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Paradigms in migration research: exploring 'moorings' as a schema

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I Introduction

> Over the last 15 years demographers have given increased attention to the significance of cultural factors in explaining demographic phenomena. A consensus has not yet emerged, however, regarding how to conceptualize these factors (Hayes, 1994: 1).

On the premise of a 'tyranny of behaviouralism' in migration research, Halfacree and Boyle (1993: 345, 337) advocate a new paradigm because '. . . migration research is in danger of being left behind by recent developments in social theory'. A number of differing critiques to the behavioural paradigm have appeared in recent years (e.g., Aitken and Bjorklund, 1988; Savage, 1988; Cadwallader, 1989; Knapp and Graves, 1989; Findlay, 1991; Findlay and Graham, 1991; Greenwood *et al.*, 1991; Fielding, 1992; Longino, 1992; Shelley and Koven, 1993). Similarly, Green (1990: 1335) calls for a 'new perspective', a 'mesoanalysis' that would combine the collective experiences of migrants to the larger flow patterns. Like many of the contributions to the debate over epistemological direction in migration theory, Green provides no illustrative methodology, making the abstracted argument difficult to relate to the empirical world. This article also critiques migration research to illustrate problem areas, but differs by providing a tentative schema.

The basis of the argument in this article is that the progression of migration research has been hindered by the adherence to inflexible assumptions of social behaviour derived from functionalist sociology. This has impeded theoretical linkages between the macromigration processes from the microlocus of the migrant. By reviewing the progression of theoretical developments of social action from the perspective of social psychology, the rigidities of sociological functionalism become apparent.

On the basis that a 'new' paradigm for migration research is a plausible endeavour, but that any progression to a 'new' paradigm should rise from that which currently exists, this article reviews migration theory in terms of the three dominant perspectives of social organization: social factors, personal factors and cultural factors. The article observes that research on social factors (elsewhere considered as the 'institutional framework') is strongly characterized by functionalist and behavioural theories. And, while research on

personal factors is also characterized by functionalism, there has been a progression from behaviour to cognition as the dominant theoretical frame. In terms of cultural factors, the article observes that migration research has much ground to cover, especially in relation to current theoretical endeavours.

When considering where migration research interests may proceed, this article suggests much could be gained by considering theories of human motivation which, in the field of social psychology, represents a theoretical progression from the behavioural and cognitive approaches. The article suggests that combining theories of human motivation with the developing understanding of cultural influences may provide linkages between, on the one hand, the personal realm of migration and, on the other, the regional institutional framework of politicoeconomic structure within which people make their decisions.

Within the migration literature there is little discussion, and no agreement, as to the distance a person must travel when relocating residence before qualifying as a 'migrant'. Similarly, the term 'migrant' is used to denote a number of different perceptual meanings. In this article, the focus is on the migrant who remains within the same broad cultural context (such as within the same nation or ethnic group), but travels away from the confines of the general area in which he or she previously resided. Thus a person undertaking intraurban relocation is not regarded here as a 'migrant', and the schema proposed will probably not apply to international migration.

II Migration theory – the paradigmatic determinants

As a general social process, migration is an important event for both the migrant and the wider society because it cuts across the expected norm of personal and cultural stability with all that that implies. However, the theoretical knowledge of the migratory process is far from complete, with considerable discord over an appropriate research construct (White, 1980). As Shuval (1982: 677) posits, of the '. . . large number of descriptive studies that have been carried out in the past 20–30 years [none contain a] . . . single, coherent model concerning migration'. In part, this has resulted from the disciplinary perspective of the researcher. Geographers, for example, have sought to understand the spatial consequences of migration, while economists have viewed migration as a normal opportunistic response to market forces. Similarly, anthropologists and sociologists have looked to migration for indications of change to cultural and/or social functioning, while psychologists have delved into the issues surrounding the migrant's experiences so as to provide additional meaning to the migratory process. Unfortunately, far from focusing the issue, the subject of migration has become increasingly differentiated as each discipline pursues its own goals.

White (1980) suggests a philosophical schism also exists between the way macro- and microlevel research is considered, and the results produced. To some degree, this may be because macrolevel researchers use '. . . measurable characteristics of the socioeconomic and physical environments to explain migration, [while] the micro approach emphasizes the migrants' decision-making process' (Halfacree and Boyle, 1933: 333). Even so, given the unswerving adherence by some to their particular methodological structures, it is plausible that the macro/micro schism may, in part, be the result of ideologically bound determinism. Nevertheless, Burnley (1988: 126) considers that the macro/micro bifurcation may be transcended by demonstrating the linkages '. . . between specific migrations and specific decisions by institutions and wider processes' in the regional political

economy. Implicit in Burnley's observation is that microlevel research may not have been focused by the researcher to relate the larger social and cultural issues in which migrant decision-making occurs to the spatial outcomes of the region's political and economic institutional decision-making process. This suggests a need to develop some form of representational schema for migratory processes that is based on the three central components of social organization: institutional framework, personal behaviour and cultural context. This perception is not new. For example, Parsons and Shils (1951: 53) noted that

> Actions are not empirically discrete but occur in constellations which we call 'systems'. We are concerned with three systems, three modes of organization of the elements of action; these elements are organized as social systems, as personalities, and as cultural systems.

Even though Halfacree and Boyle (1993: 337) note that a number of authors have accepted a 'multiple currents' approach to the conceptualization of migration, none seem to have considered 'multiple currents' as the conjoint application of the three elements of social organization. Possibly because researchers have approached migration using methodologies dominant in one or other of the elements of social organization, migration knowledge also tends to be differentiated along these lines. However, before considering a 'multiple currents' approach to migration research, wisdom alone suggests a review of those migration research methodologies that focus to some degree or another on the individual because there may be elements within the current paradigms that could provide a basis for renewed research vigour.

1   Paradigm one: the social, or the 'institutional framework'

The development of an 'institutional framework' paradigm within migration theory is probably the result of Hawley's (1950) inspirational views in the discipline of urban geography (Gibbs and Martin, 1959). But it was in the period immediately after the second world war that microlevel migration research blossomed, and much influence can be attributed to sociology and psychology (Gaile and Willmott, 1989). This interdisciplinary combination enabled an exploration into issues of urban structure as a functional determinant of community development generally, and/or the behaviour of people in particular (Wilson, 1993). As an explanation of society, functionalism was then the '. . . dominant theoretical perspective in sociology' (Haralambos, 1980: 9). However, functionalism is little more than a theory of status quo, and its adherents tend to explain social activity as the result of invariable principles (Saunders, 1986: 81). Analysing behaviour using functionalist methodologies allowed researchers to produce concrete results, but effectively resulted in positivist outcomes. This is not unexpected as the history of sociology (and thereby much early social psychology) has been described as an epistemological struggle with positivism (Halfpenny and McMylor, 1994). While the principle of positivism is to discover properties that are typical of society, rarely is it possible to show these properties in practice (Latour, 1986: 272). As positivism reduces social action to an ordered structure, it excludes the capacity for multiple outcomes that inevitably result from people appraising different value-sets in their decision-making practices (Johnson et al., 1984: 34).

In addition to the sociological input, urban geographers were also influenced by the psychological theory of behaviourism. Behavioural studies, at least as they are applied in geography, integrate Watson's (1919) notion that the only human decision-making activity that can be scientifically measured is behaviour. Grounded on the premises of functional

advantage, early behaviour-based researchers theorized that people were socialized to display a logical, and largely inflexible, mode of behaviour. This assumption of psychological stability '. . . became the empirical cornerstone and the theoretical lodestone of behavioral geography' (Aitken and Bjorklund, 1988: 59). So when the determinism of functionalism is combined with the fixedness in behaviourism, one witnesses research that '. . . emphasises the functional role of social institutions [and inevitably asserts highly rigid] . . . assumptions as to motivations, attitudes, sentiments and values' (Robson, 1969: 23). Babbie (1986: 78) illustrates two problems flowing from the union of deterministic functionalism and behaviourism: *ecological fallacy* – '. . . making assertions about individuals based on the examination of groups'; and *reductionism* – '. . . an overly strict limitation on the kinds of concepts and variables to be considered as causes in explaining a broad range of human behavior'.

The combination of deterministic functionalism and behaviourism underlies the 'institutional framework' approach. In part, this is because it also underlies neoclassical economics. Together, the 'institutional framework' approach and neoclassical determinism have produced some extremely rigid outcomes. This can be seen in the notion of *push* and *pull* factors as explanatory variables for migratory decision-making. Push factors are those at the origin which are assumed as having a negative influence on the quality indicators of life, while pull factors are the positive factors drawing prospective migrants to the destination (Bogue, 1969; 1977). Figure 1 lists Bogue's principal push and pull factors. But when Bogue's factors have been tested by actually surveying migrants, correlational significance between migration patterns and groups of push or pull factors cannot be found (e.g., Skinner *et al.*, 1983). Shuval (1982: 678) posits that, in this behaviourist methodology, there will always be a '. . . symmetrical relationship between factors that motivate people to leave a permanent residence and those that attract them to another specific locus'. By adducing pull factors as a criterion of positive social functioning in cities attracting large numbers of migrants, migrational researchers have even sought to measure discrete values for these assumed place attributes (Maier and Weiss, 1991). Rather than

Push factors	*Pull factors*
• Decline of regional income, causing localized recession	• Perceived superior career opportunities in another location
• Loss of employment (from causes other than recession, e.g., mechanization)	• Greater income in another place
	• Personal growth opportunities such as better education, group assocation, etc.
• Political, religious, ethnic and/or other forms of oppression, or discrimination	• Preferable environment, such as climate, housing, schools and/or other institutional facilities
• Little or no pathway to increase personal development in structures such as marriage, status or career	• Desire to be with kin, or other favourable people, in another place
• Catastrophe. For example, floods, fire, earthquake, war, etc.	• Lure of different social or physical activities in another place

Figure 1 Bogue's push and pull factors
(*Source*: After Bogue, 1969: 753–54)

provide answers to migration behaviour, this stimulus-response determinism enabled the formation of a set of differentiated physical and social characteristics for various urban locations largely, it seems, based on abstracted supposition. That these models could neither explain why everyone did not gravitate to the most 'ideal' city, nor that a counterflow existed of people moving away (Berry, 1988), attests to a major methodological flaw.

2   Paradigm two: the personal – three approaches

The second paradigm used in migration research relates to factors of a 'personal' kind. Three approaches have been adopted, and all rely on paradigm trends in the discipline of social psychology. In the first approach, the theory of behaviourism was considered the key element in determining an understanding of migration patterns. In the second approach, cognitivism ruled the way the paradigm was materialized. The third approach dispenses with structural rigidities implicit in the previous two approaches, and relies on personal motivation as a determinant for migrational decision-making.

a Behaviourism: Early considerations of 'personal behaviour' grew from behaviourism. Rossi (1955; 1980), for example, connected family 'life-cycle' stages to housing preference as an additional variable to the mobility equation, concluding that people relocated as a response to the stimulus of altered needs generated by household life-cycle changes. Here, 'life cycle' refers to the explicated material needs of families as they move through the various stages of the family reproductive cycle. The concept of life cycle still generates considerable research interest – especially as it relates to the urban housing industry (Ermisch, 1983; Hogan, 1987; Laslett, 1989). Life cycle as a migrational variable still holds interest (Rowland, 1982; Mueser *et al.* 1988; Nijkamp *et al.*, 1993), but as Harper (1991: 25) states, the '. . . use of the life-cycle indicator alone as a predictor of mobility is clearly inadequate'. If life cycle were to be influential, one would not only need to explain the impact of lifestyle but also the influence of cultural variables such as income, status, ethnicity, location, etc. (Bonnar, 1979; Lewis, 1982; Fielding, 1989). Similarly, not all people share the stereotypical life-cycle events, nor do those undertaking activities attributable to life cycle do so according to a 'typical' age-related sequence (Oldakowski and Roseman, 1986). Life cycle also assumes a nuclear family structure, so it fails adequately to address single-parent households, blended relationships, multiple remarriage and gay associations.

   As a variable in the migratory decision-making process, some life events clearly do impact in household transformations (Newton, 1978; Lewis, 1982; Grundy, 1992). However, the term 'life-course', after Levinson's (1978) model which avoids age and structural stereotypes, may be a better construct as it is a less deterministic replacement (Warnes, 1992: 177). The term 'life-course' illustrates that factors exist in a person's life that produce influential motivations. For example, marriage generally means a change of household and, for some, this may also mean migration. Similarly, retirement tends to produce household remotivations.

b The cognitive impact: With the shift of attention in social psychology from behaviour to cognition, a concomitant response occurred in many social science disciplines (Mandler, 1985), including studies in social geography and thereby migrational studies (Gaile and Willmott, 1989). Underlying the importance of cognitive psychology were the investiga-

tions into three human mental processes: categorization, attribution and judgement. Cognitive theorists posit that people make integrative judgements on perceived and stored categories of data to arrive at conclusions about the social world (Sears *et al.*, 1988: 12–14). Thus, external stimuli do not elicit a typical learnt behaviour but may initiate a cognitive process where the stimuli are categorized, attributed to a cause and a judgement is produced that guides behaviour patterns appropriate for the circumstances.

Early cognitive influences within geographical research saw analysts modify the assumptions of a functional structure by adding cognitive decision-making variables. The effect of this modification allowed social geographers to maintain positivist methodologies, as behaviour could be viewed as resulting from logical rationalizations of external impositions (Golledge and Stimson, 1987). Wolpert (1965; 1966), for example, studied the cognitive perceptions of the migrant, prompting other studies into the personalized aspect of push and pull factors, such as a search for stressors (Ritchey, 1976; Christenson, 1979), quality-of-life indicators (Michelson, 1977; Taylor, 1979) or the economic considerations in the decision-making process (Greenwood, 1975; Short, 1978). As people are assumed to optimize their possible opportunities rationally, migration becomes a response to some set of destabilizing criteria. Wiseman's (1980) model of elderly migration, illustrated in Figure 2, provides an example of this.

In assessing the issues in elderly migration, Wiseman (1980) added a number of stressors as push-and-pull triggering mechanisms. He argued that, in response to some stress trigger, the elderly appraise their needs and are assumed to consider migration as an optimizing solution. A conceptual difficulty in accepting Wiseman's model is that it assumes the elderly scan their needs against opportunities that may exist in other locations. There is no doubt that the elderly might undertake a process of comparative appraisal should they become convinced relocation is a preferable option; however, it seems incongruous to assume that they undertake a scanning process on the basis that migration may be an option. Given also that, statistically, relocation to an adjoining region or beyond by functionally independent Americans over the age of 55 is materialized by less than 1% of that population (Mueser *et al.*, 1988), it seems dubious to assume that the elderly appraise their material and social welfare in order to effect a relocation, should the circumstances permit. A more credible view is that, owing to a triggering stressor, the

	Triggering mechanisms	*Indigenous factors*	*Geographic movement*
Trigger issues	• Life-cycle change • Lifestyle change • Age-related losses	• Personal resources • Community ties	• Long-distance move • Short-distance move • Seasonal change
Push factors	• Loss of independence • Loss of spouse • Environmental stress	• Housing market • Cost of living • Community services	
Pull factors	• Retirement amenities • Friendship networks • Kinship networks		

Figure 2   Wiseman's model of issues in elderly migration decision-making
(*Source*: After Wiseman, 1980)

circumstances of the elderly may allow them to be persuaded by others to migrate to a place with specific characteristics (Warnes and Law, 1984; Clark and Wolf, 1992). This could be being close to offspring (Speare, 1992) or to a place with happier memories, such as a past holiday location (Murphy and Zehner, 1988; Longino, 1992).

The use of cognitive-based theories in migration research to achieve dubious results can also be seen in computational models based on Sjaastad's (1972) *human capital* approach. Sjaastad (1972) assumed that migrants weighed up their anticipated future benefits in a number of places before deciding to migrate. Here, migration is viewed as a logical response for people pursuing benefit-cost-type rationalizations between places offering different opportunities (Greenwood, 1985). Like Wiseman's (1980) model, this assumes people compare their present circumstances by continuously, or periodically, scanning for socially optimizing opportunities that may exist elsewhere. Recent studies show that, annually, fewer than 7% of people migrate long distances in Australia (Flood *et al.*, 1991: 5), the USA (Long, 1988: 51) or the UK (Owen and Green, 1992: 18). It therefore seems illogical to accept the cognitive-based assumption that people frequently appraise their circumstances in order to ensure they are optimizing their potentiality.

c Theories of motivation: Just as cognitive psychologists showed that behaviourist theories were inadequate to explain fully human action, motivational psychologists charge that cognition theory is also an insufficient explanative model. In response, motivational psychologists have proposed a multidimensional model based, in part, on aspects of behavioural and cognitive theories (Cofer and Appley, 1964; Crano and Messé, 1982), but also inclusive of features derived from humanist psychology where behaviour is perceived as being '. . . motivated from within by powerful internal drives, impulses, or needs' (Sears *et al.*, 1988: 14). By rejecting the functionalism central in behaviourism, human action is perceived as responsive more to ideas conveyed by social and cultural signals than controlled by rule-based structures. Essentially, motivational psychologists have sought to understand both the implicit and explicit forces that invigorate or direct human action. In this regard, there are assumed to be three realms that impact on human action: the realm of unconscious drives; the realm of discursive consciousness which represents that which is rationalized; and the realm of pragmatic and/or learnt responses to everyday activities.

In the realm of *unconscious drives*, need fulfilment is viewed as an important motivational issue. For some time, need has been categorized as relating to a latent desire for power, affiliation and/or achievement (Maslow, 1954; McClelland, 1955). More recently, researchers analysing consumer behaviour note that need can be materialized as either felt and/or perceived, and each aspect can be '. . . caused by internal stimuli found in the person's physiological condition, emotional or cognitive processes, or by external stimuli in the outside environment' (Schiffman and Kanuk, 1987: 79).

In the realm of *discursive consciousness*, motivationalists react against the structural rigidity of cognitivism. In the cognitivist approach, people were assumed to make rational-choice decisions according to organized rules, even in the most subjective of circumstances (e.g., Brubaker, 1984). However, the organization of rules in rational-choice decision-making models necessitates the employment of syllogistic forms of reasoning (Hutchins, 1981) which require the decision-maker to be sufficiently detached from the matter as to observe objectivity in means-end deductions. This structured approach has been undermined by the theory of expectancy value, which holds that people decide matters based on the best probable outcome after weighing up the expected (or perceived) outcomes and the anticipated necessary investment (Edwards, 1954; Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980). Unlike

rational-choice theories, expectancy value does not hold that a person rationalizes available information to arrive at a logically optimal or deductively rational outcome. Rather, in the process of selecting an outcome that seems beneficial to his or her personal need structure, a person *may* reasonably be expected to appraise information he or she considers pertinent. Thus, people make decisions that at the *time* of assessment seem logical to their own interests. It follows that impulsive or random decisions under expectancy value theory can be regarded as logical to the decision-maker, though they may not turn out to be rational in the light of fuller information.

In another aspect of discursive consciousness, Deutsch (1985) argues that people's behaviour can result from an emotional construct. Emotion is known to fashion the way people react. As Harper (1991) observes, people do not necessarily stand back and appraise information whenever there is some matter worth deciding, – they often react on 'gut feelings' or other nonrationalizing methods. Similarly, the emotional involvement with significant others may induce a person to act according to an agreed pattern where he or she may have preferred a very different response.

Within the realm of *pragmatic and/or learnt responses to everyday activities*, how people are socialized to act and react within their surroundings has traditionally been viewed as important in influencing their motivational behaviour. This aspect has its roots in behaviourism, where socialization was thought to enable a person to act without integral cognitizing. But, where functionalists suggested a dominant socialization mode (thereby enabling deviant behaviour), motivationalists take a broader view. For example, the theory of self-serving bias indicates a person would attribute success to his or her own abilities but blame failures on external events (Nisbett and Ross, 1980). So, when experiencing feedback regarding their own behaviour, people can choose to accept or reject the signals. Self-serving bias contradicts typical socialization patterns. This example does not refute socialization processes, but serves to cloud the issue. Motivationalists suggest that, given the western tendency for a plurality of cultural options, people are able to make any number of seemingly logical and socially acceptable behavioural responses (Bourdieu, 1977; Derrida, 1982; Baudrillard, 1983; Giddens, 1984).

d Observation   While the decision to migrate is personal, it is none the less undertaken within an institutional framework. Similarly, the theoretical developments of the 'personal' paradigm can also be seen in the methodological underpinning of the 'social' paradigm. This is not unexpected. However, the trend towards motivational approaches seems absent from even the most recent migrational research. It is plausible that the methodological rigidities of deterministic functionalism do not lend themselves towards motivational-type approaches.

3   Paradigm three: the cultural

> There is something strange about the way we study migration. We know, often from personal experience, but also from family talk, that moving from one place to another is nearly always a *major event* . . . Migration tends to expose one's personality, it expresses one's loyalties and reveals one's hidden values and attachments . . . it is a statement of an individual's world-view, and is, therefore, an extremely *cultural* event. And yet, when we study migration scientifically, we seem to forget all this. Migration is customarily conceptualised as a product of the material forces at work in our society (Fielding, 1992: 201).

In many respects, a migration research paradigm of cultural factors could be viewed as the 'personal behaviour' paradigm modified to be responsive to that of the 'institutional framework'. However, this is not how the paradigm of cultural factors has been examined

in migration studies to date. Research into the cultural aspects of migration has largely been based on anthropological-type studies into the personal experiences of the migrant.

Anthropological studies into migration have been strongly influenced by Durkheim's view of a cultural system. That is, the inter-related abstraction of '. . . the organization of values, norms, and symbols which guide the choices made by actors' (Parsons and Shils, 1951: 54). In this approach, the capital for the cultural system exists in the routines of daily life (Gadamer, 1975). This same construct forms the basis for rationales that add consumption and mass media as influential components in the construction of each person's perception of the cultural system (e.g., Adorno, 1975). This follows Marcuse's (1964) argument that people are integrated into groups through the commodification of needs and desires.

Recent endeavours into cultural studies are not anthropologically bound. For example, Seidman (1990) follows sociology, observing that as modern western nations commer-cialized the commodification of personal gratification they have concomitantly dispelled the pertinence and centrality of an ideological national value model. This has resulted in localized and pluralistic cultural systems dependent on the foundational beliefs, values and norms of the group members themselves. Thus, instead of a national cultural uniformity being the norm as functionalists have assumed, multiculturalism, or cultural plurality, has become the national experience.

In a different perspective, Bourdieu (1984) has provided an additional focus to the term culture with the notion of *habitus*. Where culture refers to all the shared ideas, beliefs, values and knowledge which constitutes the basis of social action and physical expression, habitus is the realm of the person's own conscious and subconscious perception of what culture means to him or her. Habitus is not acquired in the same way as are social mores, or norms; it is more subtle and complex. For example, the codes utilized in food preparation and consumption are representative of social mores and norms, but the behaviour accompanying the process is cultural in that it is rarely rule governed and usually explicated by the use of ritualistic symbols (Sahlins, 1976). Thus, habitus refers to that inner repository of cultural knowing, social status and perceived relationship of structural variables, that each person holds and uses in order to socialize.

Fielding (1992: 202–203) suggests that a person's habitus is materialized in the way he or she both views and uses places, and so there are a number of spatial and cultural features that can bring about a propensity to migrate. For example, people may perceive the important cultural variables of a place becoming unsuitable, either owing to the relational disintegration with social reference groups (such as ceasing work) or a change in social motivation (such as a desire to pursue a different set of social activities), marginalization by reference groups (this could be brought about by a major conflict or a changing community structure because of in-migration) and/or change to the physical structure of the place (such as a new motorway causing dislocations and barriers or a place becoming gentrified). Similarly, people may perceive some other location has a preferable habitus, such as when retirees see locations with a relaxed lifestyle offering opportunities that seem absent in their present urban location. People may aspire to a social standing which, in part, necessitates migration (such as may occur to the young upwardly mobile). The difference in this approach to functionalist models is that, although people do migrate to optimize their experiential circumstances as cognitively inspired models assumed, instead of making the decision according to some functional structure or rationalization of 'evidence', they do so in response to signals perceived as being transmitted from a variety of cultural symbols. And the way the signals are 'read', even responded to, is personal, not

social. This also accords with the views of Derrida (1982; 1988) and others, who posit that against the functionalist view that bestows an institutional narrative on people to undertake action according to ordered rules, each person makes his or her own narrative from a world that lays intensely competitive forms of consumerist imagery over cultural symbols of status, power and prestige.

III   Where to from here?

Long (1988:55) noted that the '. . . dominant themes of migration research . . . over the last two decades or so have been the determinants of migration'. The use of functionalist theory in sociology, and behavioural and cognitive theories in social psychology, have, in conjunction with positivist methodologies, facilitated the determinism of migration research to date. Unfortunately, sociological determinism has been used to appropriate all manner of assumptions to qualitative issues in migratory research knowledge, none of which has been able to materialize a theory adequate to explain migration in terms across more than one of the three perspectives. But in addressing the matter, rather than making assumptions based on the aspirations of the disciplinary structure, it may be opportune to revert to first principles.

An issue for migration analysis not contained within the current research focus is observed by Greenwood (1985:529), who posits that migration is an '. . . event that occurs in continuous time'. The notion of 'continuous time' is increasingly being recognized as an important social variable, possibly more so than stationary time (e.g; Bourdieu, 1977; Berger, 1984 Harvey, 1989). Though not expressed, a continuous time approach is also implicit in Halfacree and Boyle's (1993:343) 'biographical approach'. However, in a 'continuous time' approach which incorporates 'multiple currents', each act of migration may have '. . . any one of a number of differing interpretations' (Shotter, 1984:89). One solution would be to suggest all migration exists in some form of overarching pattern, but that each act is based on a number of variables considered important to the migrant, and which together are only a partial representation of all possible variables. An overarching pattern ought not to be perceived as some macro structure, rather as a flexible representational schema allowing for both generalizations and specificities. The benefit of this approach over a model or theory is that it does not promote conceptions of perceptual rigidity typically assumed of models and theories. Central to a comprehension of migration as an overarching pattern spread across continuous time is that the generalizations will evolve from an understanding of the breadth of influential specificities as perceived by each migrant to precipitate and/or initiate their act of migration.

A 'pattern' type solution may, in part, be found in the way motivational theorists approach human behavioural patterns, and in part by the way cultural theorists allow the person to be the locus of consideration when defining social variables. Motivationalists indicate that people respond to circumstances under a rubric of self-motivation that is shaped by the assumed relative advantages based on some combination of felt and/or perceived need, emotional reaction, reasoned outcome and some judgement of the necessary investment required to achieve a particular result (Kelley and Thibaut, 1978). And these variables will each be moulded by the person's perception of the plethora of cultural signals being transmitted from within the community to which he or she belongs (Helgeson *et al.*, 1984).

IV   Towards combining the research elements into a singular schema

In a modern western society, most people tend to want to stay locationally settled because of the icons, relationships and structures inherent in the pattern of settlement – all of which allow for the interpersonal behaviour that provides personal status, psychological and emotional stability, and meaning in life (Argyle, 1983). Thus, migration ought to be viewed as a contradiction to the usual endeavours for locational and social stability. And as people tend to perceive disruptions to their stability as extraneously caused, understanding the person's perceived linkages between him or herself and the social structure is important.

A problem for migration research has been that people are assumed to make their migratory decisions as a reaction to the economic and social structure of the region (Walmsley, 1988: 117). This top-down approach still tends to dominate migratory research (e.g., Clark and Wolf, 1992). It cannot be denied that people make their decisions to migrate within parameters defined by the regional political and economic institutional framework. However, what seems to be missing is the knowledge of, and relative parameters for, the cultural experiences used by migrants in their decision-making motivation. If relative economic advantage were a major determinant, then in an economically depressed region there would be mass out-migration. As there is no such cause-effect relationship, there must be other factors in migration decision-making. Bourdieu's (1984) notion of habitus, described above, provides a start in this direction. A knowledge base of motivational issues as perceived by migrants, rather than items of relative locational advantage attributable to place, would provide much needed information currently missing in the migratory literature about how cultural issues impinge on the migrant's underlying motivation to want to migrate. It would also provide a better understanding of why only some people view migration as a viable social option.

A different conceptualization of the variables in migratory decision-making is the notion of moorings (Longino, 1992: 24). While yet to be explored in detail, moorings can be viewed as those social expressions which not only allow a person to materialize his or her physical, psychological and emotional well-being but also serve to bind a person to a particular place. Thus, a person's perception of his or her relative stability in a place will hinge on how well he or she values his or her moorings. As Figure 3 indicates, moorings encompass a range of issues whereby a person gains meaning to his or her life. In terms of migration research, a mooring is important because elective migrants choose to cut the ties that ordinarily provide personal well-being and psychological and emotional stability. A mooring that is not perceived as locationally binding, or is viewed as readily replaceable in another location, may allow an understanding of the impact of the cultural and institutional issues in personal motivation. However, it is not only the cultural and institutional context existing in the place that makes each mooring personally (un)important but it is also the person's own set of aspirations within the genre of habitus which provides motivational meaning. Thus, migration research needs to understand how each migrant views the various mooring issues that impact on *his or her* life.

Moorings are unlike Bogue's (1969) push/pull factors, the latter being assumed to be determined by the function of the social structure and outside the control of the individual. In contrast to the functionalist notion of push/pull factors, people can express some degree of personal control over each mooring issue, dependent on how they wish to be motivated relative to the dominant social and cultural values implicit in the way the mooring issue is materialized. The manner in which a person (or household) conceptualizes each mooring
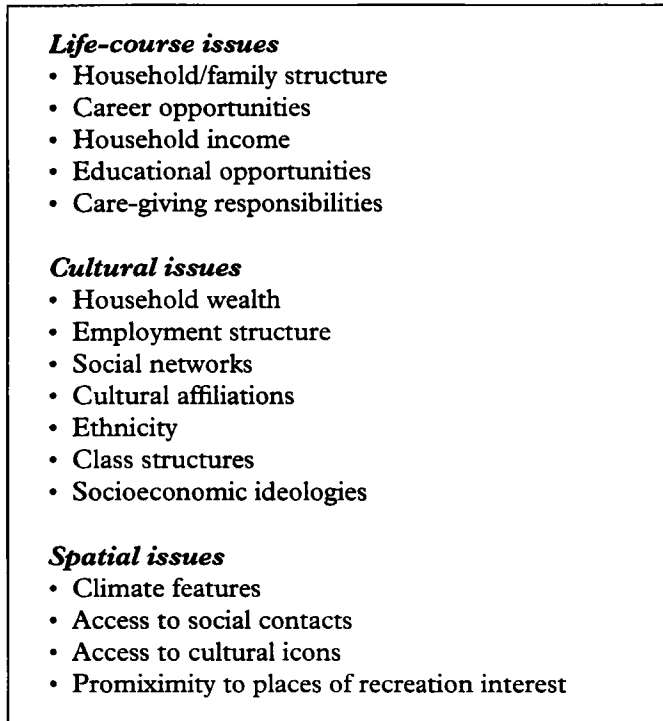

Life-course issues
- Household/family structure
- Career opportunities
- Household income
- Educational opportunities
- Care-giving responsibilities

Cultural issues
- Household wealth
- Employment structure
- Social networks
- Cultural affiliations
- Ethnicity
- Class structures
- Socioeconomic ideologies

Spatial issues
- Climate features
- Access to social contacts
- Access to cultural icons
- Promiximity to places of recreation interest

Figure 3   Typical moorings

issue will lead to his or her acceptance, or otherwise, of the issue being considered a locational tie. The conceptualization of a mooring issue for each person will be subjective and may include the following:

- The relative desire to want the mooring issue to be personally important, e.g., a perception of being the family mediator; or a rural coastal town will allow an escape from the rat-race.
- The (in)ability to 'escape' perceived and/or experienced conflict attributable to a particular mooring, e.g., the warmer climate in another place may be perceived as relieving health problems; or a lower-paid secure job in another place may be perceived as providing income continuity and lessening household stress.
- The degree of importance in relation to the experienced level of well-being or quality of life, e.g., the presidency of the local club may be perceived as a motivationally central factor; or being near the 'children' may be perceived as centrally important.
- The capacity personally to manipulate the social and/or cultural issues/factors (or parameters) which construct and/or influence the way the mooring issue is experienced.

In this context, each mooring issue is perceived in relative terms, and so is value laden. Essentially, moorings may enable migration researchers to determine the values a migrant (or migrating household) places on his or her interactions with other people, and the impact of institutional decisions to his or her overall life experience in the place he or she leaves. And, this can be compared to the experiences, or expectations, in the new place of residence. Thus moorings may not only be indicators for the (in)stability that precipitates a

decision to migrate but also the degree to which it is person or place that influences the decision.

V   Towards a 'moorings' research method

An approach to analyse 'moorings' in the framework of migration can be found in a method employed by Mansfield (1992a; 1992b), who sought to measure tourist valuations of particular destinational locations. Mansfield (1992a: 19) accepted that '. . . values are not a single or fixed point but rather an encompassing range', and adapted a concept known as 'value stretch', originally developed by Rodman (1963). This approach may be productive to measure the relative value placed on particular mooring issues by migrants (or migrating households). Figure 4 is a reworking of Mansfield's (1992a; 1992b) concept to suit the matter here. Explaining Figure 4 from the top of the diagram, each person has a level of *ideals*, which is a sort of 'what is the most ethical/moral/ideal stance I would like to embrace'. Recognizing that the level of *ideals* will probably never be reached, people make a pragmatic assessment as to what is achievable in their current circumstances. This level is the *expectations* level. Between these two levels is the *gap of reconciliation*, indicating that people reconcile a position below their ideal for their 'normal' day-to-day value expecta- tions. At some position below the expectations level is the *tolerance* level. It is between the expectation and tolerance levels that people operationalize their value system. And it is between these two levels that people derive *satisfaction gain* from their endeavours.

An important point here is that people also derive experiences below the tolerance level. Clearly, there is an area below the tolerance level where people will hold views of *intolerance*. The area between the tolerance level and the lowest threshold of intolerance is each person's *reactionary zone*. Supposition indicates that issues or experiences occurring in the reactionary zone facilitate one of two reactions: either the person is motivated by the value-conflict to modify the circumstances to exclude the issues appearing in the reactionary zone, or he or she has no modifying control over the issue and so might rearrange downwards his or her 'value stretch' to accommodate as acceptable that which was a value-conflict issue.
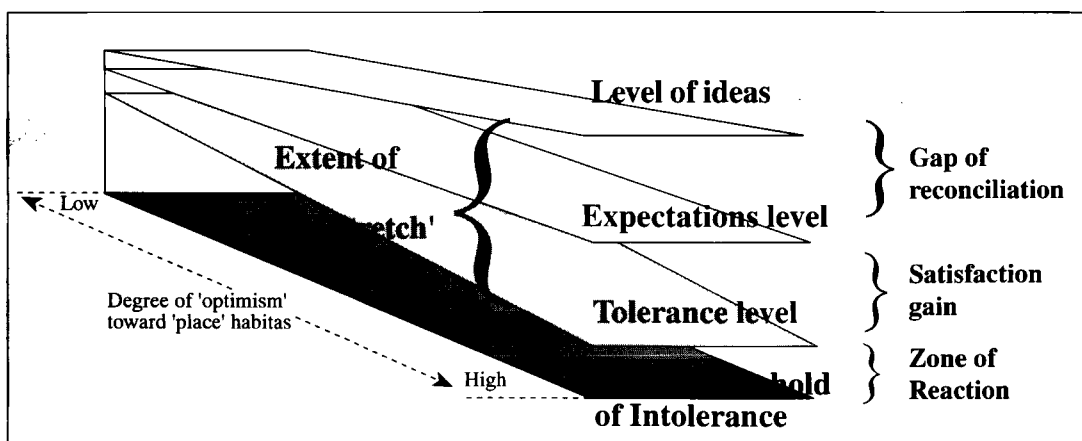

Figure 4   A 'schema' for value setting

It is the combination of gap of reconciliation and satisfaction gain that Mansfield (1992a) termed the 'value stretch', suggesting that this is the range of values people contemplate for a satisfactory life. Mansfield (1992a) posits that the 'value stretch' is assumed to be relatively narrower for high socioeconomic groups than lower socio-economic groups, suggesting more intolerance in people from a higher socioeconomic status to accept low-value experiences. This seems to be a functionalist-type assertion, and may be neither correct nor productive. Proposed here, and it may prove to be incorrect, is that a person's 'value stretch' responds to his or her degree of optimism towards his or her future well-being within the place habitas. That is, if a person perceives his or her present location as providing reasonable future prospects, then he or she may be categorized as having a high level of optimism and the 'value stretch' in which a mooring is assessed enables a broad degree of satisfaction. Alternatively, if the optimism towards place habitas performance is low, the person would be expected to have a large reactionary zone area.

Clearly, mooring issues appearing in the reactionary zone will prompt some degree of value-conflict, and may be sufficient to motivate people to act differently than they ordinarily would. This can be seen in Figure 5, where a 'slice' has been taken through the value levels depicted in Figure 4. Item 'a' could be any mooring issue, such as, for example, affiliation with a club. As item 'a' is closest to the expectations level, the value benefits deemed to be accruing to the person from club affiliation are greater than all other cultural experiences. To a prospective migrant, if this issue could not be materialized in another place, then it is possible that migration may not proceed. Similarly, if one or more members of a household deemed this item important (even by all for a central member of the household), then this might become an influential variable in the prospective outcome. Items 'b' to 'e', are progressively reducing in benefits, and each could be improved. To item 'e' the value benefits of the cultural experience would be perceived as marginally above tolerable. Items 'f' to 'h' are clearly intolerable and would be in need of some reaction. The important consideration here is whether the items 'f' to 'h' could be perceived by the person (or household) as 'rectifiable' within the present residential location, or may be resolved by migration. It is here that the degree of 'optimism' may be considered. The 'snapshot' presented would obviously change over time, with items appearing in differing positions according to changes in the person's (or household's) external relations, or to the regional politicoeconomic structure.

It is plausible that a mooring such as employment may fall into the 'intolerance' level, but if all other moorings were in the 'satisfaction gain' area, unemployment may be perceived as 'rectifiable' from the current residential location. However, if personal esteem were to become an issue as a result of unemployment, then the person may not wish to socialize, and more mooring items may consequently fall below the tolerance level into the reactionary zone. Thus it is possible that, as more items fell into the reactionary zone, relative optimism is diminished. How a person seeks to address the items occurring in the reactionary zone is important if he or she conceptualizes migration as a viable solution. This 'scenario' suggests migration results from value-conflict situations. An alternative 'scenario' is that mooring item 'a' could be the career of a household head, and that while employment provides the highest level of value-benefits, the benefits of the other mooring items are dependent on the employment relationship. Thus, cessation of work may allow another place to be perceived as providing a better overall level of satisfaction than the place of past employment (e.g., Campbell and Krieger, 1981; Greenwood et al., 1986).

The subject of moorings has here been appraised as though there were equality of experience in different places, and it was the person's perceptions that were at issue.

Clearly, this is not the full picture. Variables such as community class structure/s, dominant politicoeconomic ideologies, work, consumption and recreational opportunities, availability of services, etc., all contribute to providing a distinctive genre of habitas for each place. Thus, if surveyed, a person may have little or no binding to a place via moorings, but cannot perceive of another place offering a similar habitas. For example, a person may have no demonstrable moorings in a place such as Sydney, be quite prepared to migrate, but cannot nominate another place offering a similar habitas. In this regard, the moorings may be said to be related to specific spatial issues (refer again to Figure 3). This leads to speculation as to whether a person's moorings are always spread across a number of contextual issues or are largely issue specific. The point here is that not all moorings will necessarily be personally influential, nor will they all necessarily motivate social action.
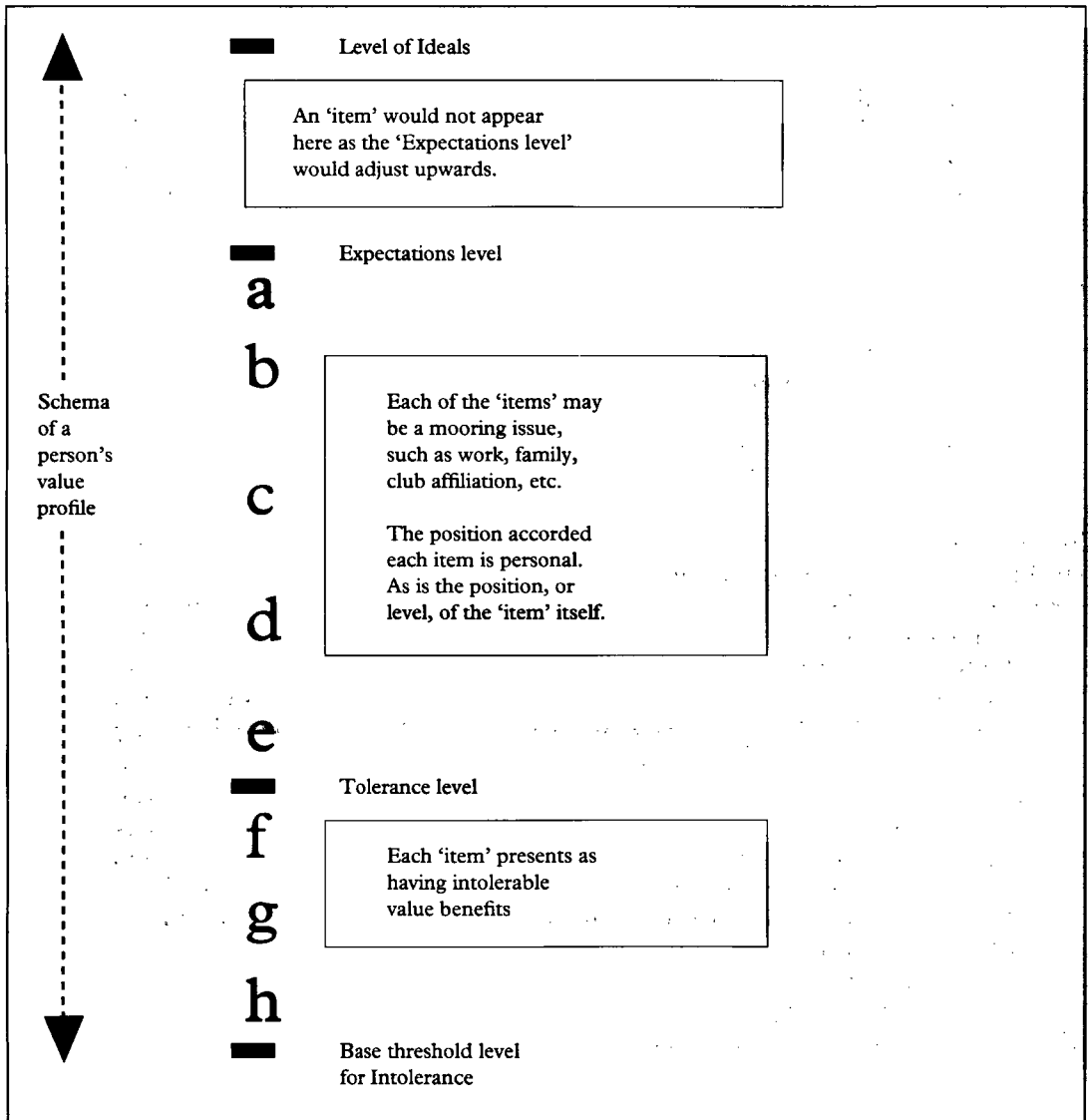

Figure 5   Value profile for mooring items

Though a number of mooring issues can be cited, there is no evidence of research that defines the range of moorings in migratory decision-making. Thus it is not possible to ascertain items for immediate research needs. This suggests that the issue of mooring description would need to be undertaken before quantifying the motivational issues. In the absence of a list of mooring issues, and to avoid the problem of ascribed meaning so common in positivist research methods, mooring items would need to be ascertained from the migrants themselves. For example, interaction with migrants may seek to establish

1)   a range of cultural activities that provided meaning to the respondent in relation to place, social relationships and in the expression of self;
2)   some relative motivational value, or tolerance level, for each of the cultural activities;
3)   whether any cultural activity was experienced as a value-conflict issue in the lead-up to the decision to migrate; and
4)   broad categories from the responses to differentiate potential major and minor mooring issues. These categories might also follow life-course issues, such as young homemakers (e.g., 18–35), or some other structure, such as socioeconomic groups.

This structure implies a qualitative assessment method to elicit mooring variables. Once a range of moorings has been established, quantitative methods could identify trends from an evaluative-type questionnaire approach.

It is probable that a range of determinants might emerge which, individually, were not seen by the migrant as singularly precipitative of migration, but collectively so. For example, the response 'I just got tired of the place' may be indicative of a number of moorings being perceived as collectively deteriorating in relative satisfaction rather than any one in particular. This reflects on the notion of migration decision-making based in continuous time, noted above. But even if a migrant posits that he or she felt no specific cultural factor had become intolerable, determining mooring (in)tolerance still has benefit if, on aggregation, collective patterns showed that particular mooring issue groups were influential in precipitating a propensity to want to migrate. This holds the key to understanding migration as a continuous time issue, rather than a specific event. Clearly, the act of migration is a specific time event. However, the proposition here is that it is the materialization of migration results from an ongoing process of change in personal perception. Thus the 'event' of migration may be seen as a continuous time development contradicting the usual endeavours for locational and social stability.

On the premise that the act of migration is a major life event because it cuts the ties that ordinarily provide personal well-being and psychological and emotional stability, then it would seem that mooring issues may be readily attributable to the place of departure. However, there is no reason why mooring assessment cannot be utilized to appraise the migrant's perception of mooring issues in the place of destination. As Longino (1992: 25) points out, many retirement-aged migrants indicate that prospective issues of relationship and/or lifestyle were perceived as more desirable in another location to that in which they previously sought an income. Clearly, the circumstances of relative mooring importance (and locational optimism) may have changed with retirement (Hass and Serow, 1993). In other words, it seems that as a major life-course event took place, not only might the mooring perceptions change but they may also be (re)evaluated in relation to different set/s of criteria. Even so, that is not to say that people do not experience loss at leaving some mooring issues. It is possible that what was viewed as important in the place of departure may still be grieved over as a loss, but also compensated by the positive optimism towards different moorings in the place of destination. Thus, unlike push/pull indicators, it does

not follow that there will be a symmetrical relationship between the (de)valued moorings in the place of departure and those valued in the place of the destination. But until a better understanding of moorings is known, how this difference is conceptualized can only be conjectured.

VI Summary

This discussion posited that current approaches in migration research constrain the opportunity for a research based on the migrants' motivational perspective. In reviewing migration research practice under a rubric of social organization, this discussion argued that the methodological determinism in functionalist structured approaches was a critical constraint to future research. This is because functionalist approaches impose a structure in which the migrant is asked to respond, and so predetermines the type of outcome gained. Thus they are incapable of enabling the migrants' views on the subject to emerge. But that is not to suggest such research methods have no place. Clearly, their capacity to determine the impact of the wider institutional setting on the decision to migrate cannot be discarded. Unfortunately, too much migration research has been premissed on a view that migrants optimally rationalize all possibilities before making a decision. Clearly, this is not the case. A preferable approach is to seek the extent of the institutional impact on the cultural experience/s of the person.

Also noted was that the approach to human psychology adopted in migration research assumed inappropriate rigidities. In rejecting the view that people do not make decisions based on some rationalizing of benefit cost, the discussion showed that people are assumed to be motivated to act by what seems logical; and logicality must be broadly defined. But rather than jettison the psychological theories of human behaviour, the article iterated the progression into motivation theory which incorporates the theoretical developments in both behaviour and cognition. Accordingly, this article proposed the combining of the cultural context with personal motivation as a means by which migration might be researched.

A schema was proposed centred on the migrant's valuation of his or her lifestyle experience across a number of 'mooring' issues. The importance of 'mooring' issues is that they can be used to define both personal experience and institutional impact in the migration decision-making. Allowing a migrant (or household) to 'value' his or her experience of various mooring issues in the place of departure and/or the destination, in a way that relates to both personal interactions in the cultural context, and the impact of institutional decision-making in the region's economic framework, provides a mechanism that not only differentiates between the personal and institutional attributes of places but also allows individual migrant (or household) experiences to be linked to the broader issue of migratory flow.

Because continuous time is an important component in the act of migration, migration ought be seen as a subjective response to a perceived (re- or de-)valuation of mooring issues across time rather than as a specific event. Viewed in this way, the locus of analysis is placed on the migrant in relation to his or her perception of the social structure, rather than on the migrant or the structure alone as has been the case to date.

Acknowledgements

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