Chapter 3: Migration
Field Note:
Risking Lives for Remittances

“In 1994, I was on my way to Rosenstiel Marine Center on Virginia Key, off the coast of Miami, Florida. I noticed an overcrowded boat, with about 70 people on board. The Haitians were fleeing the most impoverished country in the Western Hemisphere. Most of the would-be illegal immigrants were men with perhaps half a dozen women and as many children. They jumped overboard prematurely when the Coast Guard approached, and some undoubtedly lost their lives; others made it to the beach and ran for the road.”
Key Question

• What is migration?
What Is Migration?

• Movement is inherently geographical.
• All movement involves leaving home.
• Three types of movement:
  1. Cyclic
  2. Periodic
  3. Migration
What Is Migration?

Cyclic Movement

• Involves journeys that begin at our home base and bring us back to it
• Regular sequences of short moves within a local area = activity spaces
• Commuting
• Seasonal movement
• Nomadism
What Is Migration?

Periodic Movement

• Involves a longer period of time away from the home base than cyclic movement
• Migrant labor
• Transhumance, a system of pastoral farming where ranchers move livestock according to the seasonal availability of pastures
• College attendance
• Military service
What Is Migration?

Migration

• Permanent relocation across significant distances

• International migration/Transnational migration
  
  Emigrant = migrates out of country
  Immigrant = migrates into country

• **Internal migration** varies according to the mobility of the population.
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Choose one type of cyclic or periodic movement and then think of a specific example of the kind of movement you chose. Now, determine how this movement changes both the home and the destination as a result of this cyclic or period movement.
Key Question

Why do people migrate?
What Is Migration?

Forced Migration

- Atlantic slave trade: the largest and most devastating forced migration in the history of humanity
Forced migration still happens today.

Example: **countermigration**, in which governments detain migrants who enter or attempt to enter their countries illegally and return the migrants to their home countries.
What Is Migration?

Push and Pull Factors in Voluntary Migration

- Ernst Ravenstein proposed laws of migration:
  1. Every migration flow generates a return or countermigration.
  2. The majority of migrants move a short distance.
  3. Migrants who move longer distances tend to choose big-city destinations.
  4. Urban residents are less migratory than inhabitants of rural areas.
  5. Families are less likely to make international moves than young adults.

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Gravity model:

• Predicts interaction between places on the basis of their population size and distance between them

• Assumes that spatial interaction (such as migration) is directly related to the populations and inversely related to the distance between them
What Is Migration?

Push and Pull Factors in Voluntary Migration

• **Push factors** are the conditions and perceptions that help the migrant decide to leave a place.

• They include individual considerations such as work or retirement conditions, cost of living, personal safety and security, and, for many, environmental catastrophes or even issues like weather and climate.
What Is Migration?

Push and Pull Factors in Voluntary Migration

• **Pull factors** are the circumstances that effectively attract the migrant to certain locales from other places, the decision of where to go.

• They tend to be vaguer and may depend solely on perceptions construed from things heard and read rather than on experiences in the destination place.
What Is Migration?

Push and Pull Factors in Voluntary Migration

• **Distance decay**: Prospective migrants are likely to have more complete perceptions of nearer places than of farther ones.

• Since interaction with faraway places generally decreases as distance increases, prospective migrants are likely to feel much less certain about distant destinations than about nearer ones.
Distance small:
Interaction strong

Distance large:
Interaction slight
What Is Migration?

Push and Pull Factors in Voluntary Migration

* Step migration: Migration streams consist of a series of stages.

• Intervening opportunity: Many migrants encounter an opportunity along their migration stream that keeps them from getting to the metropolis that impelled them to move in the first place. Example: during the Great Migration
What Is Migration?

Types of Push and Pull Factors

• **Legal status**: Migrants can arrive in a country with or without consent of the host country.

• **Economic conditions**: Poverty has driven countless millions from their homelands.

• **Power relationships**: Power relationships already embedded in society enable the flow of migrants around the world.
What Is Migration?

Political Circumstances

• Politically driven migration flows are marked by both escape and expulsion.

• Example: Desperate migrants fled Vietnam by the hundreds of thousands after the communists took control of the country in 1975.

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What Is Migration?

Armed Conflict and Civil War

Environmental Conditions:

• Earthquakes
• Hurricanes
• Volcanoes
“This photo shows the damage caused by the 1995 eruption of the Sourfriere Hills volcano on the Caribbean Island of Montserrat... Many Montserratians fled to the United States when Plymouth was destroyed and were given “temporary protected” immigration status. The U.S. government told Montserratian refugees to leave in 2005—not because the volcanic crisis was over or because the housing crisis caused by the volcano was solved. Rather, the U.S. government expected the volcanic crisis to last at least 10 more years; so, the Monsterratians no longer qualified as “temporary” refugees.”
What Is Migration?

Culture and Traditions

• People who fear that their culture and traditions will not survive a major political transition, and who are able to migrate to places they perceive as safer, will often do so.

Technological Advances

• Television, radio, cell phones, and telephone stimulate millions of people to migrate by relaying information about relatives, opportunities, and already established communities in destination lands.
What Is Migration?

Technological Advances

- **Kinship links**: People migrate to areas where relatives live. Communication strengthens their role of push/pull factors.

- **Chain migration**: Flows along and through kinship links.

- **Step migration**: a series of small, less extreme locational changes. For example, if a person moves from a farm to a small town, then to a larger town and finally a city, it is an example of step migration.

- Chains of migration built upon each other create immigration waves or swells in migration from one origin to the same destination.
Key Question

Where do people migrate?
Where Do People Migrate?

Global Migration Flows

- Global-scale migration
- Explorers
- Colonization
HUMAN MIGRATION IN MODERN TIMES

- European emigration
- Migrations by other peoples (tied to European intervention)

Figure 3.11
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Where Do People Migrate?

Regional Migration Flows

• Economic opportunities
  • **Islands of development** – cities in the developing world where most of the foreign investment goes.

• Role of globalization and colonialism

• Reconnection of cultural groups

• Conflict and war
Figure 3.14
“Just a few miles into the West Bank, not far from Jerusalem, the expanding Israeli presence could not be missed. New settlements dot the landscape, often occupying strategic sites that are also easily defensible. These ‘facts on the ground’ will certainly complicate the effort to carve out a stable territorial order in this much-contested region. That, of course, is the goal of the settlers and their supporters, but it is salt on the wound for those who contest the Israeli right to be there in the first place.”
Where Do People Migrate?

National Migration Flows

• Historically, two of the major migration flows before 1950 occurred internally in the United States and in Russia (Soviet Union).

• **Russification** sought to assimilate all the people in the Soviet territory into the Russian culture, during the communist period, by encouraging people to move out of Moscow and St. Petersburg and fill in the country.
Where Do People Migrate?

Guest Workers

• Millions of guest workers live outside of their home country and send remittances from their jobs home.
• Their home states are fully aware that their citizens have visas and are working abroad.
• Despite the legal status of guest workers, many employers abuse them because guest workers are often unaware of their rights.
• Guest workers are legal, documented migrants who have work visas, usually short term.
Where Do People Migrate?

Refugees

• The United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that 83 percent of refugees flee to a country in the same region as their home country.

• The 1951 Refugee Convention defines a **refugee** as “a person who has a wellfounded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion.”
Where Do People Migrate?

Refugees

• **Internally displaced persons** are people who have been displaced within their own countries, but they do not cross international borders as they flee.

• **Asylum**: the right to protection in the first country in which the refugee arrives.

• **Repatriation**: a process by which the UNHCR helps return refugees to their homelands once violence and persecution subside.
Figure 3.17

Zaire-Rwanda border region. Hundreds of thousands of mainly Hutu refugees stream out of a refugee camp in eastern Zaire, heading home to Rwanda in November 1996.
Where Do People Migrate?

Regions of Dislocation

• **North Africa and Southwest Asia:** This geographic region, extending from Morocco in the west to Afghanistan in the east, contains some of the world’s longest-lasting and most deeply entrenched conflicts that generate refugees.

• **Africa:** 2 million refugees are accounted for by international relief agencies, but also millions more are internally displaced persons.
Where Do People Migrate?

Regions of Dislocation

- **South Asia**: is the third-ranking geographic realm, mainly because of Pakistan’s role in accommodating Afghanistan’s refugees.

- **Southeast Asia**: a reminder that refugee problems can change quickly. Example: Indochina’s refugee crisis
Where Do People Migrate?

Regions of Dislocation

**Europe**: even after the cessation of armed conflict and the implementation of a peace agreement known as the Dayton Accords, the UNHCR still reports over 100,000 IDPs in the area.

**Other Regions**: The number of refugees and internally displaced persons in other geographic realms is much smaller.
Key Question

How do governments affect migration?
How Do Governments Affect Migration?

Legal Restrictions


• In 1901, the Australian government approved the Immigration Restriction Act, which ended all nonwhite immigration into the newly united country.

• White Australia Policy
How Do Governments Affect Migration?

Waves of Immigration in the United States

• The United States experienced two major waves of immigration before 1930 and is in the midst of another great wave of immigration today.
• Immigration quotas
• National Origins Law in 1929
• Immigration and Nationality Act: 1952
• Selective immigration
How Do Governments Affect Migration?

Post–September 11

• New government policies affect asylum-seekers, illegal immigrants, and legal immigrants.

• 9/11 Commission Report was released in 2004.
One goal of international organizations involved in aiding refugees is repatriation—return of the refugees to their home countries once the threat against them has passed. Take the example of refugees from the Darfur region of Sudan. Think about how their land and their lives have changed since they became refugees. You are assigned the daunting task of repatriating refugees from Darfur to Sudan once a peace solution is reached. What steps would you have to take to rediscover a home for these refugees?
Additional Resources

• Immigration to the United States
  www.uscis.gov

• Refugees
  www.unhcr.org

• Geographic Mobility and Movement in the United States
  www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/migrate.html