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Migration in Modern European History

Charles Tilly

University of Michigan

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## What is Migration?<sup>1</sup>

Some apparently crisp concepts owe their crispness to bureaucracy. After many centuries in which workers had now and then walked off the job to put pressure on the boss, only in the nineteenth century did firms, unions and governments coerce each other into precise definitions of the strike. Thenceforth the strike routinized, and strike statistics based on standard definitions proliferated. Slowdowns, wildcats, demonstrations, tardiness, absenteeism, unauthorized holidays, sabotage, mass resignation came to seem distinct alternatives to the strike. Most of the organized parties came to consider these other forms of action less desirable than the strike because they were riskier and less routine. Yet in the eighteenth century the boundaries among these ways of behaving had been unclear indeed. Bureaucracies defined the strike as a distinctive form of action. Bureaucracies helped create the modern strike.

Other commonly employed and frequently statisticized concepts owe the same debt to bureaucracy: unemployment, employment, production, consumption, perhaps marriage and illegitimacy as well. Twenty-five years ago Oskar Morgenstern pointed out that fluttering definitions introduce significant errors into economic statistics. But Morgenstern thought the main problems were theoretical:

There is often lack of definition or classification of the phenomenon to be measured or recorded, and in addition, there is the difficulty of applying correctly even a faultless system of classification. The theoretical characteristics of, say, an industry or simply of a "price" are less well established than those of a wave length. Almost everything turns around the question of classification. This is

a well known difficulty and much effort has been directed towards the establishment of uniform classifications, of employment categories and commodities in foreign trade. But there are large fields where very little has been done and where deep theoretical problems await solution before classification can be significantly improved (Morgenstern 1963: 35).

Morgenstern shows appropriate indignation when faced with evidence that organizations actually fabricate or manipulate definitions for their own purposes:

Perhaps equally important is the often arbitrary, willful, and frequently politically determined procedure employed by customs officials. In spite of a perfectly definite classification scheme, commodities are sometimes put into a similar category carrying higher duties in order to impede their import (or, as the case may be, into one that will make the import cheaper). This plays havoc, of course, with statistical accuracy (Morgenstern 1963: 37-38).

Here is a less testy, but more cynical, interpretation: bureaucracies first produce definitions to serve their own purpose. Economists come along later to rationalize the definitions.

The concept of migration faces the same difficulties. From the continuous locomotion of human beings, to pick out some moves as more definitive than others reflects the concern of bureaucrats to attach people to domiciles where they can be registered, enumerated, taxed, drafted and watched. A vagrant -- a person without a domicile -- gives trouble not

only to the police but also to definitions of migration. Are gypsies migrants? The crisp definitions and statistics essential to an answer emerged with the consolidation of national states and state bureaucracies.

With rare exceptions, both practical definitions and available evidence concerning migration state the answers to some combination of these three questions:

1. Who lives here now?
2. Where did they live then?
3. Who else lived here then?

A single enumeration of the population can produce answers to the first two questions. The third question requires enumerations at more than one point in time. But all three can be answered within a single administrative unit. Only rarely do we find an answer to the fourth obvious question in the series: Where do they live now? That requires two difficult operations: looking in several places, and tracing people forward in time. Counts of migration therefore consist mainly of comparisons, one place at a time, a) between the answers to questions 1 and 2; b) among the answers to questions 1, 2 and 3.

All the elements -- who, where, when -- are problematic. All are quite vulnerable to the administrative vagraries which vexed Oskar Morgenstern. "Who" may refer to heads of households, workers, citizens, legal residents or everyone on hand. "Where" may mean in some particular dwelling, in some particular parish, or in some much larger administrative unit. "When" is most elusive of all. For the innocent theorist, to live somewhere sometime implies a durable attachment to the place. For the actual collector of the information, however, physical presence on census day, or mere registry as an inhabitant, whether the person is physically

present or not, is commonly all that matters. As a consequence, our conceptions of migration and our evidence concerning it both emphasize changes of legal domicile and crossings of administrative boundaries.

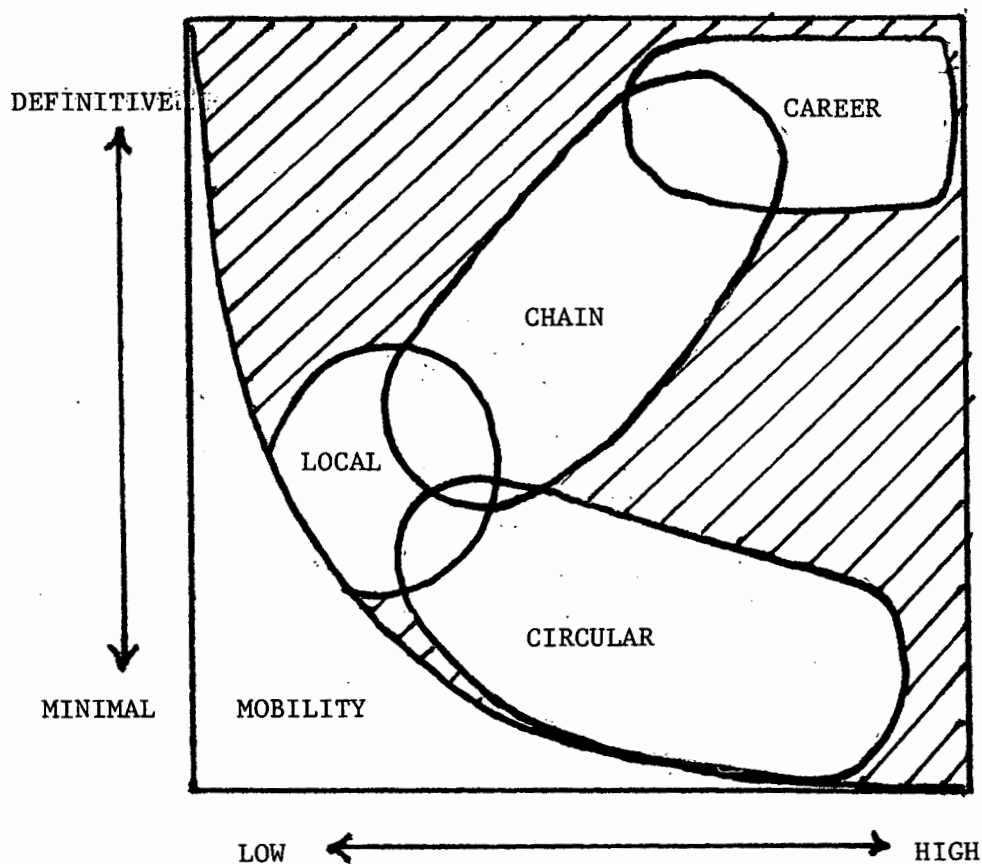
In order to make sense of the long-run changes in European migration patterns, we must therefore add social content to our measures and classifications. Whatever else migration is about, it is about moves which are relatively long and relatively definitive. Figure 1 presents a simple classification scheme based on length and definitiveness. It classifies moves of individuals, households or other social units. Its first dimension is distance; there we have the choice of simple geographic distance, time, expense, cultural distance, or some combination of them. Below some minimum distance, no move (however definitive) constitutes migration. Although any such minimum is arbitrary, we are unlikely ever to consider a move from one house to the house next door to qualify as migration.

The second dimension is the extent of the social unit's break with the area of origin. At the one extreme lie moves which entail no breaking of social ties; at the other, the complete rupture of ties at the move's place of origin. Below some minimum amount of rupture, no move (however distant) constitutes migration. Such a minimum requirement corresponds readily to our intuitive reluctance to consider a long round-the-world voyage as migration; to our intuitions, the maintenance of a household "back home" says that too few ties have been broken.

Given the two dimensions, most moves -- a walk around the block, a vacation trip to London, the daily trip to the factory and back -- involve too little distance and/or too little break with the place of origin to count as migration at all. The diagram labels those moves "mobility". It includes them to emphasize that the line between mobility and migration is

arbitrary. The point may be obvious, but it is important. For example, historians working with village population registers frequently encounter individuals who kept the same legal domicile for years while working in distant cities; before calculating migration rates and describing the characteristics of the village's "resident" population, they must decide on which side of the curved line to put those vagrant individuals.

Figure 1: Four Standard Migration Patterns



#### Local, Circular, Chain and Career Migration

The most interesting distinctions appear within the shaded migration area. They depend on the social organization of the move in question.

"Local migration shifts an individual or household within a geographically

contiguous market -- a labor market, a land market, or perhaps a marriage market. In local migration the distance moved is small by definition; the extent of break with the place of origin is also likely to be small. On the whole, the migrant is already quite familiar with the destination before making the move; he or she therefore has relatively little learning of a new environment to do after the move.

Take Uppsala-Näs, an agricultural parish near Uppsåla, Sweden for an example. There, the continuous population registers make it possible to pinpoint different types of moves from 1881 to 1885. There were many moves. Calculated as rates per year per hundred persons who could have moved, the figures (Eriksson & Rogers 1973: 67) are:

moves into or out of the parish	35.2
moves within the parish	40.6
movers into or out of the parish	25.1
movers within the parish	26.9

In the ordinary year of 1882, in a parish whose population remained a little under 500, 76 in-migrants arrived, 93 people left the parish, and 27 more moved within the parish. If the parish boundary is the line between "local mobility" and "migration", migrants were equal to about a third of the total population. In 1883, the figure went up to about two-fifths. Yet the occupational structure remained fairly constant, no devastating social change occurred, and the great bulk of the migrants moved to or from other parishes in the immediate vicinity. Although many migrants tried their hands in Uppsala or Stockholm at one time or another, Eriksson and Rogers suggest that the structure of local agriculture accounted for most of the movement:



Large estates required hired labor and a landless proletariat quickly developed, which in turn contributed to a higher rate of movement. Landless and almost entirely restricted to agricultural occupations these groups had little chance for social advancement until the breakthrough of industry, bringing changes in society and new opportunities (Eriksson & Rogers 1973: 79).

The local migration rates for this one well-studied Swedish parish were probably above average for Europe as a whole. Yet where hired labor and a landless proletariat prevailed, local migration rates on the same order seem to have been common.

"Circular" migration takes a social unit to a destination through a set of arrangements which returns it to the origin after a well-defined interval. Seasonal work on harvests, pastoral transhumance, the sending of young people into domestic service before they marry and the circuits of Alpine villagers who served long years in the lowlands as schoolteachers, soldiers or craftsmen before their long-planned return to the mountains with the accumulated capital all represent variants of circular migration. Today many Turks, Algerians, West Indians, Spaniards and Portuguese are traveling in similar circles.

In the nineteenth-century Limousin, for example, there were a number of cantons in which a quarter, two-fifths or even three-fifths of the adult males reported their occupations as "mason" (Corbin 1975: 197). That was only possible because each spring thousands of men who worked on Limousin farms during the winter months walked off to earn money in construction elsewhere, and each fall most of them returned with the bulk of their earnings hidden in their napsacks. Taking all trades together, at mid-

century some 50,000 Limousins joined each year's circular migration. In Paris, "mason" and "Limousin" were nearly synonymous.

Because of their migratory regularity, the Limousins bore the nickname Swallows. Although the road from Limoges to Paris was close to 200 miles, before the railroad offered a cheap alternative hundreds of village bands trampèd most of it together each year. The famous mason-become-politico Martin Nadaud took his first trip in 1830, when he was fourteen. He, his father, and other masons from their village walked the roughly 150 miles of back roads and woods to Orleans in four days before boarding their hired coaches for the last leg to Paris. Once in Paris, the Limousin masons gathered for the construction season in cheap, dingy rooming houses run by their countrymen. During the great Parisian workers' insurrection of June 1848, 575 masons were among the roughly 11,600 people arrested and charged. Of those 575 masons, 246 were from northern Limousin. The great bulk of them lived in central-city lodging houses, especially in the narrow streets behind the Hotel de Ville.<sup>2</sup> The Limousin masons were at once countrymen, migrants and active participants in Parisian life.

"Chain" migration is our third type. Chain migration moves sets of related individuals of households from one place to another via a set of social arrangements in which people at the destination provide aid, information and encouragement to new migrants. Such arrangements tend to produce a considerable proportion of experimental moves and a large backflow to the place of origin. At the destination, they also tend to produce durable clusters of people linked by common origin. At the extreme, they form urban villages. In Medieval and Renaissance Europe, cities often permitted or even required these clusters of people to organize as "nations" sharing well-defined privileges and bearing collective responsibility for

the policing and welfare of their members. In those cities, migrants of one nationality or another frequently established a quasi-monopoly of some particular trade. In sixteenth-century Rome, for example, the most successful courtesans were Spanish. The fact was so well known that in 1592 other members of "the Spanish nation", no doubt wishing their reputation to rest on other accomplishments, formally petitioned Pope Clement VIII to banish Spanish courtesans from Rome (Delumeau 1957: I, 201). To this day, the old university of Uppsala is organized in Nations representing the major provinces of Sweden. But most chain migrants have formed and reformed their communities without the benefit of such formal recognition of their common origin. When the chain works well as a transmission belt, it continues to stretch from origin to destination until no members are left at the origin.

In the 1950s and 1960s, for example, chain migration was emptying Tierra de Campos, a Castillian agricultural region of some 120,000 people in 178 small settlements. In one sample of out-migrants interrogated by Victor Perez Díaz, 60 percent of the migrants already knew someone at the destination before they left home. Once departed, the migrants sent back letters and remittances at an impressive rate: a reported average of 40 letters and 8,000 pesetas per year (Perez Díaz 1971: 148-153). In general, the more distant and costly the migration, the more people rely on others at the destination to ease the way. The extreme -- for the case of Tierra de Campos and for the migration of poor Europeans in general -- is overseas migration, where the great majority of moves belong to well-defined chains.

"Career" migration, finally, has persons or households making more or less definitive moves in response to opportunities to change position within or among large structures: organized trades, firms, governments, mercantile

networks, armies and the like. If there is a circuit, it is not based on the social bonds at the migrant's place of origin, but on the logic of the large structure itself. If people within the migrant mass help and encourage each other, they are generally colleagues, not neighbors or kinsmen. The migrations of scientists, technicians, military officers, priests and bureaucrats commonly fall into this type rather than into local, circular or chain migration.

Sixteenth-century migrants to Canterbury and other towns of Kent, according to Peter Clark, consisted mainly of two groups: poor people from the countryside who moved relatively long distances to take up unskilled urban work, and more comfortable people from other towns and the nearby countryside who entered crafts and other fairly skilled urban employment. Both of these groups probably consisted chiefly of chain migrants. But with the economic expansion of the sixteenth century, another category was becoming more important: itinerant professionals, craftsmen and other specialists. As Clark puts it:

If the itinerant craftsmen or specialist had also been a medieval figure the expansion of this kind of professional migration in the sixteenth century in response to the needs of an increasingly sophisticated social and economic order had a new, radical importance -- both in numbers and impact. The growth of internal trade entailed a major increase in the numbers of pedlars, chapmen and other itinerant retailers with their own trade routes across countries (Clark 1972: 146).

In the same general category were clergymen seeking new posts. None of those people were undergoing the sorts of station-to-station transfers

which became the common experience of employees in big twentieth-century organizations. Yet as compared with the other migrants to Kentish towns they were clearly migrating in response to career opportunities.

The types overlap. They sometimes change from one to another. For example, most systems of circular migration leave a residue of migrants at the destination. The stayers include both successful people who make a good thing of mediating between their mobile countrymen and the local population, and failures who die before accumulating the capital to go back home. A circular system with a rising residue eventually becomes a chain. In migration from the high Alps, for example, the peddler-migrants who made good tended to establish shops in lowland towns, and to provide the contacts for subsequent migrants from the uplands (Merlin 1971: 34).

In another overlap, local migration systems sometimes provide the basis for long-distance chain migration. One of the most spectacular examples is the little local system of labor migration around seventeenth century Tourouvre-au-Perche. It extended into the long chain which, through transatlantic migration, North American propagation, and subsequent migration within Canada, gave ancestors to much of Quebec's contemporary population. Some 300 migrants from that small region left for Canada in the seventeenth century, especially toward 1650. Labor recruiters encouraged the move to Quebec, and drew a disproportionate number of men in their twenties. Despite the unbalanced sex ratio, the migrants married and bore children in exceptional numbers. Some migrated as families, some sent later for families already begun in France, some returned to marry in the region of Tourouvre, and almost all the rest married in Canada soon after arrival (Charbonneau 1970).

Despite the overlap, the systems have some characteristic differences.

On the whole, circular migration is very sex-selective: practically all-male practically all-female, depending on the occupation at the destination. Chain migration's sex-selectivity tends to change over time. One typical arrangement is for single males to make up the vanguard, with single females and then whole families joining them later. Local and career migration, in contrast, are not generally very selective by sex; either whole households migrate or the stream comprises both men and women.

The geographic pattern also varies from one type to another. Chain migration tends to link a particular origin with no more than a handful of possible destinations. But those destinations are often at a considerable distance. Circular migration may do the same thing, but it is somewhat more likely to disperse the available workers among a number of opportunities. Local migration involves many destinations within a circumscribed range. Career migration, finally, tends to spread people far and wide. The geographic differences suggest the following grouping of the migration patterns:

		SUPPLY OF RELEVANT SKILLS	
		<u>General</u>	<u>Special</u>
COST OF INFORMATION ABOUT OPPORTUNITIES	<u>High</u>	chain	circular
	<u>Low</u>	local	career

Chain and circular migration are ways of combatting high costs of information about opportunities for employment, proprietorship, and other desired ends. Circular and career migration respond to situations in which the skills the migrants exercise are not generally available -- because they are hard to learn, because the migrants have monopolized them, or because

other people are unwilling to work at them. Thus as the cost of information about job opportunities declines, chain and circular migration give way to local and career migration. But to the extent that all job skills are unevenly distributed, circular and career migration tend to supplant chain and local migration.

The rough classification of migration into local, circular, chain and career does not exhaust the significant distinctions one might make. For example, it catches quite imperfectly the important difference between individual and collective migration; although on the whole chain and circular migration less frequently involve single individuals than do local and career migration, there are individual and collective versions of all four types. The classification does not embody the distinction between forced and voluntary migration; it therefore deals awkwardly with the expulsion of the Huguenots from France and the flight of Jews from eastern European pogroms. Since it concentrates on particular moves, it does not easily separate two rather different relationships between a major city and its hinterland: the rare pattern in which migrants come directly to the city from the distant countryside, and the common pattern in which country people move to nearby small towns, small town people move to large towns, and so on step by step to the metropolis. The classification into local, circular, chain and career migrations separates some significantly different social arrangements from each other, but it does not make all the distinctions one might wish to employ.

The sorts of administratively produced evidence we have concerning European migration do not permit us to distinguish easily among local, circular, chain and career migration. To do so, one needs life histories, detailed accounts of intentions and social relations at the time of moves,

or both. Records of official changes of domicile yield the former with great difficulty, and the latter not at all. On the basis of the scattered evidence available, nevertheless, it seems safe to say that in the age of industrialization the general character of European migration shifted from the lower left to the upper right of our diagram: away from local and short-distance circular migration, toward longer-distance, more definitive chain and career migration. It also seems safe to say that the pace of migration changed much less than its character. The history of Europe shows us not so much periods of immobility and mobility as decisive shifts among types of mobility.

#### The Great Flows

William McNeill has portrayed the repeated sweeps of conquering bands across the continent. He has also recounted the less dramatic, but no less momentous, flows of agricultural settlers into the continent's emptier spaces. Before the last millennium, large-scale movements of armed men and tribute-takers set the rhythm of European political history. Armed men and tribute-takers have thrived into our own time, but on the whole they have fixed themselves in space, reduced the scale and duration of their movements, and worked harder and harder at controlling the flows of people and goods into and out of their own fixed territories. Within Europe, long-distance flows of agricultural settlers continued, although their relative volume seems to have declined irregularly with the approach of our own time.

The last massive migration of agricultural workers within Europe was the Medieval flow of German-speakers into the East and South of the continent. That flow continued past 1500. But by then its volume had greatly diminished. By that time German-speaking migrants consisted



mainly of one variety or another of conqueror: officials, managers, merchants and landlords. The seventeenth- and eighteenth-century expansion of the Prussian state formally incorporated a number of eastern German enclaves and took in a good deal of predominantly Slavic population. It did not, however, produce movements of population comparable to those of three or four centuries earlier. Despite Frederick the Great's strenuous efforts at settlement, for example, Silesia remained predominantly Polish-speaking. Further south, the Austrians also sought to settle German speakers to their east by such straightforward devices as dispossessing the Czech landlords of Moravia. Although such planned migrations were of the greatest political importance, the numbers involved were relatively small. Indeed, they bucked the long-range trend, which was for Slavic-speakers, given weight by their generally higher levels of natural increase, to push westward into areas earlier occupied by Finns, Swedes and Germans. On either side of the linguistic frontier, massive long-distance rural-to-rural migration became less prevalent after 1500.

Long-distance moves of workers into non-agricultural employment are a different matter. They accelerated some two hundred years ago, and have remained important since then. The migration of Poles into the mine-fields of western Germany and eastern France and the rush of Irishmen to Liverpool and London illustrate the importance of long-distance migration within industrial Europe. Contrary to first impressions, few of these long-distance migrants moved directly from farm to factory. For the most part, the farmers who moved to cities found low-level employment in services and commerce. The apparent exceptions were commonly small-town artisans or rural industrial workers rather than peasants or farm laborers. Indeed, over the last two centuries the most important single category of urban

employment for rural-to-urban migrants within Europe has most likely been domestic service. Only an undue concentration on males and on manufacturing has obscured that fact.

During the period of swift natural increase from the mid-eighteenth century to the end of the nineteenth, Europe also sent millions of its residents to the agricultural and industrial areas of the Americas and of Oceania. The great flows of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries followed smaller but still important migratory movements which accompanied European colonial expansion during the three previous centuries. In this great overseas migration, millions of rural Europeans did migrate to farms. French migrants peopled rural Quebec as well as Quebec City and Montreal. Portuguese emigrants became Brazilian farmers as well as residents of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. Later, more than two million Germans and Scandinavians sailed to America. There, many of them settled on frontier farms.

Altogether, Europe's net migration from 1800 to World War I was on the order of fifty million persons. Given the frequent returns of chain migrants, a much larger number must have made the trip at one time or another. Since a return rate of 30 percent is plausible, the true number could easily be 65 million sometime emigrants. Over half of all European emigrants in that period went to the United States.

The British Isles -- especially Ireland -- were the champion exporters of humankind, and the chief purveyors to America. About three-quarters of nineteenth-century emigrants from Britain went to North America. As a result, at least a third of all American immigrants in that century were native speakers of English. Nevertheless, Germany, Greece, Italy and the Scandinavian countries all became major sources of overseas migrants at some time during the nineteenth century.

One of the best-documented cases is Denmark.) With a total population in the range of two million, Denmark sent over 300,000 migrants overseas between 1840 and 1914 (Hvidt 1975: 9). Over 90 percent went to North America. Within that small country, rates of emigration differed dramatically from one district to another. On the whole, they were much higher in the southeast than elsewhere. More generally, urban areas sent migrants at a significantly higher pace than rural areas did. Yet where urban growth and industrialization were vigorous, relatively little emigration occurred.

The ideal origin for Danish emigrants seems to have been the stagnant town in which underemployed long-term migrants from nearby rural areas were accumulating. Landless laborers and servants were especially good prospects for emigration. Kristian Hvidt quotes a letter describing the situation on the high-migration island of Bornholm:

The Bornholm farmers pay their small-holding laborers much too poorly in relation to the prices of necessities. But the huge number of immigrating Swedes rules out a rise in wages. An ordinary laborer who is not a craftsman has often only the choice between America or the poorhouse (Hvidt 1975: 129).

Chain migration was the predominant pattern among the 300,000 Danes who left Denmark. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, around a quarter of all Danish migrants to the United States came on steamship tickets prepaid by migrants already in America. (The comparable figures for Norway and Sweden run from 40 to 50 percent.) "Letters, money, and prepaid tickets came in a constant stream, the volume of which would quite likely surprise

most people." writes Hvidt,

since the emigrants were generally believed to have formed the poorest part of the population and to have been characterized by intellectual narrowness and insufficient education. Improved economic conditions in the United States combined with the emotional longings inherent in emigration furthered both letter writing and sending tickets home. These personal contacts with the Old Country may well be sufficient explanation of why mass emigration accelerated whenever economic conditions permitted (Hvidt 1975: 194).

Indeed, it was partly because they were poor and uneducated that the Danish emigrants relied on their compatriots for aid, encouragement and information in the long migration to America.

In the period after World War I, with declining European rates of natural increase and rising American resistance to immigration, the pace of European emigration diminished. Nevertheless, Canada, Argentina, Brazil, Australia and New Zealand continued to receive large numbers of European migrants. In that period, as Table 1 shows, the British Isles regained the predominance they had lost to Italy during the period 1891 to 1920. Poorer areas of the British Isles, such as the declining Welsh mining region, sent their surplus labor overseas in the company of a smaller number of highly-educated people from all over Britain. Since the table deals only with the total number of overseas emigrants, it conceals an important counter-current: while the poor areas of Northwestern Europe continued to send migrants overseas, the more prosperous areas began to bring in migrants from elsewhere in Europe.

Table 1.

Percent of All European Overseas Emigrants Leaving from Selected Countries, 1846-1963.

<u>COUNTRIES</u>	<u>PERIOD</u>			
	<u>1846-90</u>	<u>1891-1920</u>	<u>1921-39</u>	<u>1946-63</u>
British Isles	47.9	17.7	29.0	27.7
Germany	20.2	3.4	9.8	15.7
Sweden, Denmark, Norway	6.9	3.8	3.8	2.1
France, Switzerland, Netherlands	4.2	1.5	2.5	14.9
Italy	8.2	27.0	18.6	19.0
Austria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia	3.7	15.9	4.1	?
Russia, Poland, Lithuania, Estonia, Finland	2.1	13.0	12.0	?
Spain, Portugal	6.9	15.3	15.0	12.1
Total Emigrants from Europe per year (x 1,000)	376	910	366	585

Source: Calculated from Kosinski 1970: 57.

The figures describe gross migration, not net loss through migration.

Boundaries as of the 1960s apply to all periods.

Since World War II, Northwestern Europe has become an even more active importer of migrants. Yugoslavia, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Ireland, Turkey became major suppliers to the highly industrialized regions of Europe. This last shift has its ironies: we see the nations which peopled the rest of the western world drawing their unskilled labor from poor immigrants, and fretting about the disruption such migrations may cause.

The Switzerland which long disposed of its surplus men as mercenaries in European armies now has a sixth of its population foreign-born. The Great Britain which flooded America with English-speaking families now debates the desirability of its 5 percent born elsewhere. According to Stephen Castles and Godula Kosack, France, West Germany, Switzerland and Great Britain, among others, have come to rely almost entirely on foreigners to do their dirty work. Yet they have proved quite hostile to granting the newcomers a permanent stake in their host countries. Xenophobia is nothing new. But the backing it has received from West European states in recent years is unusual.

#### The Impacts of War and Politics

The most dramatic twentieth-century change in European migration patterns was not the Northwest's shift from export to import of migrants. It was the expanding role of political pressures and political controls. Politics impinged on migration in three distinct ways: through war, through deliberate relocation of ethnic minorities, and through stringent national controls over immigration and emigration.

During the twentieth century, in more senses than one, war became the prime mover. Earlier, such continental conflicts as the Thirty Years' War and the Napoleonic Wars had produced hordes of refugees. They also produced some long-term displacement of population away from the war zones. But World Wars I and II produced incomparably greater migratory currents in Europe. According to Eugene Kulischer's compilation (Kulischer 1948: 248-249), the largest flows within Europe and the adjacent sections of Asia from 1918 to 1939 were:

1.2 million Greeks to Greece from Turkey (1922-1923)

1.15 million Russians to Europe outside the Soviet Union (1918-1922)

1.1 million repatriated from Russia to Poland (1918-1925)

900 thousand Poles from former Russian and Austrian Poland to former German Poland (1918-1921)

700 thousand Germans from Western Poland, Danzig and Memel to Germany (1918-1925)

Only then do we arrive at migratory streams in which the war and the peace settlement did not play a large, direct part: the estimated 650 thousand Italians who went from Italy to France over the 21 years from 1919 to 1939, and the estimated 450 thousand Poles who made the move to France over the same period. (These are net figures; according to Polish statistics, for example, 622 thousand Poles went to France from 1919 through 1939, but 200 thousand returned to Poland, for a net of 422 thousand migrants: Kosíński 1970: 79-80.)

These numbers are large. They are, however, modest compared to the figures for World War II and its aftermath. To again take the leaders in Kulischer's compilation (Kulischer 1948: 302-304):

6 million Reich Germans from New Poland to Germany (1944-1947)

5 million Jews from Germany to extermination camps in Poland and elsewhere (1940-1944)

4 million Reich Germans from the Soviet Zone to the U.S. and British Zones (1945-1946)

3 million Poles from Old Poland to New Poland (1945-1947)

2.7 million ethnic Germans from Czechoslovakia to Germany and Austria (1945-1946)

1.8 million Czechs and Slovaks from Inner Czechoslovakia to the former Sudetenland (1946-1947)

1 million ethnic Germans from Old Poland to Germany (1944-1945)

The list goes on. However approximate these figures are, and however much double-counting they include, they portray World War II and -- especially -- the postwar settlement as one of the greatest demographic whirlwinds ever to sweep the earth.

Some of these migrants fled from war zones. Many more of them moved at the behest of governments. On the whole, the refugees contributed to the diversity of population at their destinations. When states deliberately relocated people, however, they tended to homogenize the language and culture of the people within any particular set of national boundaries. The net effect of the migrations surrounding the two world wars was therefore to homogenize nation-states and probably to increase their capacity for nationalism.

Heightened nationalism and the recurrent labor shortages of the richer European countries have combined to produce a contradictory situation. On the one hand, such countries as Switzerland, West Germany and France have become sorely dependent on poorer countries for supplies of unskilled labor. On the other hand, those same countries and their neighbors have greatly increased their controls over immigration and emigration. There is, to be sure, a sharp difference between eastern and western Europe in those regards. On the whole, the richer western European countries have encouraged circular migration of low-wage workers from elsewhere but have made it difficult for them to become long-time residents and, especially, to acquire citizenship. The Soviet Union and other Communist states have simply made all forms of entry and exit difficult.

The last five centuries of European long-distance migration show us three major factors at work: 1) a changing geographic distribution of opportunities for employment, 2) alterations of regional differentials in



natural increase, 3) actions and policies of national states -- notably making war, controlling migration and deliberately recruiting, expelling or relocating specific ethnic and religious groups. The first two factors have shaped migration throughout the five hundred years. To explain why and how they worked is to trace out the expansion of capitalism, the proletarianization of the European population as a whole, the march of urbanization and industrialization. The third factor -- actions and policies of national states -- gained importance as the five centuries wore on. By the twentieth century, wars and their settlements rivaled the interplay of employment and natural increase as incentives to long-distance migration.

#### The Local Flows

No one has given us a comprehensive statistical atlas of long-distance migration within, from and to the European continent. That would be a useful enterprise. But at least the existence and broad directions of the long-distance flows are well known. In the present state of our knowledge, local migration provides more puzzles.

Recent work on the historical demography of Europe has experienced a nice dialectic. The fastidious methods for reconstructing pre-census demographic characteristics developed by such scholars as Louis Henry and E.A. Wrigley sometimes assume, and always apply more easily to, relatively immobile populations. Yet one of the most impressive and consistent findings of the historical demographers has been the high level of local mobility among pre-industrial European people. In studies of eighteenth-century agricultural villages, it is not unusual to find over a tenth of the population making a significant change of residence each year. If the sheer frequency of moves (rather than the distance moved) is the criterion, it is not at all clear that industrialization produced a major increase in

the European population's mobility.

The findings coming in jar our preconceptions concerning the settled peasant world industrialization is supposed to have broken up. Still, the idea of a settled peasant world is not so much wrong as incomplete. Let us consider "peasants" to be members of households whose major activity is farming, households which produce a major share of the goods and services they consume, which exercise substantial control over the land they farm, and which supply the major part of their labor requirements from their own energies. If that is what we mean by peasants, a majority of the European population was probably peasant until late in the eighteenth century. The true peasant population was, so far as we know, relatively immobile.

But the extrapolation of peasant immobility to the European population as a whole errs in several ways. A substantial minority of the population was not peasant. From the later eighteenth century, the non-peasants were probably a majority. Among the non-peasants were significant groups of traders and artisans for whom movement was a way of life. Less obvious among them was a large, growing mass of landless laborers. (To take one of the extreme cases, Gregory King estimated for the England of 1688 that only 350 thousand of the 1.2 million families in agriculture lived from their own land: Pollard & Crossley 1968: 154.)

The landless and land-poor moved frequently, sometimes seasonally, in response to the demand for wage-labor. As Paul Slack points out, the seventeenth century English local authorities regularly whipped the "vagrants" who were multiplying in the countryside and sent them back to their parishes of origin. But those "vagrants" were only a minority of the many landless laborers then on the roads. They were the ones who had failed to find work. As enclosures and population growth swelled the

numbers of people who had no place on the land in their home villages, many migrated in search of employment elsewhere. Local authorities treated them ambivalently: welcoming their labor if the parish needed it and could control it, but striving to make sure the wanderers gained no claims on parish welfare funds. Hence the whip.

Contrary to ideas linking high mobility to industrialization, however, the spread of rural industry seems to have helped the landless to settle down. It meant they could piece together starvation wages from industrial and agricultural work in their own villages. In his rich study of the Zurich uplands during early industrialization, Rudolf Braun shows us exactly that fixing of the proletarian population in place via cottage industry. Whereas the surplus hands of previous generations had walked off to military careers, domestic service or another/<sup>kind of</sup> unskilled work elsewhere, the villagers of the eighteenth century began to stay on the land, spinning and weaving.

In the Leicestershire village of Shepshed, where cottage industry grew considerably during the eighteenth century:

In pre-industrial Shepshed just 46 percent of the families entering the observation had been married in the parish whereas during industrialization the proportion of parochial marriage rose so that after 1810 76.9 of all families had been married in the village church (Levine 1976: 72).

As opportunities for industrial employment expanded in Shepshed, more people lived out their lives in the parish, and saw their children do the same.

Some true peasant households were also quite mobile. It is doubtful that the majority of European peasant households owned the bulk of the land they farmed before some time in the nineteenth century. Most were tenants of one type or another. Tenancy meant turnover. Annual, quinquennial or even nine-year leases brought the significant possibility of a move when the lease expired. The scattered studies in historical demography which have been able to make the essential distinctions with respect to control of land have found tenants migrating to and from villages in significant numbers. During the nineteenth- and twentieth-century "rural exodus", landless laborers were generally the first to leave the countryside, tenants next, and owners quite slow to depart.

#### Demographic Stimuli to Migration

In addition to the effects of tenancy and employment, old-regime demographic conditions provided their own spurs to migration. The best-known of those demographic conditions was the enormous death rate in cities. The rates were high enough that before the nineteenth century large cities could only maintain their populations through substantial in-migration, and could only grow through massive recruitment of outsiders. For example, in the little North Sea port of Husum from 1765 to 1804 the crude birth rate was about 26.6 and the crude death rate about 28.9, for a natural decrease of about 2.3 persons per thousand per year. That was true despite an age structure favorable to low mortality. In the forty years after 1804, by contrast, the crude birth rate rose a trifle to 27.1, while the crude death rate declined to 24.8. That produced a natural increase of about 2.3 per thousand (computed from Momsen 1969: 58, 66). In actual numbers, the breakdown of Husum's growth in the two periods ran like this:

PERIOD	POPULATION CHANGE	BIRTHS - DEATHS	NET MIGRATION
1769-1802	+165	-345	+510
1803-1844	+249	+358	-110

Thus in the early nineteenth century natural increase more than supplied Husum's need for new hands and a surplus migrated elsewhere. But in the eighteenth century the city had to bring in migrants simply to maintain its population.

Husum and other small cities generally drew the bulk of their migrants from their immediate hinterlands. In most cases, a small city's radius of intensive attraction was no more than ten or fifteen miles (see Patten 1973). Before the rising natural increase of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the supply of migrants behaved a good deal like the supply of food: cities consumed more than they produced; they drew the hard-won surplus from many surrounding communities, and thus affected those communities deeply; they drew more specialized supplies from greater distances via other cities; when they grew fast, that growth generated a demand which reverberated through more and more of the hinterland.

Large cities drew on correspondingly larger areas of supply. In times of relatively rapid urban growth, such as significant parts of the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, major cities drew their increments from vast hinterlands. London grew from about 400 thousand in 1650 to about 650 thousand a century later. That growth had a large impact on the food production of southern England. It also altered English migration systems, despite the fact that they were already centered in London. E.A. Wrigley speculates that in the high-growth century from 1650 to 1750 a sixth of the entire adult population of England spent some part of their

lives in London (Wrigley 1967: 49). The high-mortality metropolis stuffed itself with an entire country's demographic surplus.

Urban natural decrease was not the only important demographic condition. In a time of high, fluctuating fertility and high, unstable mortality, households which had relatively inelastic labor requirements often found their supply and demand badly matched. Artisans with an expensive stock in trade and peasants with fixed allotments of land, for instance, tended to develop a well-defined household division of labor by age, sex and marital status. They could only absorb an extra hand or do without one of the standard household members at great strain. Either the death of a mother or the survival of an extra child jostled a delicate equilibrium. In the short run, such households used migration to adjust the supply to the demand. Extra children migrated, temporarily or definitively, into domestic service, armies, peddling. The household made up shortages by bringing in servants and/or kinsmen from elsewhere. A very high proportion of all individual migration before the twentieth century consisted of these transfers of labor among households.

In quantitative terms, however, marriage and the termination of marriage were probably the most significant demographic spurs to migration. Throughout the centuries, almost every European marriage has required at least one spouse to make a definitive change of residence. With some lags and exceptions due to co-residence with parents, the great majority have led to the formation of a new household in a new location. As nuptiality rose in the nineteenth century, the frequency of marriage-linked migration rose as well. The termination of marriages through divorce or death played a smaller part, but not a negligible one, in causing migration. To know whether its importance increased or decreased,

we need not only to grasp the trends in the divorce rates, but also to balance off the migration-inducing effects of remarriages against the changing likelihood that a bereaved spouse will remain in the household she or he already occupies. We do not now have the necessary evidence. My speculation is that the termination of marriages became a less important occasion for migration in Europe after the eighteenth century.

#### Qualifications and Conclusions

Over the five centuries or so we have been reviewing, most migrants have moved short distances. Most moves have responded to demographic imbalances and changing employment opportunities. Both remained true during a nineteenth century of massive overseas migration. Both remained true during a twentieth century of major displacements by war. Furthermore, local systems of migration often provided the bases of subsequent longer-range migration. That happened in circular migration systems which included cities; if opportunity rose in the city and declined in the countryside, the system started depositing a permanent residue of migrants in the city. It also happened in some essentially rural systems of labor migration to which an overseas destination became available: mobile agricultural workers in Denmark or Portugal found themselves working, in the company of their compatriots, in New York or Toronto. The long-run trend of European migration ran from local and circular migration to chain and career migration. The average distances moved and the definitiveness of breaks with the place of origin both increased. But the continuities between the older and newer forms of migration were impressive.

I have stressed the high mobility of European populations before the nineteenth century. I have stressed it because it requires us to rethink the relationship between industrialization and mobility. If I

have given the impression that nothing changed in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, however, that is wrong. The average distances of migration rose dramatically with large-scale industrialization. The unprecedented concentration of opportunities for employment in large cities oriented migration to those cities as never before. The growing power of national states impinged on twentieth-century migration through war and through deliberate controls over entries and exits. Those are novelties of the modern world.

The high mobility of the pre-industrial world also requires some qualification. In general, the distances involved in rural migration or in migration to small cities were small. The bulk of the migrants to any locality typically came from within five or ten miles. Only larger cities regularly escaped from that rule. If we were to set a local labor market as the limit within which a move counts as "mobility" instead of "migration", we would eliminate many of the extremely high rates of migration now coming in from demographic studies of pre-industrial European populations. The generalization would then read: before large-scale industrialization, rural labor markets were typically larger than a single village; they were often very active, especially where tenancy and/or wage labor prevailed; people moved frequently within those labor markets in response to demographic imbalances and shifting opportunities for livelihood.

We might speculate, in fact, that despite all the reverence for the village European historians have developed, the village, parish or commune, the fundamental local unit was larger than any of them. The area served by a single market has turned out to be the basic building block of traditional China (Skinner 1964, 1965). It defined the familiar world,



the world of labor exchange, marriage, social mobility, local solidarity. Perhaps local market areas played a similar role in traditional Europe. The village, parish or commune then may have acquired importance only when national states required mutually exclusive administrative units which they could hold collectively responsible for taxation, conscription, road labor, the provision of food and the maintenance of public order.

To the degree that we expand the definition of local mobility and become more stringent in our definition of migration, the era of large-scale industrialization and massive expansion of national states separates from the previous era. Long-distance, definitive migration did increase with industrialization and statemaking. Gross and net flows of migrants from rural to urban areas came to dominate the migration map as never before. As urban mortality declined, large rural-urban flows increasingly meant rapid urban growth. As rural natural increase declined, large rural-urban flows increasingly meant a depletion of the rural population. As national states grew, wars, peace settlements and national policies acted more and more powerfully as spurs and checks to migration. In the same era, local mobility did not increase significantly; in rural areas and small towns, it probably declined.

The study of migration, then gets us into the homely adjustments ordinary Europeans made among their own life plans and the labor requirements of the various organizations which had claims on them, or on which they had claims. Organizational structure, life plans, demography: changes in any of these three large elements eventually affect the character of the other two. Every major change in European organizational structure, life plans and demography has produced a durable transformation of European migration patterns. As time has gone on, national states have increasingly

shaped and reshaped those patterns -- by deliberately controlling the possibilities of migration, by intentionally relocating ethnic minorities, and by destructively making war. The history of European migration is the history of European social life.

## FOOTNOTES

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2. Computed from dossiers in Archives Nationales (Paris), F<sup>7</sup> 2586 and in Archives Historiques de l' Armée (Vincennes), series A.

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