

THE DISORGANISED MIGRATION OF THE POOR: COSTS, RISKS AND SOCIAL NETWORKS.

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1. Introduction

In a research programme starting in the late 1980s (Massey 1988), Douglas Massey and his associates (Massey, Goldring & Durand 1994, also see Boyd 1989) have developed the argument that migration between a particular area of origin and destination area may eventually become self-sustaining. Initially, because of the high costs and risks of migration, only the better-off members of a poor community can afford to migrate. Once those migrants are established in the destination area, however, they help aspirant migrants in the community of origin to migrate, and this reduces the costs and risks of migration. The development of migrant networks involving social connections between previous and aspiring migrants allow more people to make the move than would have been the case otherwise, and eventually the whole of the community of origin comes to be involved in migration. The initial migration sets in motion a cascading process of additional migration. Massey and colleagues called this cumulative causation. Besides migrant networks, Massey and colleagues also identified other factors involved in the process of cumulative causation, such as the relative deprivation triggered among non-migrants when successful migrants visit home (De Haas 2010).

In this paper I focus only on the migrant networks part of their argument. I argue that while this model has some validity, it overestimates the degree of organization present in the migration of poor people. Like the rest of the social capital literature it assumes that the development and maintenance of social networks are an unproblematic and inevitable outcome of the presence of migrants in the destination area (Brown 2004). Consequently it ignores the instability that can be induced by an unfavourable macro-environment, consisting of both macro-actors and macro-structures, in the migrant networks of especially the poorest people. It also ignores the conflictual internal dynamics of migrant networks, preferring a view of social networks as harmonious and mutually supportive. Due to the precariousness of migrant networks, migration may be less self-sustaining than previously argued. The model also ignores the extent to which step migration may be an alternative to network migration. Unlike the latter, which consists of organised movement between an area of origin and a destination area, step migration involves a larger number of places and follows a more irregular and unpredictable path.

2. The needs that migrant networks respond to

Migrant networks provide an answer to the problem of the costs of migration. In order to evaluate the cumulative causation argument, it is therefore necessary to gain greater clarity about the connection between the costs of migration and the rise of migrant networks. The costs of migration have to be paid up front, while any advantages from the move, in the form of higher wages and employment, only flow at a later date. Migrant networks become important in this context, as they can provide the necessary credit not available from financial institutions.

It is important to note that the costs of migration are not constant. They generally increase with the distance of the move, and when an international boundary is crossed, especially for undocumented migrants. If the demand for the services of people smugglers increases, and if border crossings become more dangerous due to increasing government crackdowns, they become more expensive. According to Liang, Chunyu, Zhuang & Ye (2008) the costs to smuggle a migrant from Southeastern China to the US increased during the 1990s and reached \$60 000 by the early years of the 21st century. This compares to their estimate of \$2000 for being smuggled over the border between Mexico and the US. Due to the high costs of migration from China, a household cannot afford to send a new migrant overseas until they have paid off the debt for the first one, according to them (Liang et al.2008). The migrant's need for assistance by migrant networks increases, in general, if the costs of migration are high (Gelderblom 2006, de Haas 2010). However this insight needs to be tempered by the realisation that the costs of migration also have to be seen relative to incomes. It is this relationship that will determine the affordability of migration, and thus the necessity of migrant networks, more than simply the absolute amount of the costs. Poor people will struggle to afford even the relatively low costs of internal migration over shorter distances, whereas middle-class people may call upon friends and family for help in the case of expensive international migration but not internal migration.

In general one will expect migrant networks to feature more strongly in international migration than internal migration because of the higher costs of the former. However, as we saw above, this also depends on the incomes of the potential migrants. And as Adepoju (2006) has pointed out, sometimes international migration involves shorter distances, lower costs and fewer barriers than many cases of internal migration, as in the case of migration of Yorubas between Benin and Lagos in Nigeria. Although the theory of the cumulative causation of migration was initially developed to account for international migration, the relationship between costs and the income of the potential migrant suggests that it is also applicable to the field of internal migration when we are dealing with poor people.

We have now established the conditions under which migrant networks are needed. Because of the influence of the rational choice perspective in the social sciences on much of the migrant networks literature, it is often assumed that if people face a problem (in this case financing the costs of migration), and a particular institution is the solution to that problem, individual rationality will ensure that that solution is adopted. Not much thought is given to the resource constraints faced by poor people that may make this solution impossible to attain, or the social structural forces that will cripple the development of these institutions. These constraints will be the focus of much of the rest of this paper. It is also not considered that functional equivalents may exist for the institutions that render their existence far more problematic. In this paper we will in fact consider step migration as a functional equivalent to network migration.

Familial versus communal migrant networks

Migration only becomes self-sustaining, in terms of Massey et al.'s argument, in cases where migrant networks become diffused throughout the community of origin (De Haas 2010). Migration has to reach a high degree of prevalence in the community of origin so that migrant networks stretch beyond particular families. The motivation for migrants to help each other now extends beyond kin relations to include factors such as having been class mates, or belonging to the same age group at initiation. If this stage is not reached, only those community members who have contacts with immediate family in the destination area will be able to migrate, and the

pool of available migrants in the community of origin will soon be exhausted, thus ending the self-sustaining impact of migration.

De Haas (2010:1610) explains the conditions for the growth of community-wide networks as follows:

Large-scale migration diffusion through network effects seems most likely to occur among relatively poor, low-skilled migrant groups with a ‘moderate’ level of group identity, cohesion and ‘strong ties’, which should be strong enough to guarantee clustering and prevent rapid assimilation, but also loose enough so that group norms do not prevent the establishment of ‘weak ties’. This seems to apply to many rural communities in relatively poor but rapidly modernising and transforming societies.

We have already covered the reasons why migrants should be relatively poor: if they are not, the costs and risks of migration will not be a constraint. Group cohesion is important, because without it, they will not form self-contained communities in the destination area, keen to retain a stake in the community of origin. They will more easily be assimilated in the destination area and their motivation to help new migrants will be less. If their level of group cohesion is too strong however, and ‘weak ties’ with outsiders cannot be formed, they will not be exposed to information about opportunities in the destination area. As a result the initial migration of the ‘bridgeheaders’ is less likely to take place. In that case migrant networks will not come off the ground at all.

De Haas’s application of the social capital literature to arrive at these conditions seems to be apt, although he can be criticized for not acknowledging the role that employer and government based recruitment have played, historically, in the development of migration streams all over the world (and still plays currently, cf. Krissman 2005). Recruitment often has fulfilled the role of ‘weak ties’ in providing information about new opportunities. Because recruitment agencies have also often assisted migrants with their move and therefore covered the costs of migration, it is, incidentally, also a reason why Massey et al. is not necessarily correct in assuming that the first migrants will be part of the better-off grouping in the area of origin. In fact, because recruitment often involved an element of coercion, as in the rise of the migrant labour system in Sub-Saharan Africa, one can assume that the disenfranchised in the local communities would be the first to leave.

3. Circumstances under which the development of migrant networks may be constrained

The resources of the network are low relative to the costs of migration

As we saw above, the network literature assumes that migrant networks can subsidize the costs of migration for members of poor households in the community of origin. The extent to which this can happen depends on two variables: firstly the costs of migration, and secondly the resources of the migrant network. Although there is a general tendency for the costs of migration to decline over time due to the development of transport and telecommunication links, some of the costs of migration can increase under specific circumstances (Gelderblom 2006). Under circumstances of mass unemployment, the costs of subsistence while looking for work as well as the costs of job search will increase. Difficult economic times will reduce the resources of

networks of friends and family in the destination area, leading to new arrivals being squeezed in a vice between rising costs of migration and decreasing support available from their network connections.

Government clampdowns on irregular migration also increase the costs of migration for undocumented migrants, because new arrivals will not be able to access government support, and job search will be even more difficult. This was the case with the Algerian asylum seekers in France studied by Collyer (2005). They could no longer find legal employment while waiting for their application to be processed, and this could take longer than a year. Because of increasing surveillance of those who access government services, family members now had to carry the full burden of supporting the asylum seekers. The risks involved in sheltering an illegal migrant increased as well due to increased government surveillance (Collyer 2005). Engbersen (1995/6) sketches a similar picture of the conditions of illegal immigrants in Rotterdam.

Menjivar (1997) describes the difficult situation faced by Salvadoran migrants to San Francisco in the early 1990s. They were unable to claim refugee status due to the vagaries of American foreign policy, and they arrived at a time of severe recession in both the US as a whole and in California in particular. Community organisations that generally provide support to immigrants also has their budgets squeezed owing to the recession and a general climate of anti-immigrant sentiment, and were thus less able to help. As a result of these factors, the recent arrivals' need for support increased. Because their family members arrived under the same constrained circumstances, their ability to help them, on the other hand, was very low. This situation produced much conflict between family members, and eventually resulted in many new arrivals being isolated completely from family support networks. Menjivar (1997) qualifies her description by saying that even though kin support dried up once these migrants arrived in the US, they did receive help from their kin in arranging their trip to the US. They could also access other kinds of support, such as from religious organisations and friends

Inability to reciprocate leads to exclusion

In the cases described by Collyer, Menjivar and Engbersen the problem faced by immigrants was not only that their need for support increased relative to the resources controlled by social networks. It was also that they were not in a position to return the help they received from their family connections within a reasonable time frame. Salvadoran migrants could not reciprocate because of the weak state of local labour markets. Algerian asylum seekers could not reciprocate because they were banned from the formal labour market, and the informal labour market was overcrowded and exploitative. The same situation faced illegal immigrants in Rotterdam, who were further pushed into informal employment as a consequence of increased demands for a valid residence permit in accessing formal employment (Engbersen 1995/6:98). Consequently they were going to take much longer to establish themselves in the new environment. This had implications for the amount of resources they were going to consume in their host families, and extended the time before they could return the favours extended to them.

Social networks tend to eventually exclude those who cannot reciprocate because reciprocal exchange is the basis of network functioning (Lomnitz 1977:134; 1988; Sharp 1994:78; Sharp & Spiegel 1985). This is the case despite the fact that the expectation of reciprocity within social

networks is implicit, rather than upfront (and often denied) (Bourdieu, 1990: 112-121). Network exchange is often expressed in terms of a discourse of family or friendship obligations and the open expression of the reciprocal basis of the relationship is regarded as being impolite (Lomnitz, 1988:44, Bourdieu, 1990). There is some cultural variability with regard to the obligations acquired when participating in mutual help relationships. The people one has special obligations to can vary, although it is generally family members, friends and neighbours. Among the Tswana of Botswana the position of 'mother's brother' carries special obligations (Townsend 1997). There are also differences about how one should reciprocate. Caces et al. (1985:16) refer to the lowland Filipinos, where the accepted practice is that one must always repay a favour with interest to make sure that one has repaid the debt. There are also differences with regard to the time within which one is expected to reciprocate, as pointed out by Sahlins (1972). Generally the reciprocity is delayed because the debt that is created by such helping is not expected to be repaid immediately, but lingers on as an obligation to the giver until such time as a return gift is appropriate (Mauss 1966). Despite the cultural variability within which the principle of reciprocity is embedded, this does not change the fundamental requirement that favours received have at some stage to be returned.

The exclusion of those who are unable to reciprocate may be mitigated if there is a possibility that the recipients may reciprocate through, for example, child minding or working in the garden, that is, by offering their labour to the benefactor (Ilcan, 1994:568-569). Because of the fungibility of money and thus the demand for it within the networks of the poor, this is unlikely to be a satisfactory solution over the long term, however. Evidence for this is provided by the observation by Du Toit & Neves (2009b) that cash grants play an essential role in allowing the poorest people in South Africa to participate in social networks. The tendency of social networks to insist on reciprocity therefore has clear implications for the functioning of migrant networks, as those who need most help in their migration will eventually not be able to access it.

The exclusion experienced by the poorest is not only because of an inability to reciprocate, but also a lack of capacity to live up to group norms regarding participation in community rituals. This affects the status of the poorest as respectable people in the community, which is in turn a precondition for participation in reciprocal exchange (Clever 2005, Du Toit & Neves 2009). According to Du Toit & Neves (2009) this is called *isidima* in the rural communities that they studied in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa. Maintaining this status firstly demands attending and contributing to community rituals, such as funerals. The poorest are often not capable of doing this. They are in addition unintentionally excluded, and in effect exclude themselves, because they cannot live up to informal norms regarding the standards demanded at such gatherings. Cleaver (2005) refers in this regard to the spotless white uniforms that are necessary to participate in singing and dancing groups in rural Tanzania. Another instance of being unable to live up to community norms is provided by Mosoetsa (2011). She recounts the story of Nonhlanhla, who has left her neighbourhood in a township in KwaZulu-Natal province, as well as her church, the source of many of her friendships, because she thinks they may judge her for leaving her husband.

Social networks do not only exclude downwards. People whose fortunes have risen to such an extent that they consider their previous friends as occupying a lower status can also come to exclude themselves from networks (Gelderblom & Adams 2006, De Haas 2010). This is especially likely if they feel secure enough on their own to think that they are unlikely to need

the assistance of their former friends and family in the future. The latter now change from a source of security to an onerous obligation to help. According to De Haas (2010) this scenario is more likely if the former migrants become assimilated into the host society and they no longer live in ethnic neighbourhoods. If the better-off still feel committed to the community of origin, they may not necessarily disengage from their home-town networks. However, in these cases, their relationship will become a patron-client relationship (Lomnitz 1977). The better-off will help their former social connections in the expectation of a higher status in the home community. Because the patrons depend on their clients to remain at home to benefit from the support they have offered, it is not clear that patron-client relations can be a viable mechanism for migration out of the community of origin.

Unequal exchange within networks can lead to destabilising conflict

From the above it is clear that network support functions on the basis of a norm of reciprocity. According to Gouldner (1960), the norm of reciprocity may be violated when exchange occurs between people who occupy different positions in the power hierarchy, leading to unequal exchange. The contributions of the poor and the powerless are often devalued by communal norms. An example is the well-documented devaluation of housework and child minding relative to waged work in the household as well as in social networks (Mosoetsa 2011:121), or the devaluation of manual labour within the wider economy generally and social networks specifically. In these cases the exchange rate in the reciprocal exchange is loaded against the poor. An example is the case of Patricia Menziwa, who lives in a distant rural village in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa (Du Toit, Skuse & Cousins 2007). She makes a living, in part, by making mud bricks for others in her community to use in their building projects. Because of the extremely low prices she can charge for these, this work is exploitative and indicates her unequal position in village networks. However, it is more acceptable to her than asking her neighbours and relatives for direct transfers of food, as this will entail losing respect within her social networks.

Unequal exchange within households can create conflict between the sexes and the generations. Under conditions of large-scale male unemployment in South Africa, men no longer have a socially sanctioned place in the household, and they often respond to their loss of status in a violent way. Conflict also occurs between older women and their children over control of the former's old age pension (Mosoetsa 2011). Another source of conflict within the households of extended family members in rural South Africa is the care of grandchildren, where children expect grandparents to take care of their children while they try to find employment (Kotze 1993).

The role of early migrants who become recruiters of new labourers from their hometown and supervisors of these labourers for employers can also be a cause of unequal exchange within the migrant network (Krissman 2005). They become agents of the employers who want to employ an exploitable, illegal migrant labour force with as few strings attached as possible. In their role as agents they firstly benefit at the expense of their compatriots, and secondly they serve as the vehicle whereby the migrants are exploited by the employers. Cranford (2005) described the process whereby building owners in Los Angeles made use of non-union janitorial companies in the 1980s in order to destroy unionization and thus undermine wages and working conditions.

These companies employed previous migrants as supervisors to recruit and manage co-ethnic workers, most of whom were recent migrants. While there were probably some migrants who appreciated the effort of the supervisor in helping them find a job, the fact is that the nefarious role of the supervisors also created much conflict within these networks, often between immediate family members. In the case described by Cranford this caused only a temporary destabilisation of the network, given that network solidarity eventually provided a basis for the re-unionisation of the janitorial workforce. However, it is conceivable that over time this kind of conflict can destabilise the migrant network to such an extent that it can no longer be a source of support for new migrants.

Social cleavages such as gender and ethnicity may limit the expansion of migrant networks

Social cleavages such as gender and ethnicity may act to exclude some people in the area of origin from migrant networks (Gelderblom & Adams 2006, De Haas 2010). Patriarchal restrictions may limit the (especially independent) movement of women away from the area of origin. The extent to which this happens depends on a variety of factors, such as the age and marital status of the woman, the state of the gender division of labour (more female migration in context of high male unemployment, for example), or the kind of migration, with woman being less represented in international migration networks. Because early migrants may not feel much obligation to help members of other ethnic groups in their community of origin, this will also limit the growth of community-wide migrant networks.

Maintenance of migrant networks may become difficult under adverse conditions

Up to now, we have not differentiated between migrant networks per se and other kinds of social support networks. We have assumed that processes that apply to the latter also apply to the former. Like other kinds of translocal social networks, migrant networks however span physical distance, and in this respect they are different from local support networks. They consequently require more money and effort to maintain them (Gurak and Caces 1992:152). Friends and relatives who live elsewhere have to be visited, or contacted in some other way, savings clubs and sports associations that link the migrants with the area of origin maintained, and so forth Boyd (1989:650). In their comparison of two neighbourhoods in post-Katrina New Orleans, Elliott, Haney & Sams-Abiodun (2010) established that people in the poor neighbourhood struggled to gain assistance from kin and friends who lived in more distant places, not affected by the hurricane, during the disaster, and that their difficulties were at least partly the result of the problems of maintaining what they called translocal social networks. It is therefore not impossible that the same may happen with migrant networks, especially under circumstances of extreme poverty. Spiegel, Watson & Wilkinson (2005) have demonstrated that some migrants in Cape Town, South Africa, are no longer able to maintain their connections to people back home in the rural Eastern Cape province due to impoverishment. Meagher (1997:89) found a similar situation with regard to connections between rural and urban areas in Nigeria under conditions of structural adjustment. According to Cleaver (2005:898), the family relationships of the poorest members of the rural community in Tanzania she studied ‘were characterized by intermittence – the chronically poor had no spare money for transport to visit working relatives in town, and written communications often secured little response’.

The variable impact of network dynamics on support for new migrants: a summary

There are a variety of outcomes to the processes described above. They generally involve circumstances affecting previous migrants now living in the destination area, as it is this pole of the migrant network that takes primary responsibility for financing the migration of those left behind. These outcomes are as follows:

- Discretionary limits to network support (helping some but not others). In this case, the previous migrants are still committed to the community of origin and prepared to help new migrants. However, due to community norms, it excludes some categories of people within that community from support for their migration: those who cannot reciprocate, women, the ethnic other, and transgressors of community norms. These restrictions will keep migration from becoming a community wide phenomenon.
- Discretionary cessation of network support (not prepared to help anybody). This happens when past migrants become assimilated in the destination area, and lose interest in helping new migrants. The end result will be the gradual break-up of migrant networks.
- Forced cessation of network support: when the resources of those in the destination area are too limited to help those left behind.
- Intermittent and conflictual social bonds lead to frayed migrant networks, thus over the long-term limiting the help available to new migrants. We have indicated a few scenarios under which conflict over the unequal contribution to, and distribution of, network resources may eventually impact negatively on the capacity of the migrant network to help new migrants.

I have hopefully now demonstrated that there is nothing inevitable about the rise and continued existence of migrant networks. At the same time we have to recognise that any particular social network only represents a subset of the total set of social connections of a person. Some people may possess enough redundancy in their social connections that they can activate new sources of support when old ones dry up. They can, for example, call upon friends when family can no longer help them, or ask for help from local connections instead of those in the destination area. Other people may be more dependent on the existing social networks. Individual characteristics will therefore play a role in determining how the decline of network support will impact the migration process.

The subsumption of migrant networks under hierarchical structures: implications for network resources

Nicos Mouzelis (1995) has criticised rational choice theory for conceiving of the link between micro and macro phenomena as only one of aggregation. It is therefore incapable of giving an account of social hierarchies and the resultant impact of macro-actors on the decisions of micro-actors. Migrant network approaches focus on the meso-level of social networks, but it does not overcome the basic limitations of rational choice theories with regard to their inability to account for macro-actors. As Mouzelis (1995) admits, the aggregative logic is not completely misplaced. We can see this in the extent to which recent migrants cluster together in specific neighbourhoods in the destination area. This clustering creates positive externalities in the form of economies of scale that would otherwise have been unattainable. As has been well-demonstrated in the migration literature, this creates a viable market for ethnic foods and a ready-made workforce for ethnic entrepreneurs, among other things. It is however essential to go beyond this aggregative approach to the micro-macro-link. Migrant networks are embedded

within the ethnic community and its hierarchies, while the community as a whole is embedded into a dynamic, competitive environment where positioning relative to other powerful (meso and macro) actors such as employers and government bodies is crucial. These community level contacts can have a dramatic impact on the resources of migrant networks.

As Cranford (2005) has demonstrated, undocumented Hispanics have managed to displace, and now have the ability to exclude, African-Americans as the janitorial workforce of Los Angeles. Due to the decisions of powerful actors (the building owners), migrant networks within this ethnic/class community have now increased their resources and thus their ability to help new migrants. Even the clustering of the ethnic community into a particular space, which is the precondition for the aggregative logic, depends on the tolerance levels of local government. By enforcing slum laws, or demolishing cheap housing, the local government can reduce the space available for new migrants. In South Africa, the local government's actions in making land available for informal settlements, and local community leaders' reaction to this, plays a crucial role in determining the scope for migrant networks. Spiegel, Watson & Wilkinson (2005) have showed, for example, that the mobilisation of established black residents of Cape Town against the government's Khayelitsha project (and their subsequent boycott of it) allowed recent migrants to gain a space for consolidating their households in Cape Town. Access to land for housing facilitated the migrant networks of these recent arrivals by increasing their ability to accommodate friends and family. However, this was constantly undermined by the political violence (flowing from the actions of meso and macro-actors) that engulfed these settlements during the 1980s.

4. Alternatives to migrant networks

The trade-off between the costs and risks of migration

It is possible to lower the costs of migration by increasing its risks. By opting for the cheapest, least secure forms of transport and accommodation, as well as the most dangerous ways to cross international borders, poor people can lower the costs of migration. They can walk or cycle to employment possibilities, go hungry and sleep rough en route and while looking for work, and try to cross borders without the help of people smugglers. As Mutsindikwa (2012) points out in the case of Zimbabwean migrants to Botswana, this choice can carry lethal consequences. Because this is an option that people smugglers want to discourage, it often happens that migrants are attacked, raped and in extreme cases even killed if the smugglers find them unaccompanied in the border area. In all of these cases, the physical risk of migration increases exponentially. They all involve exposing oneself to the risks of being attacked and robbed along the way, or of suffering illness and disability due to exposure to the elements. By substituting risks for costs, these cases involve people carrying the costs of migration on their bodies, so to speak. Gelderblom (2007) refers to this as the internalisation of the costs of migration. Because there is a clear gender dimension to risk taking behaviour, one can assume that men would be more likely to attempt to lower the costs of migration in this way.

Step migration as a functional equivalent to network migration

As a result of the migration literature's recent fixation on migrant networks, it has lost track of the earlier insight that poor people can finance the costs of migration by approaching their

ultimate migration destination in a series of small steps (Lipton 1980). This is an alternative way to overcome the problem of financing the costs of migration. It involves breaking up these costs into more manageable chunks by migrating to intermediate destinations first. As a result, only the first, less expensive move needs to be financed upfront. The next moves can then hopefully be financed from the income earned in the intermediate destinations. Step migration is therefore a functional equivalent to network migration.

Because it involves more than one destination, each of which carries risks, and because it is carried out without the knowledge of local circumstances offered by migrant networks, as well as the support from friends and family in the destination with regard to accessing employment and accommodation, step migration is a more risky activity than network migration. It is one example of a trade off between the costs and risks of migration that poor people can engage in.

Step migration as more disorganized than ideal typical network migration

Although networks can, for well-connected migrants, offer a choice of destinations, in most cases migrant networks combine one area of origin with one destination area. As long as migrant networks function well, migrants will flow within this channel in a relatively predictable fashion. Social organisation will create a bigger degree of certainty in the outcome of the migration process. This contrasts with step migration, where more destinations are at stake, and where the specific combination of these destinations is often subject to chance occurrences. Even the ultimate destination is less circumscribed, as one can assume that step migrants will simply move on if their latest destination does not allow them to make a living. Because of the risks involved in step migration, its outcome is less assured, and it is less amenable to careful planning than network migration. It is for these reasons that I regard step migration as more disorganized than the ideal typical case of network migration.

Conclusion

In this paper I have indicated a number of reasons for why migrant networks may start malfunctioning, especially in the case of chronically poor people. When this starts happening, network induced migration will lose its previous organisation, and become an increasingly chaotic and risky activity. In order to keep the costs of migration manageable, it may start to be combined with other strategies for lowering these costs, such as internalising the costs and step migration. An example of this is Menjivar's (1994) study of Salvadoran migration to the US in the 1980s. Contacts with kin and friends in the US were vital in making the move possible. However, given that we are already familiar with the constrained resources of the social networks of these migrants, it should not be surprising that most of the migrants in her study did not travel to the US directly, but approached it in a number of steps. An astonishing 25% of her research subjects stated that they walked part of the way. The recent diversification of migrant streams in Europe beyond the typical connections between ex-colonies and the metropole, can also be seen as examples of this more chaotic migration in action. Collyer's (2005) study of Algerian asylum seekers to the UK, as well as the complex migration paths of illegal migrants to Rotterdam found by Engbersen (1995/6), are both examples of step migration occurring in the context of the weakening of migration networks.

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