ways more “rooted” to those places from which they come.

## Multilocality & community

- Research on international migration suggests formation of “*transnational communities*” in which individuals & groups constantly negotiate choices with regard to their participation in host societies, their relationships to their homelands, & their links to co-ethnics...
- Regardless of how migrants define their home communities, there are several ways in which they tend to engage with those communities.
- Two of major patterns are
  1. formation of organizations
  2. donations for the benefit of those at home (Trager pp. 29-30)