Ann. Rev. Anthropol. 1980. 9:135–59

RETURN MIGRATION

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International migration today differs from that of the last century. Then migration was largely a one-way movement with major streams of migrants leaving Europe and Asia for North America. It was generally assumed that those who left the Old World never returned. As early as 1885, however, Ravenstein (64) had noted the principle of return migration in his renowned list of migration laws: "Each main current of migration produces a compensating counter-current." Nevertheless, the view of migration as a once-and-only phenomenon which arose from the nineteenth century transatlantic experience dominated migration studies (38). The thousands of migrants who returned to their homelands, including an estimated one quarter of the 16 million Europeans who arrived in the United States during the early decades of this century, were barely noticed by social scientists. In a migration bibliography published as recently as 10 years ago by Mangalam (51), only 10 of the 2051 titles listed were studies of return migration (8). There were actually several times that many studies, but still a trifling effort.

Rhoades (68) has suggested several other reasons for the neglect of return migration. The massive urbanization occurring in most parts of the world led to a "rural-urban" analytical framework in which geographical movements were viewed as occurring in one direction only—rural to urban. The nature of traditional anthropological fieldwork which involved research for a limited period of time (customarily one year) in a limited space (a single village) may also have led to a view of migration as a static event. Finally, return is the most difficult aspect of the migration cycle to quantify. While

[1]I wish to thank Richard Felson, Sharon Gmelch, Donald Hill, Robert Rhoades, and Walter P. Zenner for their helpful comments on an earlier draft, and John Cullen at the Irish Foundation of Human Development and Conor Ward at University College, Dublin for their support and services which enabled me to undertake this review.

0084-6570/80/1015-0135$01.00

most countries gather information on incoming aliens, the same does not apply for returning citizens.

In the last 15 years, however, anthropology and its sister disciplines have begun to treat migration as a system, examining both stream and counterstreams; and working at both ends—sending and receiving societies. In this essay I will review the findings of the now growing literature on return migration, attempting to pull together the insights made by fieldworkers and to arrive at some generalizations. Treated will be typologies of return migrants, reasons for return, adaptation and readjustment of returnees, and the impact of return migration on the migrants' home societies.

Before proceeding, I should make clear what is meant by return migration. Perhaps reflecting the subject's recent emergence as an area of inquiry, there has been much terminological sloppiness (8). A wide variety of terms has been used to describe return migration: reflux migration, homeward migration, remigration, return flow, second-time migration, repatriation, and at a recent AAA meeting one speaker suggested "retromigration." Following its usage in most of the works reviewed here, *return migration* is defined as the movement of emigrants back to their homelands to resettle. Migrants returning for a vacation or an extended visit without the intention of remaining at home are generally not defined as return migrants, though in some settings it is difficult to distinguish analytically the migrants returning home for a short visit or seasonally from those who have returned permanently. A related concept is *reemigration.* This refers to people who move back to their homelands and then emigrate a second time. The frequent movement between two or more places, such as in seasonal labor migration, is referred to as *circular migration* (8, 54).

In this review I am primarily concerned with international return migration in which the returnees cross cultural boundaries. I will not be concerned with the return movements of migrants within a single cultural system such as African wage laborers going from the city back to rural villages. This type of domestic return which frequently comes under the heading of circular migration has been treated elsewhere [see, for example, Graves & Graves (29) and Petersen (60)]. Most of the return migration literature deals with persons who originally migrated to urban-industrialized countries or regions, notably in northern Europe and northeastern North America, who have returned to their homelands in less developed areas, particularly the southern and eastern fringes of Europe and the Caribbean, but also to rural hinterlands within industrialized regions, such as the west of Ireland.

Data on the sociodemographic characteristics of return migrants are limited but do permit us to make some generalizations about *who* returns (1, 2, 9, 27, 35, 44, 49, 56, 57, 66, 70, 71, 76, 78, 85, 87, 93). Most return

migrants originally emigrated from rural areas and small towns in developing regions. Their decision to leave was voluntary, yet motivated by economic necessity—high unemployment, decline in the amount of available agricultural land, the fragmentation of family holdings, and so forth. More men than women left, most while in their late teens or early twenties and still single. Most went to major urban-industrial centers where they obtained unskilled jobs which nevertheless paid far more than they could have earned at home. They followed a pattern of chain migration, going to places where their kinsmen or friends had already become established. Among the married couples, the men usually went first, sending for their wives and children later, once a home had been set up. Upon returning many settled in large towns and cities but many also went home to their rural place of origin. Few, however, resumed the agricultural occupations they had held before emigration.

TYPOLOGIES OF RETURN MIGRANTS

Most typologies of return migration have dealt with two dimensions along which there is considerable diversity: the length of time migrants intended to remain abroad and their reason(s) for returning (8, 13, 44, 49, 66, 72). In each scheme a basic distinction is made between those migrants who intended their emigration to be *temporary* and those who intended it to be *permanent.* The former usually returned to their country of origin after accomplishing the specific objective(s) they had set out to achieve, most often to accumulate a sum of money. By returning they are merely fulfilling their original plans. The second type, on the other hand, had intended, or at least hoped, their emigration to be permanent—that they would be able to create a better life abroad. But for various reasons they decided or were forced to return. King (44), Lianos (49), and Cerase (13) categorize two or more subtypes among these "permanent" migrants according to the cause of their return. First are those who were forced to return due to some outside factor, either family circumstances, such as the need to look after an ill or elderly parent, or faltering economic conditions in the host country. These migrants were satisfied with their situation abroad and would have preferred to remain had they been able to do so. Second are those who failed to adapt to the way of life in the host society, perhaps because of the strangeness of the language, people, and customs or because they could not bear the psychic costs of being separated from close friends and the familiar environment of home.

The core features of the various classifications can be abstracted into the following composite typology:

1. Returnees who intended temporary migration. The time of their return is determined by the objectives they set out to achieve at the time of emigration.
2. Returnees who intended permanent migration but were forced to return. Their preference was to remain abroad but because of external factors they were required to return.
3. Returnees who intended permanent migration but chose to return. Failure to adjust and/or homesickness led to their decision to return.

The typologies reviewed here do help clarify basic types of return migrants. Nevertheless there are problems, especially in attempting to categorize migrants according to their intentions at the time of emigration, i.e. temporary versus permanent. Most migrants simply do not have definite plans (8, 26, 73). They go on a trial basis, letting their decision of whether or not to return and when to return be guided by the opportunities they find in the new society. Bretell (10) shows that the Portuguese migrants she studied, even after many years away, retain an "ideology of return." That is, most, no matter how settled, keep open the possibility that they will one day go home. They take action to that end in sending remittances and maintaining close contacts with people at home. An ideology of return and perpetually postponing a decision on permanent settlement has been described among other migrant groups as well (16, 36, 74).

MOTIVES FOR RETURN MIGRATION

Why do migrants return to their homelands? Why are many willing to give up a comparatively high standard of living in one of the advanced industrialized nations of the world in order to return to a less developed society? In reviewing the evidence on the reasons for returning I will concentrate on those migrants who either intended permanent emigration or lacked definite plans. I am not concerned with the forced repatriation of refugees during or following war (8, 53, 73, 81) when obviously little choice is involved, nor with circular labor migration.

A few writings point to unfavorable economic conditions in the host society, such as recession or layoffs and unemployment within a single industry, as the primary cause of return migration (35, 41). Hernandez-Alvarez (34) reports that many Puerto Rican migrants in the United States returned to Puerto Rico in the 1960s as a result of being displaced from their jobs by automation and mechanization. Kayser (40, 41), King (46), and Rhoades (66, 67, 69) have documented the massive return flows of European guestworkers or *Gastarbeiter* from Germany and other industrialized northern European nations due to recent economic recessions

(1966–1967 and 1972–1973) which had their most serious impact on those sectors of the economy—factory and construction—in which most migrant workers are employed. Most studies, however, report noneconomic factors as the primary reasons for return migration (1, 8, 16, 19, 22, 26, 42, 57, 72, 77, 78, 85, 93). Most frequently mentioned are strong family ties and the desire to be in the company of one's own kin and longtime friends. The desire to return often surfaces during vacation trips home. Perhaps not entirely satisfied with factory work and city life, and exalted by open space, blue sky, clean air, an easygoing pace of life, and the friendliness of people at home, the migrant begins to seriously consider a new life at home. Many Newfoundland returnees indicated that they had made the final decision to return while in Newfoundland on holidays, and although they had always thought about returning, made the actual decision suddenly (Gmelch et al, in preparation). Some returned to their homes in Toronto, Montreal, and other Canadian mainland cities just long enough to pack their belongings and put their houses up for sale.

Ailing or elderly parents obligate some migrants, particularly the eldest children, to return. They go back to look after a sick relative and to run the family business or farm. Initially they may have intended to reemigrate to the host country once affairs at home were sorted out, but after settling in again they soon gave up thoughts of leaving. The importance of family ties in return migration is reflected, I believe, in the sizable numbers of migrants who return to their home communities in rural areas. One might expect all but retired and independently wealthy returnees to settle instead in urban areas where employment opportunities are greater and the attractions of city life, to which they had become accustomed, are present. Yet in studies where data are available on the place of resettlement, from one-third to one-half of the migrants returned to rural areas or small towns (23, 26, 27, 49).

Feelings of loyalty or allegiance to the home society is also cited as an important consideration among many migrants. In several studies where a series of reasons for return were scaled and quantitatively measured, "love of homeland" or a similarly worded concept was cited as the most important factor in the decision to return (26, 70, 85). This was particularly true among Israeli, Irish, and Newfoundland migrants. For many of these returnees the social and cultural advantages of life in their native society outweighs the economic costs—the expense of moving and the decline in earning power—of returning. This is less often the case, however, in the poorer developing nations where the home economy cannot provide many returnees with adequate employment and a comfortable standard of living. Only in the hinterlands of the industrialized world are the economic costs of return small enough to be affordable.

In some cases the decision to return was also influenced by negative or "push" factors in the host country. Jamaican migrants in Britain encountered painful experiences of racial prejudice and discrimination (19, 82). This was also reported to be a factor in the return of some Puerto Rican migrants from the United States (34). Emigrants from the warmer climates of south Asia and the Caribbean had difficulty adjusting to the comparatively severe European and northern North American winters (16, 19, 82). And, as previously mentioned, poor economic conditions force some migrants to return.

Overall, however, the attractions or positive attributes of the home society—"pull" factors—have more influence in return migration decisions than factors inherent in the host societies. This was conclusively demonstrated by several quantitative studies of migration in which the relative influence of push and pull factors as motives for return were compared (26, 85).

The most common method used to elicit migration motives in these studies has simply been to ask migrants directly why they returned (*standard motive*). There are several potential problems in this approach. For one, it implicitly assumes that migrants know what motivated them and that they will state those factors when asked. Moreover, as Taylor (83) points out, there is a tendency for people to reduce the wide variety of factors which influenced their decision down to one or two overriding reasons. This is done to reduce the cognitive dissonance or psychological discomfort that results from having to make a decision where there are two or more alternatives. Also, the reason migrants give may vary with the identity of the interviewer and the context in which they are asked. A second problem arises in ordering and classifying the wide array of reasons given by migrants into a set of meaningful and manageable dimensions. Nina Toren (84) tackles both problems in a methodologically sophisticated study of Israeli returnees from the United States. Rather than ask returnees directly to explain their motives for returning, she presented them with a scale or "accounting scheme" of 18 reasons and asked them to indicate on a five-point scale the degree to which each influenced their decision to migrate. The 18 motives were grouped into three broad categories: 1. economic and occupational; 2. patriotic and social; and 3. familial and personal. Within each category there were three reasons which indicated pull factors (positive features associated with the homeland) and three indicating push factors (negative factors associated with the host country). In effect, Toren operationalized the push-pull model of migration motives.

A modified version of this method was adopted by Taylor (82) among Jamaicans and by Gmelch in separate studies of Irish and Newfoundland return migrants (26). All four studies using this technique found pull factors

(the attractions of the place of destination) to be far more significant than push dimensions in promoting return migration. Push factors had surprisingly little effect on the decision to return. Consistent with the previously discussed findings, social-patriotic and familial-personal reasons were stated by the migrants to have greater influence on their decision to return than did economic-occupational factors. However, we must be cautious in interpreting these findings as it has not been demonstrated conclusively that the migrants' ratings of the various motivational factors accurately reflects the real reasons for their return. The economic dimension may be more important than many returnees are willing to admit. For instance, when controlling for socioeconomic status, Toren found the more successful Israeli migrants to be influenced more by occupational opportunities back home, while the less successful were primarily influenced by patriotic attachments and loyalty to the home country. For government bodies concerned with return migration, this means that higher status returnees may not be a good investment as they may leave again should better job opportunities open up elsewhere. The lower status migrants, in contrast, are more inclined to perceive their homecoming as the end of the journey (84).

Success or Failure

A question posed by some researchers is whether returnees were basically "successes" or "failures" as emigrants (8, 92). Do they return because they have failed to adapt to their surroundings or achieve the "good life" they had expected? Or did they fare reasonably well, choosing to return not because of discontentment but because they felt there were important advantages to living in their homeland which were not available abroad? In other words, is return migration usually the consequence of a positive or a negative selection process? This question is of obvious importance for understanding the effects of return migration on sending societies.

The data suggest that most returnees were clearly not failures, but neither were they great successes. In her study of Israeli returnees, Toren found that return migration was nonselective: return migrants resembled those who remained behind both in level of education and in occupational position. Hernandes-Alvarez (34) found that the Puerto Rican returnees had a small educational advantage over those who remained in the United States but had earned less money. They also had a higher rate of unemployment (16.7%). Most Irish returnees appear to be drawn from the middle ranges of the socioeconomic ladder in the overseas Irish community: return migrants at both the top and bottom are underrepresented (26). It has been suggested that among various European migrant groups the unsuccessful are disinclined to return because they do not wish to admit having failed (26, 42, 43, 75). Moreover, many of those who do not fare well simply

cannot afford the expense of a return trip home. The very successful are often not interested in returning because it would mean giving up secure, well-salaried positions which cannot be equaled in the homeland. Returning may also mean costly obligations to share one's wealth with less well off kinsmen at home.

Until more is known about the characteristics of the migrants who remain abroad, however, it will be difficult to know for certain the relationship between economic success and the decision to return. Unfortunately, there have been very few systematic attempts to compare returnees with their compatriots who remain behind.

ADAPTATION AND READJUSTMENT OF RETURN MIGRANTS

There are two perspectives from which the question of readaptation can be approached. The first approach examines the actual economic and social conditions of returnees: whether or not they have found jobs, adequate housing, developed personal relationships, participated in community organizations, and so forth (39). Success or failure in adaptation would depend upon the degree to which the migrant has satisfied these objective criteria. The second approach focuses upon the migrant's own perceptions of his or her adjustment and the extent to which he feels the homeland has filled self-defined needs and given him a sense of well-being. The literature approaches readaptation from both perspectives, etic and emic, to some degree. But the emphasis is clearly on the latter approach in which readaptation is analyzed as a form of personal adjustment and measured in terms of the degree of "satisfaction" or "dissatisfaction" expressed by the migrants (1, 14, 20, 26, 82). Plans to reemigrate are interpreted as a sign of dissatisfaction or maladjustment (57).

DaVanzo (18) suggests that because return migrants are familiar with their destination and are likely to have friends and relatives there, the barriers to and psychic costs of returning will be lower than for individuals arriving for the first time. Moreover, if there is a degree of learning-by-experience associated with migration, then persons who have emigrated at least once should find it easier to move again. The data, however, present a very different picture. Some migrants do readjust quickly and encounter few problems; even after many years' absence they appear to pick up where they left off as though they had never been away. But many migrants are unhappy and disillusioned. They are often economically better off than their neighbors, yet they are disappointed and sometimes bitter about life in the homeland. Kenny (42) and Rhoades (66) note that younger Spanish migrants replace their *Heimwich* (homesickness) of Germany with *descon-*

tento (dissatisfaction) in Spain's villages. King (44), Bernard & Vouyoucalos (6) and Kenny (42) report "reverse culture shock" among Italian, Greek, and Spanish returnees, respectively. Taylor (82) reports that 61% of the Jamaican returnees he interviewed were dissatisfied although his measures of adjustment are less than satisfactory. Paine (57) notes that Turkish migrant workers back from Germany are so dissatisfied with conditions at home that a majority say they would like to reemigrate. And one-fifth of the 600 Irish returnees interviewed by Gmelch and his associates (26) said they would be more satisfied back in the host society (United States or Britain) then they are at home.

Many migrants are ill prepared for their return. They do not realize how much they or their communities have changed during their absence. Those returning from highly urban, industrialized nations to the Third World no longer share many of the basic notions that underlie their traditional culture (16). Relatives and former friends no longer share the same interests, and seem narrow, overly provincial, and in some cases backward (26, 42, 66, 77). On the other hand, local people have developed new friendships during the absence of their migrant friends and relatives and are not always enthusiastic about resuming old relationships (1). A few migrants, the extreme cases, feel they have been so changed by their emigration experience that they now have more in common with people of the host society than with their own rural countrymen (20, 26).

Some migrants encounter envy and suspicion among their less prosperous neighbors (16, 19, 66). Believing that all migrants are wealthy, locals sometimes take advantage of migrants by expecting higher payment for services and overcharging for goods. As one Newfoundland migrant explained, "When a Newfoundlander asks his neighbors to help him repair his roof or fix his boat, they say, 'Sure, just let me know'. But when someone who has been away asks, they say, 'Sure, how much are you going to pay me?' " (Gmelch et al, in preparation).

Many returnees are unhappy with the "way things are done" at home. A typical complaint concerns the lack of efficiency and punctuality. In contrast to the fast pace of the urban, industrial host societies, everything happens slowly at home. It seems to take forever to get things done (16, 20, 32, 59). Clerks and cashiers move at a snail's pace, plumbers, electricians, and other repairmen fail to arrive at the appointed time or do not come at all. A meddling, insensitive, and inefficient government bureaucracy is a source of considerable frustration for some. Dahya (17) reports that the correspondence columns of the Pakistani immigrant press are filled week after week with complaints about the country's bureaucrats, including charges of bribery, corruption, and nepotism. The returnees compare this with the efficiency and fair play they experienced in the hands of British civil

servants. Such complaints are not unique to migrants in the developing nations. Norwegian returnees also complained bitterly about the lack of services and the interminable delays, such as a 1-year wait to have a telephone installed (20).

Although most migrants do not return home in hopes of getting rich, economic conditions are sometimes worse than anticipated. Jobs are harder to find, wages lower, and working conditions poor to abysmal. Some Irish pub owners found they had earned more money tending someone else's bar in New York or Boston than they could running their own in Ireland. Taylor (82) reports that the Jamaican returnees he studied were unwilling to take jobs at their preemigration economic level becuase they would lose esteem among their neighbors and relatives who expected them to be upwardly mobile.

For many migrant women who held jobs while away, problems of readjustment are heightened by their early and usually involuntary retirement. With few employment opportunities for women in the rural areas at the periphery, many migrant women are confined to home (4, 26). Women returning to their husband's home community rather than their own, as is often the case among couples who met overseas, experience more difficulty establishing meaningful relationships than their husbands. Unfortunately, very little attention has been given to the special problems of female migrants. Clearly more research is needed on sex differences in migrant readjustment. The same is also true of the readjustment of children in migrant families. R. L. King, in one of the few studies that even mentions children, reports that the problems associated with return migration to Italy are "most acute for children of school age and teenagers" (44). Unlike preschoolers, this age group had already started their education in the host country, England. Return migration for them meant leaving behind their friends and English, the language of instruction. In Italian schools at home they have difficulty because they cannot read or write Italian and "the behavior of the village children seems strange to them." Language is similarly a problem with some Spanish school children who return to Spain with better German than Spanish (R. Rhoades, personal communication). Jamaican migrants in Britain who intend to return avoid these problems by sending their children back to the island to be raised by relatives (19).

With time migrants learn to cope with many of the problems discussed here. Several studies discern a period of adjustment of from 1 to 2 years (6, 26, 44). Among Irish returnees, for example, the percentage who expressed dissatisfaction with their lives in Ireland dropped from 51% among migrants who had been back 1 year or less to 21% of those who had been home 2 or more years (26). And among those who had been back for more than 5 years, the number who were discontented dropped to 17%. Not included

in these figures, however, are the estimated 5 to 10% who were so unhappy that they reemigrated. Bernard and Vouyoucalos describe readjustment as a process in which the strong allegiances and preferences for traits and institutions found abroad is blurred with time. "Less concious of the lost advantages of this former host country, but also less aware of his homeland's shortcomings, he or she settles down" (6). This is not unlike the "reverse culture shock" or short-term readjustment problems many Peace Corps volunteers experience on their return to the United States.

Why do so many migrants experience problems in readjusting to the cultures in which they were socialized? A theme that runs through these studies is that migrants have unrealistic expectations of what the home society would provide. The process of adjustment is not just a function of the actual conditions—environmental and social—of the area, but a function of the expectations held by migrants (21, 33). For a variety of reasons these expectations are often unrealistic. Their memories of home are nostalgic ones, with positive experiences standing out while negative aspects have receded from memory. Home, after all, was the place where the migrants spent the formative years, their youth, a time when they were healthy and relatively free from the annoying responsibilities of adult life. Vacation trips home did little to correct this idealistic image since they were usually made during the summer when the weather was good and the atmosphere festive. For the two or three weeks they were home social activity was intense, as it could be for a short period of time to celebrate the return of a relative. Letters from home were also a contributing factor. In hopes of encouraging the migrant to return, relatives exaggerated the benefits of life at home while underplaying or even ignoring unemployment and inflation. Together these factors raised the returnees' expectations higher than the reality of life in the homeland could satisfy, thus producing a sense of relative deprivation among otherwise successful migrants.

Some problems of readjustment are attributable to differences in the scale of the communities in which migrants have lived. Most returnees left large metropolitan areas, e.g. New York, Munich, Paris, London, where the density of population, heterogeneity of lifestyles, and wide range of choices in shopping, food, and entertainment provided much stimulation. Those who lived in "ethnic villages" within the city were somewhat sheltered from these influences but only partially. The migrants return, then, to a developing society—to a remote village or small town in the Mezzogiorno or Andalucia or to a quiet fishing outport with unpaved roads on the coast of Newfoundland. At home there is a certain uniformity in the work and outlook of the people. There are differences, of course, but they are small compared with what one experienced in the city. The pace of life is relaxed and there is seemingly little to do with one's free time other than play cards

or join a few men in a game of *bocci* or *boules.* The contrast may be a bit exaggerated but many migrants would not disagree. The point is that many of the complaints migrants have about home, the slow pace, the provincial interests of local people, and so forth, are due to basic differences between urban and rural life. And to some degree returnees would experience many of the same adjustment difficulties if they moved to a rural area within the industrialized host society—to a village in the English Peaks district, say, or a farming community in Vermont.

For those who do not readjust, who do not settle in, reemigration is one solution, at least temporarily. Little is known about the numbers of migrants who reemigrate. However, several surveys asked returnees about their future intentions. The results show that 25% of Greek (49), 20% of the Irish (26), 64% of Italian (44), and 85% of rural and 65% of urban Turkish (57) migrants expressed a desire to reemigrate to the host countries from which they had returned. These figures require an important qualification. They do not distinguish returnees who wish to reemigrate because of dissatisfaction from those who wish to go abroad again in order to earn more money and who intend to return home. Some individuals become "shuttle migrants," cultural commuters who move back and forth between home and host societies never fully satisfied with where they are (6).

IMPACT OF RETURN MIGRATION ON HOME SOCIETIES

The consequences of emigration for the sending societies has been the subject of much debate (see, for example, 7, 8, 63, 65, 80, 92). Proponents of emigration argue that among other things returning migrants bring back valuable industrial work experience and skills as well as capital needed for the economic development of their homelands. This position has been summarized by Arnold Rose (73):

> The migrant workers are getting training and experience in modern techniques of production which many bring back to their native lands; the cost of unemployment payments or social assistance to the unemployed are avoided; there may be less of a housing shortage; the migrants send some of their savings to their relatives in the home country, which provides foreign exchange to the governments of emigrant countries, and the returning migrants bring the rest of their savings home for investment in presumably productive enterprises [quoted in (65)].

Empirical studies of return migration, however, do not support these claims. In this section I will review the literature on the impact of return migration in terms of the introduction of new skills, returnee investment of capital, the introduction of new ideas and attitudes, changes in social structure resulting from return migration, and the influence of return migration in encouraging further emigration.

Introduction of Work Skills

Because the great majority of migrants work at unskilled jobs while abroad, few return with work experience that can be considered important to the development of the home economy. Paine reports that less than 10% of the Turkish workers returning from Germany had received any training while away. The pattern is similar for Greek (49), Spanish (66, 69), Irish (9, 26), Italian (15), Mexican (91) and other returnees. Of the migrants who do obtain better jobs while living away, most are only semiskilled. This, as Castles & Kosack (12) note, usually means "nothing more than a brief introduction in how to carry out a specific operation in a specific factory."

Even for the few migrants who do acquire technical or industrial skills there is a good chance they will not be able to apply them at home. Rural areas from which most migrants originate lack the infrastructure needed to make effective use of their skills. Moreover, migrants generally have little desire to continue in industrial employment upon return. Among Turkish returnees, for example, just 3% of those returning to rural areas and 20% of those returning to cities were willing to consider wage employment (57). The dream of most return migrants is to be independent and self-employed, which usually means setting up a small business such as a grocery shop or taxi service, not returning to the assembly line.

In a study of Algerian migrants, Trebous (86) offers a striking example of the inappropriateness of foreign acquired skills to the economy of the sending society. Nearly two-thirds of all Algerian workers in France worked in a single industry—the building trades. With limited activity in this sector of the economy in Algeria, the workers who returned were likely to find themselves unemployed. Similarly, migrants who worked in the rural, agricultural sector of the host society and resettled in rural areas in the home society may not be able to make use of their foreign work experience because of differences in the scale of the two economies. Raymond Wiest (91) provides an illustration of this in an excellent study of Mexican wage-labor migration. The skills Mexican braceros learn while working in large-scale agriculture (mainly fruit picking) in the United States have little relevance to small-scale (mainly cereal) agriculture in Mexico.

Before leaving this topic two exceptions to this pattern should be noted. In a national survey of Puerto Rican returnees, Heranandez-Alvarez (34) found that over 40% were white-collar and that as a group they represented a middle sector bordering on the nation's educational, financial, and occupational elite. His survey was conducted in 1960, however, at a time of rapid expansion of the Puerto Rican economy which attracted many professionals home from the United States. Alvarez correctly predicted that the white-collar job market would quickly reach a saturation point making it difficult for future, skilled migrants to find work. The second case concerns Filipinos who had been away for a long period working at various jobs on Hawaiian

sugar plantations. MacArthur (52) credits them with introducing many useful skills as cooks, carpenters, welders, heavy equipment operators, and the like.

In drawing conclusions about the role of return migrants in introducing work skills, an important qualification needs to be made. The bulk of field research has been done in rural areas, while a majority of return migrants in many countries have resettled in towns and cities. In an urban context the influence of the returnee might be different. There they have the opportunity of finding industrial or office work which would make use of their foreign acquired skills.

Investment of Savings

After years of hard work and saving, many migrants return with sizable amounts of capital. In addition to their savings account deposits, cash is obtained from the sale of their overseas assets. As Appleyard (1) notes in a largely economic study of British returnees from Australia, "emigration to a distant overseas country and return are about the only occasions when a person liquefies the bulk of his assets." Most of the possessions—furniture, car, consumer durables, and house—accumulated during the migrant's residence abroad are sold prior to departure and the money transferred to a bank in the home country. Rhoades (66) has been successful in estimating returnee capital by examining the bank deposits of Spanish return migrants. With this exception, however, there is little statistical data on how much money the average returnee brings home. But it is clear that many are well off by local standards and may even rival the purchasing power of local elites (31, 52, 66).

The key question, however, is not how much migrants return with, but how they invest their earnings at home. Do they invest in enterprises, such as new types of businesses, new farming techniques, or cooperatives which will raise the productive capacity of the region and generate further capital? Or is their money spent on consumerism, to raise the living standards and social status of the individual returnee? The empirical evidence suggests the latter (26, 31, 66, 69, 80, 91, 92).

Housing or the purchase of a building plot for a house is the most common form of investment (3, 13, 16, 19, 26, 31, 36, 42, 57, 61, 89, 92). Over two-thirds (69%) of returning Yugoslav workers surveyed said they intended to spend their earnings on a house (3). In the Philippines the type of investment varies somewhat with the length of time the migrant has been away, but housing and land are always the preferred form (52). The migrant who has been away a short time builds a traditional house, while the "old timer" with more money to spend builds a larger two-story cement and wood house. More lavish yet are the homes built by *pensionados,* retirement

returnees, who paint their houses bright colors and equip them with modern appliances such as stereo and television sets, gas stoves, electric refrigerators, and showers which require the construction of an elevated tank outside to provide sufficient water pressure.

It is not uncommon for better-off migrants to build lavish, well-appointed structures. The intent appears to be as much to show off to one's neighbors as to live comfortably. Dahya (16) describes this phenomenon in Pakistan where the brick and cement houses built by returnees, in contrast to the local mud structures, are intended mainly to impress.

> "It has more rooms than the needs of the family justify and at the most two rooms of the *pakka* house may be occupied by the family. The rest of the house which could be three stories high is kept empty, furnished but unoccupied. But none the less, the *pakka* structures, with their trellised balconies and loggias, multi-colored glass windows, and surrounding fields, stand out for miles to vindicate to one and all the migrant's and his family's achieved status."

It could be argued that such behavior is not only for "show" but raises the status of returnees and gives them better access to village resources, i.e. the show has an economic payoff in the end.

Investment in housing does have some benefit for the community. In places where a considerable portion of the local population has worked abroad, the presence of many new or renovated houses has given the areas a look of prosperity. In the Mezzogiorno of Italy, the explosion of migrant-financed building is described as "one of the most dramatic features of the changing rural landscape" (44). The health of returnees living in new housing is probably improved by the higher level of sanitation afforded by indoor plumbing, heating, and tile or flagstone floors where there was once dirt. The new construction and renovation does increase local employment. But the jobs created are usually of a temporary nature, with their continuation depending upon a regular flow of return migrants with capital to invest in housing (92). Also, widespread home construction requires expenditures by the local authority for the expansion of services such as roads, water, and electricity. The limited funds available to local authorities could be better allocated in more viable growth areas (3, 44).

Returnee investment in agricultural land is disappointing. Only where new lands are put into production or new, more efficient farming techniques are used do such investments contribute to rural development. But many migrants are no longer attracted either psychologically or economically to agriculture (26, 42, 49, 66). Greek migrants are typical in this respect. While almost 30% worked in agriculture before their emigration, less than 8% intended to return to agricultural occupations (49). As a result, lands purchased by returnees from small peasant proprietors often stand idle, out of

production, in some cases used only as summer retreats. Because of this as much as 20 to 30% of the land in some Spanish villages studied by Rhoades (66) had been taken out of production.

After housing and land, consumer goods make up the next largest expenditure (10, 26, 30, 52, 66, 74, 91, 92). The homes of returnees are often better equipped with modern appliances than those of nonmigrants. In a few instances the reported desire of migrants for consumer goods is excessive. In Spain, Rhoades (66) notes, "The home of the typical long-term *aleman* (returnee) is lavishly furnished and decorated with virtually everything modern mass consumer markets offer. It is no exaggeration to define the situation as 'conspicuous consumption run amok' . . . nor to describe returnees as rabid Germanophiles in their consumption desires . . ." Such expenditures on consumer goods bring little benefit to the local economy. Most are purchased outside the immediate area, in large towns and cities. And the major items, from appliances to automobiles, are imports not even manufactured within the country (92).

With strong preference for self employment, a distaste or disinterest in both agriculture and wage labor, it is not surprising that migrants with sizable savings invest in small businesses. In Ireland almost a third (31%) were able to set up businesses of their own. However, the Irish businesses, like those reported for Spain (46), Yugoslavia (57), Italy (15), Monserrat (62), Carriacou (36), and elsewhere, are traditional ones, notably small shops, bars, and cafes. In many instances these businesses are redundant, adding to an already saturated market. In one Irish village of just 300 inhabitants, for example, there are five pubs. All but one are owned by returnees. Investing in businesses of this type does little to increase the productive capacity of the community. But as I will discuss in the next section, the cause for this does not rest solely with the return migrants.

New Ideas and Attitudes: Innovation or Conservatism

Migrants who have spent a number of years working in the metropolitan area of a foreign society may learn alternative and more efficient ways of doing things and to varying degrees develop an urban ethos. An important question is the extent to which migrants introduce these foreign-acquired ideas into their home communities. Bovenkerk (8) phrases the question in terms of innovation versus conservatism, that is, is return migration an innovative influence promoting social change or a conservative force serving to maintain the status quo?

The writings on this issue are divided. Some analysts report that returnees play a positive role as innovators, while others find they have very little influence. The most frequently mentioned innovations are in the areas of material culture and house design. In one village in India, returnees intro-

duced home ventilation and separate kitchens and bathrooms (58). On the Caribbean island of Carriacou they introduced the first motor vehicles (36). In Ireland returnees from the United States who had purchased pubs were credited with introducing padded seating, which has now widely replaced the former hardwood benches (26). Similarly, in the early 1960s returnees in western Ireland were said to have been the first to install showers in their homes (26). In an Ilocos farming community in the Philippines, McArthur (52) found that "short time" migrants followed the traditional, conservative pattern, while the "old timers" who spent many years in Hawaii were innovators. They were the first farmers to plant new fast-maturing varieties of rice and to use fertilizer, LPG (liquid petroleum gas) stoves, and transistor radios. The example they set was widely imitated by other villagers. In Greece, Saloutos (75) reports that returnees introduced more orderly and efficient work habits and created a general atmosphere for advancement. In several studies migrants are not credited with making specific innovations, but are said to be more receptive to change—more willing, for example, to experiment with new varieties of crops (9). In societies where most adults have migrated at one time or another, such as in some Caribbean nations, it is difficult to separate changes induced by migration from other sources (36).

Apart from these examples, there is little evidence that returnees bring about significant change in the productive techniques or attitudes and values in their home communities. This point is clearly made in Cerase's (15) typology of return migrants. Only one of the four types of migrants he identifies, the "return of innovation," strives to develop new enterprises and make things more efficient. These migrants aim to demonstrate that the old ways are not always the best. But they are frustrated from the very start. The local power structure opposes any attempts by aspiring returnees to start new businesses, such as building a small hotel, which would compete with already established local interests. Also they often discover that the available material resources are too limited to develop the enterprises they had in mind. In the end, Cerase remarks, the innovative returnee is bitterly disappointed.

How can we account for the limited innovative influence of returnees? In the case of Ireland, I have argued (26) that many migrants have the potential to introduce change but do not largely because of the nature of the conservative, Catholic society they return to. Ireland, like certain other emigration societies, has traditionally been slow to accept change. In order to gain acceptance at home, Irish returnees have found that they cannot push their ideas or foreign experiences on local people. They particularly must not make unfavorable comparisons between Ireland and the country to which they had emigrated. Many migrants hold different attitudes to-

ward the church, family planning, divorce, and politics, but they keep their opinions to themselves. Those who do not risk being ignored and labeled a "Yank." Schrier (77), writing about an earlier generation of Irish returnees (pre-1950), suggests that the migrants transferred very little of their American experience to Ireland because they were not viewed by the Irish as "genuine Americans." "A group of strangers, if they do not represent a threat to a community, are generally respected for their differences, and over a period of years some of their customs or ideas might even infiltrate and become accepted by the society in which they have settled. But the returned Yank was at best an adapter, a hybrid whose roots were essentially in Irish soil, and he was not respected as the true barer of new gifts." It is conceivable that in a society in which people are receptive to new ideas, returnees might play a significant role in bringing about change.

Bovenkerk (8) notes a number of other factors which may influence the innovative potential of return migrants. One is the absolute number of migrants who return. Large numbers of returnees in a community or region may provide the critical mass needed to organize and bring about needed reforms. Small numbers of returnees are likely to have little influence and be easily reabsorbed. On a similar note, the concentration of returnees in time could have an effect. Many migrants returning about the same time will have a greater impact than if the same number were to trickle home over a long period of time. The duration of the migrants' absence may also be a factor. Migrants who have been away a short period of time will not have experienced enough of the host culture to have much of an effect at home. At the other extreme, those who have been away for a long period may be alienated from their home society or may be too old to care or exert much influence. The social class of the migrants may have an effect in that returning professional people or graduate students are more likely to be listened to and held in high esteem than returning laborers. The differences between the country of emigration and the home society also need to be considered. Migrants returning from the metropolitan, industrial world to traditional, agricultural communities will have fewer skills or knowledge that are transferable than migrants returning to urban centers at home. Finally there is the nature of the acquired training and skills. The chances for innovation will be greater among migrants who have learned general skills. Highly specialized education or work skills have less chance of being useful in the home society due to the limited technology and relative lack of economic specialization in the developing regions. Finally, it should be noted that return migrants may be more of an innovative force than the field research has so far credited them. Rural peoples in most parts of the world today are influenced by many external forces, e.g. radio and television, government programs, and tourism, and it is not always easy to separate

the influence of return migrants from other factors promoting change. None of the studies reviewed here attempt to analyze systematically the diffusion of ideas or techniques from migrants to the larger community. Rigorous research in this area may lead to a different set of conclusions.

Chain Migration

Some researchers have suggested that returnees, either by direct encouragement or by their example, encourage further emigration (8, 26, 46). A major cost of emigration to young people trying to reach a decision is the separation from family and friends that movement to another land necessitates. The returnee is a living demonstration to young adults in the community that it is possible to go abroad, see a part of the world, obtain a better paying job, save, and return to the homeland, reunited with family and friends and with enough capital to achieve a comfortable standard of living. As Kenny (42) notes for Spain, "the *indiano's* triumphant return and ostentatious generosity incite the youth of the village to emulate his example."

The opposite effect is also possible if migrants return unfulfilled. Hofstede shows this to have been the case for Dutch emigrants to Australia and Canada whose unhappy return had a depressant effect on further emigration (cited in 8). It is unlikely, however, that this occurs often since unsuccessful migrants are less inclined to return, especially to their home communities where they would have the most influence on others (75, 77). Moreover, the natural tendency among migrants upon return is to extoll the benefits of life in the host society in order to present their own migration experience in a favorable light.

Impact on Social Structure

While there is ample evidence of social mobility among individual returnees, there is no evidence that return migration causes any significant change in the social structure of home communities. There are occasional vague references to increased "fluidity" or "flexibility" in social structure brought about by the mobility of the local population (23, 24), but otherwise there is no evidence of return migration having an effect of this kind. The few scholars who discuss the issue (65, 66, 80, 91, 92) argue strongly that return migration has failed to bring about any significant change in the social order, the desired change being a reduction of inequality. On the contrary, Raymond Wiest (91) believes that return of large numbers of *braceros* to the Mexican town he studied actually increased the social and economic differences between the migrants and their nonmigrant neighbors. The migrants were better off economically in the first place, and their newly acquired wealth only served to heighten inequality and social tensions, resulting in growing resentment against the returnees.

In a macroscopic study involving both host and donor societies, Rhoades (65) examines an entire migratory system built around German industrial capitalism. Unlike synchronic studies which view migration at one point in time, and are characteristic of most return migration literature, the migration of workers from Europe's agrarian "periphery" to German cities is examined during three major eras of German history. From the founding of the Reich in 1871, an ideology of migration as equally beneficial to the European industrial core and the agrarian periphery went unquestioned by both the host and donor societies. In theory the cyclical flow of manpower would enable industrial Europe to sustain "miracle" growth through additional labor supplies while simultaneously assuring the on-the-job training of unskilled Mediterranean peasants and promoting the flow of wealth into impoverished sending regions.

Rhoades seriously questions this interpretation of functional interdependence, which has been labelled "the equilibrium model." Very few of the benefits for sending societies which proponents of migration claimed would occur actually materialized. It is true that sending societies have acquired much needed foreign currency for their economies and that individual migrants have improved their own living standard. But emigration did not bring the predicted economic boost to the periphery regions. The unequal relationship between core and periphery regions has not by any measure been lessened. Contrary to the notion that cyclical migration provides migrant workers with important work experience and technical skills, which upon their return upgrades the home labor force, there has been instead a "rural/working class brain drain." The migrants recruited by German employers have been young, healthy, and most of them gainfully employed at the time of emigration. They have also been better educated and trained than the population left to manage the economy at home. The economic productivity of the sending societies has been damaged rather than helped by this extraction of its most vital manpower. And the industrial countries, as we have seen elsewhere, have not returned workers with new skills and valuable work experience. The industrial countries benefit, of course, from a "readymade" workforce which has been reared, trained, and educated at the sending societies' expense. And when workers are no longer productive, through illness, accident, or old age, they return home with their maintenance costs again being absorbed by the sending society. Rhoades concludes that the purported benefits of emigration for sending societies are components of a "migration ideology" fostered by West European employers and governments to justify and maintain a migratory labor system that favors and facilitates the acceptance of their manpower policies.

Rhoades' conclusions are supported by the other studies reviewed here, and appear to be more general than the European migratory system which has been the concern of many of these writings.

CONCLUSIONS

The studies of return migration reviewed here vary widely in scope and method. Some are village studies based on participant-observation and informal interviews (5, 9, 31, 37, 67, 90, 91). Many are surveys, involving structured interviews with selected migrants from an entire region (11, 20, 23, 26, 27, 39, 55, 78); a few are large questionnaire surveys with respondents being drawn from national samples (34, 56, 71, 72, 85). Two studies are based on interviews with returning migrants on board passenger ships enroute to their homelands (19, 70).

The writings are largely descriptive. The tendency has been to treat each return migrant population as a special entity with unique experiences. Investigators have given little attention to the similarities between their subjects and other return migrant groups in order to distinguish the unique features of each case from what is generic to a set of cases. One of the characteristics of the literature is a neglect, if not ignorance, of other writings on return migration. This is evident in the opening paragraphs of many articles in which the authors bemoan the dearth of literature. The literature is small, particularly when compared to the entire corpus of migration studies, but as this review demonstrates, there is enough to allow comparisons and some attempt at model building. Apart from the work of Rhoades (66, 67), Swanson (80), and Wiest (91, 92), who are primarily concerned with the development impact of return migration, little theory has been applied to return migration cases, though this is true of the migration literature in general. To some extent this must be expected in a new field of inquiry. The research is interesting in its own right, but it will only become useful in addressing general questions with the development of some general models. It is clear to this reviewer that more comparative research in which there is a systematic search for the uniformities, if not universals, in return migration phenomena is needed. Perhaps in no other area of population studies are the similarities in behavior so striking, yet so little effort has been made at comparison.

More specific directions for future research have also become evident in the course of this review, and others have been suggested by Bovenkerk (8) and Wiest (92). The processes of selection (age, sex, marital status, occupation, education) in return migration are not well understood. Reliable statistical data are needed on the demographic characteristics of return migrants

and on how they differ from their compatriots who do not return. Not until this type of data are available will we and the home societies know what type of people they are receiving and what the returnees' contribution is likely to be. Most of the writings on return migration concern peasants and other "have-nots" of the developing world. We need to balance this view with more information on the return of middle and upper-strata migrants. The influence of these groups on the development of their home regions may prove to be altogether different from what has been documented for returning laborers. While most migrants resettle in cities, the bulk of research has been in rural areas. It is vital that we also examine those who return to urban areas, whose readjustment and impact is likely to be altogether different from that of their rural counterparts. Questions of readaptation have been addressed with aggregate data which may mask important sources of variance. The adjustment involved in returning to one's native community, for example, needs to be compared with return to an entirely new community. Returnee adjustment must also be examined in relationship to the significant social and environmental variables (e.g. community size, kin support, employment status) in order to better understand their effect. More information is needed on the special readjustment problems of women and children; our knowledge here is particularly limited. We need to look at the innovative potential of returnees more systematically and determine under what conditions migrants' ideas and skills, however minimal, can be used constructively to the benefit of the home society.

To address these issues adequately we will need a multimethod approach. Statistical survey data are needed to establish the basic dimensions of the problem as well as to understand the range of variation and the co-variation of factors. But equally important will be the intimate knowledge and insight that comes through participant-observation which will allow us to move from description to explanation.

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