

# **CIRCULATION IN THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES**

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Edited by  
R. Mansell Prothero and Murray Chapman

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Edited by  
**R. MANSELL PROTHERO**  
and  
**MURRAY CHAPMAN**

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# Circulation in Third World countries

edited by  
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For Peggy and Lin, who respectively maintain  
the homes from which we periodically circulate.





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# Preface

These essays are about circulatory movements, in which people move from their places of residence for varying periods of time but ultimately return to them. It is a collaborative effort which arises from a long association. In the 1950s, one of us examined seasonal movements of population from North West Nigeria, which at the time were termed 'labour migration' (Prothero 1957, 1959). The other worked in the second half of the 1960s with a much broader perspective on circulatory movements on south Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands (Chapman 1969, 1970). Our contact with one another extends from the time of Chapman's fieldwork and until the mid-1970s was maintained by correspondence and with two brief meetings in Canada (1972) and New Zealand (1974).

In 1975/76 Chapman was able to 'circulate' from Hawaii to spend a sabbatical year with Prothero in Britain, supported in part by a grant from the Social Science Research Council, U.K. (Grant HR3731/2). During this time, we explored some of the cross-cultural comparisons to be made between circulation in tropical Africa and the island Pacific. This work heightened our fascination with circulation and reinforced our belief in the critical importance of its comparative study. We decided to assemble a multi-disciplinary collection of essays, drawn from various parts of the Third World, and this volume is the result.

The other outcome of our 1975/76 collaboration was an International Seminar on the Cross-Cultural Study of Circulation, sponsored jointly by the Population Institute of the East-West Center in Hawaii and the Institute for Applied Social and Economic Research in Papua New Guinea, with financial assistance from the National Science Foundation, U.S.A. (Grant SOC77-26793). It was held at the East-West Center in April 1978

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and brought together people from a range of social science disciplines. This seminar was concerned particularly with circulation in Melanesia, but it incorporated commentaries from Africa south of the Sahara, India, and South East Asia (Chapman 1978, 1979, East-West Population Institute 1978). The main content of this seminar is being published by Routledge and Kegan Paul as a companion to the more general volume on circulation in Third World countries. The volumes complement one another.

In choosing contributions for this Third World volume, we have been deliberately eclectic in respect of kinds of circulation discussed, areas dealt with, and disciplines involved. Circulation is a grossly neglected aspect of population mobility, but in the past decade there has been an increasing amount of research on it within the multi-disciplinary field of population studies: from demography, economics, geography, political economy, social anthropology, and sociology. Geographers have made many important contributions and half the essays in this volume are from them, with the rest mainly from social anthropologists and sociologists. More than half of the contributing geographers have participated in inter-disciplinary projects, especially applied to census, manpower, health and educational planning.

Contributions have come from three directions: work of long standing and of seminal importance, from which we and others have drawn guidance and inspiration; more recent research involving fieldwork which has attracted our attention; and field studies in which we have played an initiating role. Apart from the contribution from Elkan, all the essays are published for the first time. The fact that they exemplify different disciplinary perspectives on circulation we see as of major importance. It is remarkable that so much of common concern about human mobility emerges and which reflects to a considerable extent many of the views set out in our first essay. All contributors were aware of our views, but they were in no way constrained by them in making their contributions. By no means is there consensus, but differences of opinion relate less to the nature of circulation and far more to its role in the changing and evolving patterns of human mobility over time. The nature of these divergencies and their significance for present ideas and future work are discussed.

The Third World is the exclusive focus of this volume, in part because our own research has been conducted there. It is also because the contemporary processes of change in population mobility are operating at a faster pace in Third World societies than elsewhere, thus furnishing great scope to study a variety of forms and to examine the reasons for both constant fluidity and broad patterns over longer periods. By comparison, there is only

fragmentary evidence of past circulatory movements in the now more developed parts of the world. Despite the pitfalls of cross-cultural comparison in time as well as in space, detailed and first-hand inquiry of contemporary circulation in Third World societies may throw some light on the previous experience of more developed countries.

The papers present evidence of the widespread presence of circulation. There are examples from all the major regions, as defined by the United Nations: Latin America (4) and the Caribbean (1), Africa (7) and the Middle East (1), South (2) and Southeast Asia (3), and the Pacific (1). Areal coverage, however, was a secondary consideration compared with the context in which circulation had been studied. We sought several contributions from indigenous scholars, while all the 'expatriate authors' have a great depth of experience of the areas about which they write. That more essays refer to Africa is symptomatic of the long-standing concern with circulation in that continent, where some of the most influential work was done from the 1940s to the 1970s. Papers on themes we had hoped to include, on commuting to agricultural work in Nigeria and on relationships between language and circulation in Mexico, unfortunately did not materialize.

The papers have been grouped on the basis of four major perspectives: holistic, ecological, social, and economic. Inevitably there is overlap in approach, methodology, and substance. Virtually all papers refer, for example, to the indirect if not the direct effect of ecological or political factors on circulation and no essay is without substantial comment upon the role of social and economic influences.

Acceptable terminology is a particular difficulty in the study of population movement and, as our introductory chapter makes clear, this is not surprising given the range of disciplinary and theoretical goals evident in its research. 'Population mobility' or 'population movement' is the general term used for the territorial flow of people. The critical distinction between 'migration' and 'circulation', the two major types of population mobility, denotes whether or not a return to place of origin is involved. Hybrid terms such as 'circular migration' are especially confusing. These have been retained, and placed within single quotes, only when they refer to a particular literature (as in economics) or are critical to the intellectual history of circulation. When first used, terms signifying particular kinds of circulation also are placed within single quotes: thus 'commuting', 'labour migration', and 'pendular migration'. The fact that standardization has been possible underlines the great forbearance of authors, to whom we

## PREFACE

extend our considerable thanks. Since essays range widely in time and region, pounds sterling and dollars U.S. have been adopted as baseline currencies.

We are grateful to those who agreed to contribute, made their papers available, and then were prepared to revise them according to editorial suggestions. Bringing together work of authors who are geographically so widely spaced, by editors separated by 150 degrees of longitude, has inevitably involved much longer delays than we would have wished. We apologize to those contributors who responded most quickly to our invitation and whose work therefore had to await the arrival of others.

Besides our contributors there are many others who have helped to make this volume and whom we wish to thank. Alan Hodgkiss and his colleagues in the Drawing Office, Department of Geography, University of Liverpool, have prepared all the illustrative material. Joan Rourke of the same Department typed final drafts of a number of the papers. The work on the index has been undertaken by R. Mansell Prothero. We are most grateful to Norman Franklin of Routledge & Kegan Paul for agreeing to publish this book, for his great patience in extending the time for completion of the manuscript, and to him and his colleagues for the production.

Like people written about in this volume, we have maintained contacts between Hawaii and Liverpool through a constant stream of letters in both directions, cables, and the occasional telephone call. But our collaboration has been much assisted by being able to meet on three occasions since 1976: in Hawaii in 1978, and in Liverpool in 1978 and again in 1979. We thank the National Science Foundation (Grant SOC77-26793), the East-West Population Institute in Hawaii, and the Universities of Hawaii and Liverpool for in various ways making these face-to-face contacts possible.

R. Mansell Prothero  
Murray Chapman

# 1 Themes on circulation in the Third World

*Murray Chapman and R. Mansell Prothero*

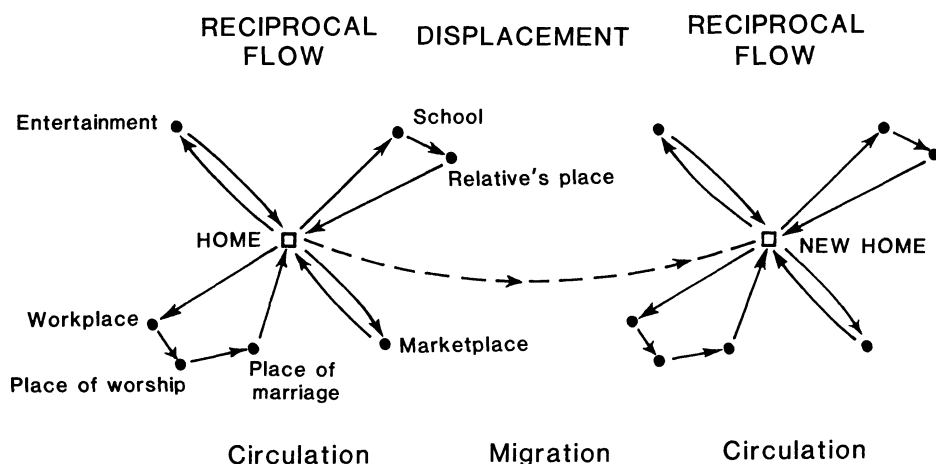
To study and define fully settled groups is nothing else than to formulate an abstraction; to grasp and describe groups in movement, in so far as possible, means to describe life itself (Brunhes and Vallaux 1921: 201).

People are in constant movement. Defined in space and time, these movements involve both displacement and reciprocal flows of human beings. Scholarly effort has focused more upon displacement, commonly referred to as migration and defined as any permanent or quasipermanent change of residence from one location to another (e.g. Lee 1966: 49). Less well understood are the reciprocal flows, called circulation, which involve the interchange of individuals and small groups between places (origins and destinations) that frequently are of differing size and function, such as villages and towns or regional centres and primate cities. Such movement ultimately concludes in the place or community in which it began (Figure 1.1).

Zelinsky (1971: 255-6) defines circulation as 'a great variety of movements, usually short-term, repetitive, or cyclic in nature, but all having in common the lack of any declared intention of a permanent or long-lasting change in residence'. Having been studied within many disciplines, circulation is designated by a confusing variety of terms: 'return migration', 'circular migration', 'wage-labour migration', 'seasonal mobility', 'sojourner movements', 'transhumance', 'commuting'.

For the people who circulate, the basic principle involved is a territorial separation of obligations, activities, and goods. Throughout the Third World, this separateness manifests two major influences. On the one hand is the security associated with the home or natal place through access to land and other local

## THEMES ON CIRCULATION IN THE THIRD WORLD



After Cavalli-Sforza (1963) and Roseman (1971)

FIGURE 1.1 *Reciprocal flows and displacement of people*

resources for food, housing materials, and trading items; through kinship affiliation; through the presence of children and the elderly; and through common values and beliefs. There are, on the other hand, the locationally more widely spread opportunities and associated risks involving local political and religious leaders; kinsfolk; marriageable partners; items for exchange or trade, ceremonials and feasts; and the introduced goods and services of wage employment, commerce, medicine, education, religion, politics, and entertainment. The great variety of circulation resulting from such territorial disjunction (Figure 1.1) has attracted the attention of many social and behavioural scientists, who have adopted in their research a range of philosophical positions, theoretical constructs, and analytic methods.

### Historical antecedents

During this century, three major viewpoints on circulation recur: it permits the integration of distinct places and circumstances; it results from socioeconomic disequilibrium; and it involves the interchange of labour between one mode of production and another. All three perspectives overlap, rather than being discrete or mutually exclusive, since they reflect varying levels of enquiry and changing socioeconomic contexts. At different periods, their complementary nature has been much obscured by the vigour with which scholars have favoured one interpretation over another.

## THEMES ON CIRCULATION IN THE THIRD WORLD

The concept of circulation as the beneficial integration of distinct places or communities dates from the 1920s, mainly characterizes the work of human geographers, and originated with the French led by Vidal de la Blache (1845-1918). Among French geographers, *circulation* refers to the reciprocal flow not only of people but also of ideas, goods, services, and socio-cultural influences (de la Blache 1926: 349-445; Sorre 1961: Part IV). It is the underlying dynamic of population distribution and the connecting mechanisms of varying lifeways. As such, the focus in circulation study may be upon patterns of flow, as of the international movement of passengers and commodities (Capot-Rey 1946), or even more importantly upon the intrinsic nature and meaning of places: their evolution, persistence, and integration (cf. Bhardwaj, in this volume).

This approach is found in studies undertaken within several disciplines. Skinner, an anthropologist, argues that the spatial and economic integration of late Imperial China was achieved by the 'sojourner strategies' adopted in many localities, by which men with training and skills in management, business, crafts, services, or soldiering worked during their adult lives in higher-order towns and cities.

Whereas an ambitious man was likely to leave his local community to work or study elsewhere, his family's residence normally remained unchanged . . . Residence was maintained in one's native place, . . . [which] . . . was in the short run of generations virtually an ascribed characteristic; abode, by contrast, was impermanent. Although a man's abode could vary in the course of his career, his residence perdured. Moreover, membership in . . . the community of one's residence, and hence in the higher-order local and regional systems of which that community formed a part, persisted even when a sojourner was upwardly mobile. It was precisely because those who left could be counted on to return that a man with aspirations to get ahead could expect support from members of his local system beyond the limits of family and lineage (Skinner 1976: 335).

Such persistent circulation gradually endows places and regions of origin with heightened meaning both for the locally born and for outsiders. To analyse the identity of Tamil country (Tamilakam), southeast India, from the second to the nineteenth centuries, the historian Stein invokes the concept of circulation to test 'that evidence of movements provides for some of the conceptions of space – the cognitive maps – of the Tamils at various times in their past' (Stein 1977: 9). After examining stone



## THEMES ON CIRCULATION IN THE THIRD WORLD

and copper inscriptions, temple records, hymns, poems, and other literary sources, he concludes:

The congruence of actual movement and the spatial conceptions of Tamils beyond the ancient *nadu* [locality] was gradual; for most peoples, the process occupied almost a millennium. Rarely was the relationship between the cognitive conception of Tamilakam and the movement of any Tamils isomorphic . . . However, actual circulation of Tamil folk did over time approximate that conception (Stein 1977: 24-5).

A similar interpretation is implicit in the research of social anthropologists who record that movers, when at their destination, continue to be linked with their natal communities by a cross-flow of remittances, investments, food, and visiting kin (e.g. Ross and Weisner 1977). At least as a first point of reference, most geographers and social demographers favour a less comprehensive view of circulation and consider it to involve the interchange only of people between complementary places or situations, studied either as individuals or at various levels of aggregation (e.g. Goldstein 1978).

The idea of circulation emerging in response to socioeconomic disequilibrium derives from anthropological research on wage labour within the plural societies and dual economies of southern Africa. Generally associated with the British functionalist school, this perspective originated in the 1920s and 1930s but was crystallized in Wilson's classic study of migrant workers in Broken Hill, Northern Rhodesia (now Kabwe, Zambia).

The social structure of Broken Hill today is characterized by the presence of a disproportionate number of young men and by a constant circulation of population between itself and the rural areas, between itself and other towns of Northern Rhodesia, and between itself and other territories. The disproportion and the circulation are intimately connected . . . ; they are phenomena of disequilibrium (G. Wilson 1941-2: 3).

This process was investigated further by Mitchell, who called it 'labour circulation' and who documented within the context of Rhodesia its close link with urbanization and structural pluralism (Mitchell 1961b, 1969b).

In general, Africans moved to earn cash with which to pay head taxes, buy trade goods, and meet school fees or, more ambitiously, to accumulate bride price and invest in agricultural land. This fact led Elkan (1960) and other neoclassical economists to use the term 'target worker', to express what they

considered the key factor in this alternating flow of wage labour between village homes and places of employment on plantations, in the mines, and at urban centres. Briefly, the neoclassical position was that the circulation of labour between poorer and better-endowed areas constituted an adjustment of the indigenous population to regional disparities in economic development. Thus Berg (1965: 161) argued that, for west Africa, this flow 'continues to benefit both the labor-exporting villages and the recipient areas', most particularly because of a seasonal fit between the slack period for agriculture throughout the densely-settled savannah and the peak demand for cocoa and coffee workers in the forest belt immediately to the south. But whereas labour circulation throughout much of tropical Africa was relatively spontaneous, the political context within South Africa meant that as early as the 1870s it was strictly controlled and highly regulated. Francis Wilson (1972b: 3) labelled it 'oscillating migration'.

Since the 1970s many economists and sociologists, notably in African and Latin American studies, are associated with the view of circulation as the interchange of labour between different modes of production both within and between countries. Their approach, more macroscopic than those previously noted, is especially concerned with the great transnational flows of labour; it derives inspiration from dependency theory and is dominantly Marxian in its analyses of society and polity. To satisfy basic socioeconomic needs, the migrant worker is seen as locked into the world capitalist system and must move cyclically, and mostly involuntarily, between domestic (precapitalist) and introduced (capitalist) modes of production (e.g. Burawoy 1976; Gregory and Piché 1978). A most forthright exponent of this position is Amin, a political economist who argues that throughout west Africa the uneven penetration of capitalism, as distinct from the autonomous and well-integrated development of rural areas, has created such sectoral, class, and spatial inequalities that 'economic (so-called "rational") choice and notably the decision of the migrant to leave his region of origin, is then completely predetermined . . .' (Amin 1974: 88-9).

Despite recent intellectual fashion, these politicoeconomic analyses of labour circulation are not new and have parallels in the economic and social histories of continental Europe, North America, and various parts of the colonial world. In 1916 Ranneft, a Dutch scholar, examined the 'movement of people in Java', and recognized three phases in the development of the Indonesian economy. During the last, a period of 'capitalistic production' beginning about 1860, reciprocal flows of villagers

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were far more evident than migration (reflecting the differential impact throughout Java of investment from Europe) and impeded the emergence of a local proletariat based in the towns and/or the countryside. Instead, the Javanese involved themselves in both capitalist and peasant modes of production; they were 'traditional men' with a strong stake in their villages of origin (Ranneft 1916, cited by Hugo 1982: 72).

Another historical parallel lies in the concept of 'sojourner', especially as applied from the 1930s by historians and sociologists to the movement of Asian labourers to North America. Based on a study of Chinese laundrymen in Chicago, Siu (1952) delineated the sojourner as constituting a new personality type:

one who clings to the cultural heritage of his own ethnic group and tends to live in isolation, hindering his assimilation to the society in which he resides, often for many years. The sojourn is conceived . . . as a 'job' which is to be finished in the shortest possible time. As an alternative to that end he travels back to his homeland every few years (Siu 1952: 34).

But, as Hune (1977: 39) notes, if migrant workers from the Pacific rim were placed by definition beyond the American experience, then 'they are treated extraneously, not because they are outsiders, but because they contradict the majority society's conception of what the immigrant experience is believed to be'.

Until the late 1970s, these three perspectives of circulation tended to remain specific to different disciplines, with little reference to one another. Yet common to most research was an emphasis upon Third World situations, especially upon peasant and tribal peoples resident mainly in villages, rural market centres, and small towns, which constituted the loci of their circulatory flows.

### **Typologies and data bases**

The many forms of circulation, and the resultant profusion of terms in the literature, have stimulated a concern with typologies of population movement. These efforts, basically descriptive and initially related to the coordinates of time and space, have been amplified to include the purposes served by reciprocal flows and the perspectives of those involved.

For Gould and Prothero (1975), the fact that circulation does not alter the long-term distribution of people distinguishes it from migration (cf. Figure 1.1). Taking tropical Africa as an example, they differentiated the spatial dimension of recurrent flows into rural and urban environments and the temporal into daily,

# THEMES ON CIRCULATION IN THE THIRD WORLD

periodic, seasonal, and long-term (Table 1.1). In this way sixteen categories of circulation are identified, which can, for example, be related to various health hazards to reveal 'different effects in the exposure of population to disease, in the transmission of disease, and in the development of programmes for the improvement of public health' (Prothero 1977: 264-5). Similarly, de Gonzales (1961) was concerned with the effects of wage-labour mobility upon the family and takes period of absence from the home village as the basis for distinguishing between moves that are seasonal, temporary nonseasonal, recurrent, continuous, and permanent (cf. Ashton, in this volume).

Although such typologies are basically descriptive devices, presented originally to focus attention upon circulation and distinguish it from migration, gradually the categories of

TABLE 1.1 *Typology of circulation in tropical Africa, with examples of associated activities and health hazards*

<i>Space</i>	<i>Time</i>			
	<i>Daily</i>	<i>Periodic (24 hours- 12 months)</i>	<i>Seasonal (one or more)</i>	<i>Long-term (12 months- several years)</i>
Rural-rural	Cultivating* Collecting (firewood, water) (1)	Hunting (1)	Pastoralism (1) (3)	Labouring (1) (3)
Rural-urban	Commuting (1)	Pilgrimage (1) (2) (3) (4)	Labouring (1)	Labouring (1) (2) (3) (4)
Urban-rural	Cultivating (1)	Trading (2)	Labouring (1)	Trading (2) (3)
Urban-urban	Intra-urban commuting (3)	Pilgrimage (2) (4)	Trading (2)	Official/ commercial transfer (4)

Some examples of health hazards

- (1) Exposure to diseases from movements through different ecological zones (e.g. malaria, trypanosomiasis, schistosomiasis, onchocerciasis)
- (2) Exposure to diseases from movements involving contacts between different groups of people (e.g. smallpox, poliomyelitis)
- (3) Physical stress (e.g. fatigue, undernutrition/malnutrition)
- (4) Psychological stress—problems of adjustment

\* Examples of activities/groups associated with different categories of circulation.

Source: Prothero 1977: 265

TABLE 1.2 *Time and forms of mobility in Third World research*

<i>Place and date of field research</i>	<i>'Commuting'</i>	<i>Circulation 'Oscillation'</i>	<i>'Circular migration'</i>	<i>Migration</i>	<i>Range of time</i>
Indonesia 1973 Villages: west Java (Hugo 1978)	Regular travel to and from work or education (not necessarily each day)		Continuous absence for up to 6 months	Continuous absence for at least 6 months	Daily journey to at least 6 months
Indonesia 1975-6 Hamlets, central Java (Mantra 1981)	Absent for 6-24 hours		Movement for at least 1 day but return within 1 year	Intentional shift of residence for at least 1 year	6 hours to at least 1 year
Malaysia 1977 Villages, north Kelantan (Maude 1981)	Regularly absent, but return at least once each week		Continuous absence for up to 12 months while retaining household membership	Continuous absence for at least 12 months but might return later	Weekly journey to at least 1 year
Vanuatu 1969-70 Tonga island (Bedford 1973a)		Routine absence for 1 day to less than 1 month	Absence for at least 1 month, with intent to return	'Permanent' move with no intent to return, but may visit	Routine daily to 'permanent' migration
Peru 1971-2 Communities, Cuzco department (Skeldon 1977)		('Pendular migration') Absent for up to 3 months	('Semipermanent migration with return') Absent for several years	Definitive change of residence; no return except visiting	Less than 3 months to definitive residential change

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Liberia 1976 Village, Nimba county (Smith 1977)	('Regular circulation') Absences up to 24 hours: for work, trade, subsistence	Absent for at least 24 hours and no more than 1 year. Short-term: 24 hours to up to 1 month; Long-term: 1 month to 1 year	'Permanent' change of residence	Daily journeys to 'permanent' change of residence
Hawaii, 1971 Village, Puna district (Mukherji 1975)	Daily absence for 5-6 hours for work or education	Absent for at least 24 hours with intent to return Short-term: 24 hours to 1 year; Long-term: at least 1 year	Shift of 'permanent' residence: maximum, 40 years	5-6 hours to 40 years
Papua New Guinea 1974-6 Simbu, New Ireland provinces (Young 1977)				
Thailand 1976-7 Village, Chiang Mai province (Singhanetra-Renard 1981)	6 hours to 5 months: daily/weekly travel to work, school, trade; seasonal/periodic travel to wagedwork, kin business	Routine daily movements to brief casual visits	Returned after period away from village	Resident outside village during survey
			Absent 1 week to 14 years, but maintain household registration and may visit periodically	No specific range No specific range during data collection. Continuum of time, 6 hours to 'total displacement', established from field record
Range of time	5-6 hours to 5 months	Daily to less than 3 months	1 day to 14 years	5-6 hours to 'total displacement'

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movement defined in them have become imbued with analytical significance and theoretical meaning. While different kinds of circulation may be complementary, they have tended to be viewed as generally exclusive of each other – an impression that has been reinforced by the need of research workers to determine minimal criteria for the collection of field data in Third World societies. Thus time, for instance, is divided into discrete segments in seven out of nine local or regional studies undertaken during the 1970s (Table 1.2, columns 2-5). On the other hand, the composite record (row ten) reveals a less tidy framework, since ‘commuting’ ranges from five or six hours to five months and ‘circular migration’ from one day to fourteen years. Singhanetra-Renard (1981) obtained a parallel result in northwest Thailand (row nine), when abandoning the assumption that forms of mobility are discrete in time, and thereby highlighted the great flexibility in and complementary nature of people’s movement on the ground.

Another classificatory approach is to conceive of mobility as a continuum and relate it to the social, economic, and political contexts within which it is enmeshed. According to Conaway (1977), more than forty different studies suggest that the nature of circulation reflects the degree to which communities of origin are integrated with ‘national political or sociocultural systems’

TABLE 1.3 *National systems and circulation*

<i>Regional characteristics in a national system</i>	<i>Categories of circular movement</i>
Least amount of economic security, least amount role/status flexibility. Frontier, economically depressed, non-modern, non-industrialized regions. Access to national rights and privileges curtailed by limited communications and socio- geographical marginality.	I. Seasonal, non-seasonal, planned and sporadic movement II. Extended moves: weeks to several months III. Once a life-time or several moves lasting one or more years
Greatest economic security and role/status flexibility. High degree of regional-national integration and communication entailing modernization, industrialization. Nationally recognized rights and privileges widely enjoyed.	IV. Weekends spent at home base, weekdays at place of employment V. Daily commuting

Source: Conaway 1977: 3

(Table 1.3). From this perspective, daily commuting exhibits the accessibility of education, health services, franchisement, minimum legal wages, and social justice, whereas seasonal wage-earners from frontier regions enjoy far fewer of the rights and privileges available in the national system.

In the specific case of rural-urban mobility in Indonesia, Hugo (in this volume) argues that to array the most ephemeral to the most permanent of voluntary transfers along a continuum greatly clarifies the varying degrees of commitment which individuals have to their villages of origin and to their city destinations (Table 1.4). For west Java, indices of such commitment would be the primary domicile of the family of procreation as distinct from those of its mobile members; the different locations of land, dwellings, or other property owned; the ratio of income or goods remitted between households of destination and origin; the frequency of return visits; the primary orientation of social or political roles performed by movers within village and city; and whether their official registration had been transferred from place of origin to place of destination (cf. Chapman 1978: 564-5). Hugo's emphasis upon the degree and content of commitment that persons have to differing locales thus removes the classification of movement from dualistic frames of reference. It also begins to capture the inherent ambiguity and fluidity that is so much a feature of Third World societies (cf. Marshall and Wood, both in this volume). Moreover, in determining whether or not a move is circular, the emphasis is shifted to the actions of those involved rather than their declared intent to return at or before moment of departure, which several commentators have rejected as opaque or impractical (e.g. Goldstein 1978: 13; Ward 1980: 129; cf. Zelinsky 1971: 225-6; Gould and Prothero 1975: 42).

As with the detailed analysis of reciprocal flows, it is difficult to test and refine such typologies because of lack of pertinent information. Data from national census and large-scale surveys yield only cross-sectional snapshots of forms of behaviour that are both complex and exceedingly sensitive to time. Intercensal comparisons based upon questions about places of birth and of residence identify long-term displacements of people (cf. Figure 1.1), but provide limited insights into the ongoing relationships within and between movement processes, population redistribution, and socioeconomic change. Most evidence about Third World circulation consequently derives from micro studies. Prospective mobility registers have been used in village-based research in the Solomon Islands, Liberia, central Java, and northwest Thailand (Chapman 1975; Smith 1977; Mantra 1981; Singhanetra-Renard 1981), but more widespread has been the



TABLE 1.4 *Rural to urban population mobility in a Third World context*

<i>Type of spontaneous mover</i>	<i>Characteristics of move</i>	<i>Commitment to city</i>	<i>Commitment to village</i>
Commuter	Work in city but return to village each evening. Can occur regularly (each weekday) or spasmodically (to market produce etc.)	Very little financial or social investment in city. Mixes with urban dwellers but on a limited basis.	High. Family remains in the village. Retain all political and social roles in village. May have village based income source. Bulk of income earned in city spent in village.
Seasonal or shuttle migrant	Search for work to augment meagre agricultural incomes.	Very little financial or social investment in city. Sleep in open, group-rented room or employer-provided barracks. Social interaction almost entirely with other migrants from village. Employment in traditional or day-laboring sectors.	Family of procreation remains in the village. Retain all political and social roles in village. Remit bulk of income (after living expenses) to village. Retain village citizenship. Almost total orientation to village. Usually retain work source in the village.
Target migrant	Come to city for limited period (though longer than a season) to accomplish a specific purpose (e.g. reach a particular education level).	Moderate. May bring family of procreation. Seek more permanent accommodation, e.g. individually rented room. Have more interaction with settled urban population but retain close contact with fellow villagers in city. Usually employed in traditional sector.	Strong links maintained with family in village through visits and letters, although some roles may be temporarily given up. Remittances remain regular and high. Usually retain village citizenship. Usually retain a source of income in the village.
Life cycle stage migrant	Migrants who move to the city at one or more specific stages of their life cycle.		

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Working life migrant	Migrants who spend their entire working lives in the city but intend, and eventually do, retire to their home village.	High. Family of procreation always accompanies. Purchases or builds individual housing, occupies employer (e.g. government) supplied housing or rents housing on long-term basis. Often in formal sector occupations. High level of interaction with settled urban population but retain contact with fellow migrants through associations etc. Always transfers citizenship to city. Assists new arrivals to city from home village.	Sufficient links maintained with village to ensure acceptance on eventual return. Investments in housing and land although unable to maintain most social and political roles. Periodic remittances to family. Return visits made at end of fasting months and for important life cycle ceremonies.
Permanent migrant	Migrants committed totally to exchanging a rural for an urban way of life.	Total.	Very little.
Undecided migrant	Migrants who have no clear intentions to either stay in the city or return to the village.	Unknown.	Unknown.

Source: Hugo 1981: Table 1

retrospective collection of movement histories (see Goldstein and Goldstein 1981).

The common complaint, that details about individuals, small groups, and communities are not susceptible to wider comparative analysis, reflects both conceptual and technical misunderstanding expressed most often in 'the myth of uniqueness and typicality' (Chapman 1981: 86). At the technical level, a codified means of synthesizing biographical data has been evolved by French scholars, based upon their experience in north and west Africa (Haeringer 1972). Conceptually, cases studied at the microscale are neither unique, in the sense of being idiosyncratic, nor typical, in the sense of representing some statistical norm. Rather, their selection according to criteria indicative of specified research goals means that findings may be generalized to other cases for which the same contextual conditions hold. Such generalizations, however, do not derive from statistical extrapolation but from an astute mix of logic and intuition proceeding from a detailed understanding of a piece of social reality (cf. Mitchell, in this volume).

The difficulties of recall, always present in the retrospective collection of mobility as with other data, can be alleviated by the use of the life-history matrix. First constructed by Balán and his associates (1969) during research in Monterrey, Mexico, this permits unstructured discussion about a person's lifecourse according to changes in critical events (birth, marriage, education, occupation, land ownership), which may be related to moves between various places at different times. Urban and rural research in Mexico (Balán, Browning, and Jelin 1973), Brazil (Perlman 1976), Colombia (Corno 1979), and Thailand (Lauro 1979a; Singhanetra-Renard 1981) has demonstrated that this technique requires a sensitive understanding of the people under study if it is to capture the details of mobility intertwined with other life events. Otherwise, a standard retrospective record will result: that is, a chronology of more permanent and long-distant movements without reference to their varied contexts. Considerable problems remain in the processing of such longitudinal data but Lauro (1979b), in a promising development, has identified lateral and vertical relationships within a field record to ensure that links and contingencies in mobility behaviour were not frozen — as usually occurs — into cross-sectional snapshots (cf. Balán *et al.* 1969).

Evidence of circulation can be gleaned from the demographic record of some countries of francophone Africa, where multiround surveys have constituted a basic instrument of data collection, with identical questionnaires being administered at

regular intervals to the same population or in the same region (e.g. Lacombe 1969, 1972). Further information may be derived from a sequence of national censuses, but few demographers have plumbed this source. In a notable exception, Goldstein and Goldstein (1979) have investigated rural-urban flows for Thailand by comparing place of birth with places of residence for 1965 and 1970. Despite the inevitable coarseness of this matrix, they show that repeat and return migration accounted for more than a tenth of all recorded movements and that about one in four adults who returned to small towns and rural areas originated from cities (cf. Goldstein and Goldstein, in this volume).

### **Recent explanatory models**

Since the early 1960s, considerable effort has been expended in attempts to explain reciprocal flows, despite the major problems in documenting their nature, magnitude, and persistence. Four emphases have dominated: changes in circulation as response to modernization; circulation in the context of social field and social network; circulation as a means to maximize family welfare and avert risk; and circulation as a result of the penetration of peasant and tribal societies by capitalism.

#### *Circulation and modernization*

In a most ambitious statement, the 'hypothesis of the mobility transition', the geographer Zelinsky argues 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' (Zelinsky 1971: 221-2). A society will pass through four unilineal 'phases' of mobility experience — premodern traditional, early transitional, late transitional, and advanced — during its transformation from a traditional-subsistence to an urban-industrial state, in the course of which there is 'vigorous acceleration of circulation'.

This evolution in mobility assumes a repetition of the Western experience, whose applicability to the Third World has been challenged in several studies. Throughout Indonesia, for instance, changes in mobility patterns after about 1500 did not conform to this sequence and the most influential forces have been those of colonization rather than of modernization (Hugo, in this volume). Even after the independence of Indonesia, movement behaviour reflected for many years much of the social and economic structure of the colonial era. Likewise Bedford (1973b), in documenting a

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transition for wage-labour circulation in Vanuatu from 1850, concluded that it represents dual participation in two socio-economic systems: one traditional and the other introduced. Bedford (1973a: 140-1) commented in similar fashion to Hugo:

There is no transitional sequence applicable to all societies, even though there is inter-dependence between mobility and socioeconomic changes associated with modernization. The manner in which these relationships are manifested in movement behaviour . . . is very much dependent on the society in which change occurs . . . It is thus more realistic to conceive of a number of transitional sequences with different explanatory frameworks providing the necessary links between pattern and process (cf. Peterson, Skeldon, Wood, in this volume).

In response to this and other conclusions from research in the Third World, Zelinsky has declared that circulation is 'symptomatic of the problems of underdevelopment' and consequently 'promises to endure, with further variations and complexities, as long as underdevelopment persists' (Zelinsky 1979: 185, 187). Despite the difficulties of assembling data to counter the ahistoricism of this position, there is increasing evidence that circulatory flows were a fundamental fact of precontact societies and that their basic dimensions often persist to the present day.

First reported by Prothero (1957, 1959), the *masu abucin rani* of northern Nigeria – 'men who eat away in the dry season' – are villagers who customarily moved from their home areas and thus conserved food supplies. Despite some element of pressure implied in the English translation, the practice was voluntary: families travelled to other places, usually over quite short distances, to work at crafts or labouring, to maintain social contacts, and to meet various kinds of obligations. Workers were paid in kind and in cowrie shells, the currency of the time. Apparently, by the 1930s, population growth and pressure upon land resources meant, at least in some marginal areas, that the need to move became more of a necessity and extended over longer distances. These involved young adult males: *yan tuma da gora* ('sons who jump with a gourd'), so named because of the limited equipment which they carried.

Apart from such environmental impediments, Swindell (1984) suggests that changes in precolonial circulation after 1900 reflect mainly the abolition of domestic slavery and only secondarily the imposition of head taxes and the introduction of a new currency. Abolition released vast numbers of agricultural workers, traders, and labourers, who subsequently engaged in dry-season circulation and sought wage employment in areas of both urban expan-

sion and cash-crop development (cocoa, coffee, cotton). On the other hand, improvements in the colonial apparatus and the greater stability of the new currency reduced the comparative advantage of regularly travelling considerable distance. Yet the practice of *cin rani* persisted and, despite marked changes between 1900 and 1930 in the nature of moves made, the major destinations, and the types of employment secured, there was considerable overlap in systems of circulation before and during the colonial period.

*Circulation, social field and social network*

The concept of social field and social network underpins several decades of research in south-central Africa by the sociologist Mitchell, who views labour circulation as a continuing dialectic in specified political and economic settings between the centrifugal attraction of wage employment and the centripetal power of village obligations, social relationships, and kinship ties (cf. Mitchell 1959, 1969). During the 1960s, this formulation was expanded in Melanesia to include all reciprocal flows, irrespective of purpose or duration (Chapman 1976). Critical to Mitchell's approach is his distinction between 'necessary' and 'sufficient' conditions: between the more aggregate and mainly economic factors as opposed to the personal needs and dispositions that surround the decision to circulate. Even so, 'we can only appreciate the causal factors in labour migration by trying to see town and country or reserve and labour centre as one social field and to analyse the forces operating within it. I doubt whether social science is yet in a position to be able to do this' (Mitchell 1959: 279).

About the same time, when studying wage labourers in East London, South Africa, the anthropologist Mayer (1961) reported that one group (Red Xhosa) maintained intense links with their natal communities, and another (School Xhosa) did not and readily accepted urbanizing influences. Whereas the social networks of the former spanned village and town, those of the latter were divided into disjoint sets (village or town) with little connection between the two. On this basis, Garbett and Kapferer (1970: 195) argued that rural-urban mobility should be viewed as a total field of 'social and economic relationships involving both town and country', within which the decisions of potential movers are constrained through time by the structure of social connections of which they are part. This notion was formalized in a decision model specifying 'the individual set in a network of social relationships' (Garbett 1975: 124). The analysis of labour circula-

tion thus involves different levels of abstraction, which Mitchell in this volume has crystallized in the distinction between the 'setting' and 'situation' of social action — the macroscopic economic, political, and administrative context as against the particular circumstances within which movers are enmeshed — and between 'social field' and 'social network': the diverse social forces that connect places of origin and destination, some aspects of which affect the kinds of mobility decisions taken by the individual.

Numerous studies have documented the varied links between communities of origin and destination, which may be so intense that social structures are bi- or multi-local and the varied locations of village movers become a socio-spatial extension of the natal place (Ryan 1970). Less well understood are the processes that underpin such connections. Based upon complementary research in Nairobi, Kenya, Ross and Weisner (1977: 362-3) suggest six possibilities: continuing availability, to those away, of land, livestock, and other rural resources; the social acceptability of these resources being owned and controlled by patrilineal, patrilocal groups of frequently absent males; presence within the village of family members to work local holdings; a level of simple agricultural technology that reduces the need for on-the-spot farm management; norms of reciprocity that derive from common kinship, language, and culture; and reasonable accessibility and travel cost between village and town (cf. van Amersfoort 1978: 21-2).

One of the few cross-national tests of such propositions is provided by Strauch (1980, 1984), from the standpoint of Chinese communities in Malaysia and Hong Kong. While kinship ties are equally strong in both places, so that people shuttle back and forth between rural domiciles and urban workplaces, the Hong Kong community is less cohesive in that it contains recent immigrants from China, who gradually transfer their allegiance from rural valley to urban metropolis. Strauch's (1980: 19) conclusion is strongly reminiscent of Mitchell and Garbett:

Patterns of population mobility are determined by a dialectic comprising individual needs and calculated choices on the one hand and overarching frameworks of political and economic systems on the other. Such systems present some options but preclude others, thereby structuring the range of [mobility] choices open to the individual.

As with most of the functionalist literature, Mitchell's explanatory framework is time free. It assumes that labour circulation will cease whenever a balance is struck between the counterposed sets of centripetal and centrifugal influences and implies that it is a transitory phase in the transformation from a basically rural to a

dominantly urban society. By contrast, a study of Nairobi over two generations by the economist Elkan (in this volume) has established that longer and longer periods of city residence need not be accompanied by the emergence of a permanent and urban-based proletariat, who depend entirely upon wage incomes and whose ties with rural areas of origin become increasingly tenuous.

*Circulation, family welfare and risk aversion*

The view that labour circulation reflects the attempt of rural households to maximize family welfare and/or avert risk also arises from field research in tropical Africa, notably of factory workers in Kampala, Uganda (Elkan 1959, 1960) and of migrant cocoa farmers in southern Ghana (Hill 1963). After stressing the 'tenacity with which people cling to their land', Elkan (1959: 195) notes:

[If] a man were to withdraw permanently from the countryside, he would be giving up both a part of his income and also a form of insurance against unemployment or ill-health. If there were provisions against these risks, . . . the value to a man of his farm would be correspondingly diminished, but the farm would still yield him an income, and this is so irrespective of whether the wage he earns in town is high or low and whether or not family houses are available in town.

Such thinking was overshadowed by the Todaro (1969) model, based upon unemployment research in Kenya and deeply rooted in neoclassical economics. Rural-urban movement was posited as a response to expected earnings, defined as the combination of rural-urban wage differentials and the likelihood of securing a job in town, as manifest in levels of urban unemployment. Yet the original model, as well as its many revisions (Todaro 1976: 36-46), is silent about the vast circulation of labour that occurs within rural areas, where wage differentials are assumed not to exist, and about why workers persistently return to their villages even when wage differentials and levels of unemployment remain constant.

For decades, social scientists have pointed to the kinds of economic calculus that underpin the dynamics of rural lifestyles and the reciprocal flow of wage labourers. Brookfield (1970: 14-15) observed, when reviewing the work of geographers in the south Pacific during the 1960s:

Peasants have greater opportunity to minimize risk, especially when they continue to produce a large part of their own food, and sustain an institutionalized system of reciprocity in full operation. Cash-cropping as a partial activity as distinct from



full cash-crop specialization, and migrant labour as distinct from full commitment to wage employment, become choices competing for inputs. Other choices include subsistence, entrepreneurship, and sundry forms of investment. In the game against an uncertain external world, peasant strategy is to keep the range of choices open and to widen the range wherever possible. Within this range they can then select according to inclination, or according to a wholly rational process which seems to operate as though they had a series of indifference curves, calibrated by perceived net return. Freedom to shift inputs also facilitates the meeting of reciprocal obligations, by means of which individuals in turn sustain their own access to reciprocal aid, and hence maximize the range of choices. The system is thus self-sustaining, and adaptive.

Such principles were rediscovered by economists in the late 1970s and formalized in several parallel, but largely independent statements (Stark 1978; Fan and Stretton 1980; Roberts with Elizondo 1980). Thus Fan and Stretton generalize from circulation research in southeast Asia and propose two complementary models, one of which considers the spatial allocation of a family's labour resources and the other the mobility options available to a particular member. The recurrent but temporary employment of villagers as *samlor* drivers in Bangkok (Meinkoth 1962), ice cream vendors in Jakarta (Jellinek 1978), textile workers in Bandung (Hugo 1978a: chapter 6), and carpenters and masons in Manila (Stretton 1981) may each and all be explained by the simultaneous effort of the household to maximize the income available from the rural and urban sectors, with expenditure allocated between urban and rural goods so as to enhance its utility to the family. There is little risk in such a strategy, especially within communities at the knife-edge of subsistence, since family members capitalize upon the absorptive capacity of the informal sector, depend upon kinship networks to identify longer-term jobs, depart during slack periods of the agricultural cycle, leave behind dependents and travel alone to the worksite, spend little in town on overnight shelter, and return to the rural household whenever their labour is needed for planting and harvesting subsistence and cash crops.

Integral to this process are transportation links between places of origin and destination, and the flow of remittances between them. Since the early 1970s, throughout southeast Asia for example, the connection of many villages by laterite and metalled roads to highways and hence to potential workplaces has enabled residents to commute up to forty kilometres each day by bicycle,

motor cycle, and other small vehicles, as well as to take public transport over far greater distances (e.g. Leinbach 1981). The socioeconomic links between absent worker and natal family are manifest in what Caldwell (1976: 337) has termed 'wealth flows': money, goods, services, and guarantees that are transferred in both directions. While the money remitted from urban incomes undoubtedly confers a net benefit on recipient households, often ensuring their basic needs and very survival, evidence about its broad effect on rural development and social change is inconclusive and academic opinion sharply divided (cf. Rempel and Lobdell 1978; Byres 1979; Lipton 1980; Stark 1980).

Very few studies consider the precise relationship of forms of mobility to regional agricultural structure, household characteristics, disposition of family labour, and the mix of rural incomes derived locally and from other regions (Goddard 1974). In a more recent study, Roberts with Elizondo (1980) examined the undocumented movement of farm workers to the United States from four quite distinct areas of rural Mexico. In Bajio, the most commercially oriented of the four, mechanization of cereal and vegetable production is well advanced, farm revenues derive from several sources, and household incomes are high and stable even though families are large. Here, regular circulation to the United States not only helps defray the cost of farm machinery and supplies, including imported foodstuffs, but also has no adverse impact upon the family labour force. In Oaxaca, at the opposite end of the socioeconomic spectrum, the subsistence cultivation of corn dominates, few opportunities exist for off-farm employment, and household incomes are both low and unstable. Consequently most movement is to quite distant urban centres within Mexico, since circulation across national boundaries is far too risky an alternative. Viewed from the standpoint of how rural households deploy family labour off the farm, circulation is an inherent part of a complex response to agricultural change, rather than simply a residual outcome of the disparity between the local supply of and demand for farm workers (see also Roberts 1982).

### *Circulation and capitalist penetration*

Labour circulation is similarly the focus of more structural explanations, partly in reaction to models of social field, social network, risk aversion, and utility maximization, partly out of concern that too little attention has been paid to the political and economic processes within which individual acts of movement occur (cf. Mukherji, in this volume). The penetration of peasant and tribal

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societies by capitalism is claimed deliberately to increase local demands for cash, commonly by such mechanisms as new currencies, head taxes, and trade stores, so that adult males have little option other than to participate in a system of migrant labour to satisfy minimal needs. Overall, as a result, regional differences are intensified, village economies are impoverished through residents having to subsidize absent members, and the stratification of rural society is either initiated or enhanced.

Common elements in this politico-economic transformation of Third World societies are the needs of the capitalist world system, the character of preexisting social formations, and the historical context, couched most often in abstract terms and in Marxist frames of reference. Although the particular, yet contrasting structures of the capitalist and the domestic, rural sector each control their means of production and reproduction, the encroachment of the former expropriates the surpluses of the latter for its own perpetuation ('reproduction'). For Meillassoux (1972, 1975), the availability and movement of labour to workplaces during the slack season in agriculture depends entirely upon societies peripheral to the capitalist sector. Adult males, unaccompanied by families, receive low and basically subsistence rates of pay during seasonal employment, while the entire cost and effort of sustaining potential wage labourers at other times during the agricultural cycle is borne by the rural community, as is also expenditure on rearing children, caring for the sick, and providing for the elderly.

Rey (1973), on the other hand, takes a less cosmic view of this unequal relationship. He attaches far greater importance to the internal differences and class conflicts found within local communities themselves, especially of how these permit the capitalist sector to strike alliances with groups or leaders who have authority over indigenous (domestic) sources of labour. In a lineage-based society, where elders control the availability of women for marriage, young men can be encouraged to go away to work and earn money for bride price. In such a situation, some of the proceeds from capitalist exploitation accrue to those groups or leaders dominating the domestic mode of production. If, however, internal conflicts or distinct social groupings do not exist or are less manipulable by outside capitalist interests, then the circulation of wage labourers may be less evident or even absent.

Very little field research supports the details of this process and Gerold-Scheepers and van Binsbergen (1978: 30) complain of the failure of Marxist scholars to 'translate eloquent and illuminating abstractions into ordinary, prosaic case studies'. This contrasts with the description that the geographer Townsend (1980: 286)

provides for the Hube of Morobe Province, Papua New Guinea, where about half the able-bodied men and a quarter of the women usually are away.

At home, many nubile women grow anxious about their prospects in life, many old people regret the passing of the vitality of the village, and many young people keenly anticipate the day of departure. One-third or more of potential coffee production is neglected each year. Probably twenty per cent of the migrant men each morning confront the humiliating search for waged work; many migrant women are frustrated by the lack of [food] gardens and the consequent loss of their role as providers and domestic managers. A kind of modern diaspora, but without a sense of destiny. How did this situation come about?

Proceeding beyond broad notions of peripheral capitalism and the articulation of contrary modes of production, Townsend (1980) presents a framework that gives far greater attention to the agents involved, their role in shaping new values, and the people's perceptions of and responses to unfamiliar ideologies. He traces how, between 1884 and 1932, the Lutheran mission both initiated and sustained an 'ideological, cultural and material revolution' with such success that gradually 'development came to be seen as a state to be attained, by correct practice and accommodating association with Europeans' (ibid: 290). The positive response to the wage-labour opportunities resulting from the expansion of the world capitalist system, in the form of coconut plantations and gold mining, was shattered during the Second World War, as the Hube saw destroyed the myth of European omnipotence. There followed a resurgence of local autonomy, notably through the establishment of trade stores and cooperatives to grow coffee, but improvements in transport links and marketing facilities slowly reduced rural isolation. By the 1970s, wage-earners were staying in town longer and more and more families were leaving their villages to join husbands and sons. This emergent pattern coincided, however, with a reduced demand for untrained or semi-skilled labour so that households became far more dependent on the urban environment at the very time they were forgoing revenue from local coffee groves and the subsistence productivity of wives and daughters. Concludes Townsend (1980: 293): 'The Hube case is just one example of how societies have been changed detrimentally . . . by their articulation with the world capitalist system. One can understand Hube's present condition only by analysing the successive demands of the world system (converts, labour, raw

materials, markets) and the means by which these demands were implemented and transmitted'.

As with Zelinsky's hypothesis of the mobility transition, most structural models emphasize discontinuities rather than continuities in the process of circulation over time, while the socioeconomic changes portrayed have the same remorseless and preordained character as do Zelinsky's 'phases of mobility'. Structuralist explanations assume, far too often, that peasant and tribal societies before colonial contact were socially and economically undifferentiated, indulged in no trade or in no exchange of labour, and did not subsequently filter the impact of capitalist forces according to the principles of indigenous, domestic production (see Swindell 1979, but cf. Murray 1978, 1980). As two neo-Marxists have cautioned: 'We should not be too sure that under all conditions modern migrations constitute a negative phenomenon' (Gerold-Scheepers and van Binsbergen 1978: 31).

Conditions do exist that relate plausibly to the politico-economic transformation of Third World societies, yet may be found upon closer inspection to reflect factors like the cumulative inertia of persistent isolation. From 1960 until 1972, and mainly in response to population pressure, one third of all able-bodied men from the Islamic Riff of Morocco circulated to the Netherlands as unskilled workers. Socioeconomic pressures upon the Riff homeland have intensified since the mid 1970s, as husbands found it more and more difficult to hold their jobs during regular visits to north Africa, a consequence of European-wide recession and stricter regulation of migrant labour. 'The problematic situation in which [Riff society] finds itself today is not a consequence of colonial or neocolonial capitalistic penetration. The very tragedy of the Riff is its isolation that has protected the area from effective penetration by the outside world in the past, and now also insulates it from effective government-sponsored change' (van Amersfoort 1978: 25).

### **The need for integrated explanation**

Although circulation in the Third World occurs between a great diversity of regions, places, and communities, the dominant empirical focus is upon rural-urban flows, notably of wage-labourers. Does this mean that most circulation in the countryside is transitory, one day to be redirected towards towns or cities and perhaps replaced by permanent relocation? Rural community studies, on the contrary, reveal the coming and going of people for reasons of kinship, marriage, ceremony, local trade, subsistence agriculture, social welfare, and political asylum to be just

as important as those reciprocal flows that postdate the incursion of western-style money (e.g. Chapman 1975: Tables 9.4-9.6; Mantra 1981: Table 4.15; Mukherji 1981: Table 8.9; Singhanetra-Renard 1981: Table 6.7). 'Circulation, rather than being transitional or ephemeral, is a time-honored and enduring mode of behavior, deeply rooted in a great variety of cultures and found at all stages of socio-economic change' (Chapman and Prothero 1977: 5).

The choice of explanatory models displays similar partiality. The explanation that wage-labour circulation results from the uneven and differential spread of capitalism into peasant and tribal societies is as tautologous as the neoclassical models that Amin so resolutely condemns (Amin 1974: 90-3; cf. Chapman 1975: 143). For, as Hugo (1982: 72) observes, economic explanations are as complementary as they are exclusive. Maximization of welfare and aversion to risk point to processes operating at the level of the small community, the household, and the individual, whereas structural perspectives emphasize more aggregate realities (the region, the country, the continent) and broader forces more apparent at that scale. The prospect for more integrated theory is recognized by Gerold-Scheepers and van Binsbergen (1978) who, in a refreshingly balanced presentation, argue that structural analysis is common to both Marxist and functionalist perspectives of circulation.

As marxists may be expected to turn to concrete empirical research in order to substantiate and enrich their theories, and as structural-functionalists will discover the riches of marxist theory in terms of synchronic scope and particularly historical depth, it can be hoped that these two approaches . . . will grow towards one another, producing . . . a viable social theory of African migration (1978: 32).

A painstaking study of how families in Lesotho are affected by the persistent labour circulation of village males leads Murray (1981: 175) to a similar conclusion: 'The anthropological method of prolonged participant observation offers an invaluable opportunity of revising or elaborating, with appropriate empirical evidence, some of the rather abstract formulations proposed by the radical theorists of underdevelopment'.

Such commentaries underline the need for conceptual synthesis. Today, as from time immemorial, Third World peoples have circulated between places and circumstances of complementary attributes and character. Connections of kin, as well as comparable resources, parallel social practices, and common world views, tie together locationally-spread communities which,

given the consequent cross-flows of people, social scientists have come to designate as places of origin and of destination. With the differential penetration of capitalism into the territory or state of which these communities form part, there is a perceptible increase in the number of such places. In addition, they are more diverse, more unlike, and become progressively linked by a greater variety and intensity of cross flows: food, money, gifts, information, ideas, technologies. These reciprocal connections define social fields, within which the choices of small groups and individuals gradually become both more intricate and more contingent, as households seek collectively through the act of circulation to maximize family welfare and their members to avert risk. The continuing dialectic between local households and communities on the one hand, and their cultural, socioeconomic, and political environments on the other, may be conceived as one of changing sets of relationships. Such relationships, as well as the transformations experienced by both whole communities and the wider society, denote processes of far greater subtlety and complexity than can be reduced to a remorseless sequence of lineally-arranged stages from things 'rural' to things 'urban'.

The essays which follow are concerned with these relationships and with the transformations experienced, at scales ranging from individuals through communities to national and international societies. They illustrate the subtle and complex processes which are involved. The problems associated with attempts at integrated explanation and prognosis for the future, from both conceptual and technical points of view, are discussed in the light of the evidence from these essays in the editorial essay which concludes the volume.

# Part I

## Holistic perspectives

The papers presented under this heading have certain broadly based and wide-ranging things to say about circulation. At the same time each of them is firmly grounded in the field area and the research experience of the author. This is particularly true of the reflections on circulation associated with wage labour by Clyde Mitchell. He has been for us and for many others in various disciplines a mentor and an inspiration.

Mitchell's work in south-central Africa in the 1950s and 1960s established major principles relating to circulation, particularly with reference to the influence of aggregate and individual factors on who moves and why decisions to move are taken. These principles were based on his own research and that of others, particularly colleagues at the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute (now the Institute for Social Research in the University of Zambia). They have been extended and developed through further work in south-central Africa.

The essay here not only illuminates the past, it is also looking forward. It underlines both conceptual and technical issues involved in the study of circulation, and links earlier work on the process of labour circulation with more recent concerns with social fields and social networks. That the actions of individuals can be understood only by being placed within their diverse contexts is the crux of the distinction that Mitchell makes between the macro 'setting' and the micro 'situation' in which actual and potential movers find themselves. Setting and situation and social field and social network refer to different scales and levels of enquiry which must be recognized.

Mitchell's seminal work must be seen in the setting of a racially and economically plural society in south-central Africa. Harold Olofson has been concerned with the traditionally highly mobile



## HOLISTIC PERSPECTIVES

Hausa-speaking people of northern Nigeria, who through travelling and trading have been involved in a diaspora throughout West Africa and which has extended into Central and North Africa. In 1976 he published a paper on *Yawon Dandi* ('the walk of Dandi') a form of movement associated with deviance from the norms of Hausa society. Here he examines *Yawon Dandi* in the wider context of the many forms of Hausa mobility and then relates this to Hausa ideas on conformity and nonconformity. Two contradictory aspects of Hausa society seem to inform spatial mobility: the stable interdependence of the domestic group and the individual search for independence and freedom. Consequently once individuals make their way beyond the entrance of the compound of the domestic group no cognitive distinction is made between a brief stroll or a long-distance journey.

While himself inevitably an alien in Hausa society Olofson, taking a lexical approach, examines Hausa terms for different forms of mobility (the emic view) and relates them to categories used by western researchers (the etic view). In this way he is able to provide a view of mobility from the 'inside', from the standpoints of those who are involved in movement. To further emphasize the 'inside' perspective Olofson classifies each movement as open or closed and as circular or linear, rather than in terms of permanence or impermanence which is one of the most common distinctions made in the literature on population movements. In these various ways the paper is pointing important directions in which future work on mobility should be undertaken.

The paper by Graeme Hugo on rural-urban mobility in western Java takes more of an outside view, though it notes that there are indigenous terms which differentiate temporary and permanent movements. It is important for its integrated use of various data and for what is said on the classification of mobility. Both past and recent census data are related with village-level data collected in the field, the former cross-sectional and the latter a mix of cross-sectional and longitudinal. From the analysis of these data a classification of mobility in western Java emerges – 'commuting', 'circular migration', 'migration' – which expresses various forms of village/city relationships. Official censuses in the past were more sensitive than those of recent time to movements between villages and city which did not involve permanent change of residence. From his own investigation Hugo demonstrates the great volume of temporary movements which is likely to continue. While the populations of major Indonesian cities will increase, significant proportions of these populations

will circulate between countryside and town.

Without exception contributors to the volume are conscious of changes over time in forms and patterns of mobility. Many of them comment on the limited perspectives that can be achieved with studies that are cross-sectional, and where for lack of evidence comparisons cannot be made with the past. Ronald Skeldon sets out to examine changes which have occurred in the mobility of rural communities in southern Peru in the more distant and the recent past and relates these changes to what is happening at the present. He blends documentary evidence for the distant past with the products of his own field research for the more recent past and the present. This evidence is used to outline the transition which has occurred in forms and patterns of mobility and to speculate for the future. Two basic processes are discernible. The first and earlier was a gradual enlargement of orbits of circulation which gave villagers access to different kinds of resources. Thus for Peru as a whole within the last three decades there has been a progressive shift in the pivot of circulation from urban to rural places. Skeldon contextually acknowledges and tests the concept of mobility transition, getting at the processes through which mobility changes over time. His conclusions have some measure of agreement but also some challenging variance with some of our conclusions and those of others.