Migration Patterns of Paraíba Peasants

by
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Studies of internal migration in twentieth-century Brazil have focused on socioeconomic developments in various sectors, particularly agriculture and industry. The 1930s are regarded as a milestone in industrial development and also in migration patterns. Brazil was transformed from a colonial country characterized by four centuries of immigration from Africa, Asia, and Europe to one with massive internal migration. The chief population movement has been migration out of the Northeast, a region looked upon as agriculturally and economically backward, toward the Southeast, the industrial heartland and center of technological and scientific progress.

Theories of migration tend to explain movements of population within the national territory as arising from differences between regions in the accumulation and concentration of capital and the resulting inequalities. According to these theories, the Northeast provides the Southeast with cheap labor and therefore plays an important role in depressing its wages and favoring capital growth. Permanent migration is seen as an increasing rural exodus from the Northeast and an increasing urban concentration in the Southeast. This article questions this thesis. It seeks to show that short-term migration is also significant and is not, as some have asserted, a phenomenon peculiar to the last decades of the twentieth century but goes back to the beginning of industrialization in Brazil. I seek to understand migration not just as the result of the dynamic of the industrial sector but as deriving also from the survival and reproduction strategies of rural society. The temporary migration strategies of people from the countryside may present quite differing patterns. While some do migrate permanently, for others migration is a basic strategy for remaining on the land. Rather than being just a transfer of the labor force from one region or one sector of the economy to another, migration is in the first instance the way in which the rural and industrial labor markets interact with the dynamic of peasants' social reproduction.

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MIGRATION AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN BRAZIL

The 1930s are a landmark in the concentration of industrial activities around the São Paulo–Rio de Janeiro axis in the Brazilian Southeast. This development coincided with the decline of foreign immigration and the growing importance of internal migration both within the region and from outside it. Migration in Brazil in 1930 showed two main trends. One of these was an increase in population in the industrial centers, especially São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro (the then federal capital of Brazil), through an influx of migrants from Minas Gerais and from Bahia and other states of the Northeast. Between 1929 and 1937, industrial output increased by 50 percent, while imports decreased by 23 percent (Cohn, 1977: 297), and this created an increased demand for labor in the industrial region. In the period 1926–1930, immigrants from overseas made up 61.9 percent and internal migrants 38.1 percent of the total of migrants to the state of São Paulo, while between 1931 and 1935 internal migrants accounted for 56.7 percent and immigrants 43.3 percent (Lopes, 1976: 58). Most migrants were headed for agricultural work on coffee and cotton plantations, because the state government was providing institutional support for their recruitment. "Recruiting workers, laying on free transport for them, and directing them to the plantations were the chief ways in which the state government showed its concern to remedy the planters' shortage of farm hands" (Lopes, 1976: 59).

The other trend was the occupation of the agricultural frontier, much of it by migration within the region. In the South, peasants from Rio Grande do Sul moved into Santa Catarina and Paraná. In the Northeast, migrants from Piauí and Ceará moved into Maranhão. There was also a lot of migration between regions, as when settlers from Minas Gerais, Bahia, and other northeastern states moved into the frontier region of Goiás.

The industrial-development model strengthened in the 1940s and 1950s. From 1939 to 1964 industry grew some 60 percent, while the increase in the farming sector was only about 7 percent (Cohn, 1977: 304). The industrial sector of the economy expanded, stimulating the output not only of consumer durables but also of so-called basic industries such as steel making, automobile manufacturing, and hydroelectric plant construction. An increasing flow of migrants was facilitated by improved connections between the Northeast and the Southeast when the first regional highway system linking the South to the North of Brazil was completed in 1949. "Emigration from the Northeast was much more intense in the 1950s than in either the preceding decade or the one that followed. This was only to be expected, given the seriousness of the drought of 1953" (Hoffmann, 1977: 35–36).

In the 1940s and 1950s, there was significant migration within the Northeast itself, both rural-urban and rural-rural, in the direction of Maranhão. According to Moura, "in the 1950s, out of a total of around 375,000 people from rural areas who migrated within the Northeast, no fewer than 250,000 went to rural areas in Maranhão. However, in the 1960s, not only did the total numbers involved drop to 150,000 but it is estimated that around 75,000 people who had previously migrated into the rural areas of Maranhão now moved out" (1980: 1044). According to Moura's data, Maranhão not only lost importance as an absorber of migrants but suffered an outflow of people returning to their home states or moving on to some other place. These changes had an impact on the amount of population movement within the Northeast. In the period 1950–1970 there was increasing migration between regions, but the amount of movement within regions remained significant. In these two decades, 5.7 million people left the rural parts of the Northeast, 3 million of whom moved to the urban areas of the region while 2.7 million migrated to other regions of Brazil.

The most typical migration pattern in the Northeast in the 1970s was rural-urban movement within the region, but Paraíba and Bahia were exceptions. This is how Moura explains the case of Paraíba (1980: 1048): "It could be reflecting the existence of a quite concentrated colony of natives of this state already living in Rio de Janeiro, which acted as a magnet for Paraiban migrants both by providing information and by helping reduce some of the monetary and nonmonetary costs incurred by the migrants in the course of their adaptation to the destination area." Paraíba's tradition of out-migration was confirmed during subsequent decades. According to data from the 1980 census, the number of Brazilians born in the state was then 3,518,655, of whom 926,351 were living outside it; that is, 26.3 percent of people born there had moved out, the highest proportion of all the states of Brazil (Menezes, 1985: 37–38). Of these Paraiban migrants, 28.5 percent had moved to Rio de Janeiro, 19.5 percent to São Paulo, 5.6 percent to the Federal District of Brasília, 18 percent to Pernambuco, 9.6 percent to Rio Grande do Norte, and 18.9 percent to other states (40).

Since the period of the so-called economic miracle (1968–1973), the Brazilian economy has been marked by repeated periods of economic crisis, affecting conditions of employment and interfering with trends in migration. Several studies have shown that since the 1970s internal migration has been characterized by an overlapping of patterns both with regard to places of origin and destination and with regard to types of migration. Whereas earlier decades showed migration flows that were fairly clear and simple, the trend since the 1970s has been toward multiple movements explained by the difficulties of staying permanently in the areas regarded as the "destination."

Circular movements, both those involving return to the areas of "origin" and those going on to other destinations, have also become important. Return migration has always existed in the Northeast, and, as some researchers have emphasized, migrants have always had the idea that one day they would return (Scott, 1982: 4). Since the 1970s, however, return migration has increased significantly: "The migratory movements of the past decade have taken on some new characteristics. . . . There are indications of continuous migration with no clear idea of a destination. That is to say, the dislocations succeed one another in multiple attempts, with considerable return migration or onward movement to other areas, giving rise to the meaningful phrase 'professional migrant' " (Patarra, 1983: 48).

THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO MIGRATION

One approach to migration centers on the social structure, the social system, or the mode of capitalist production. Lopes (1971) analyzes migration as the transfer of population from archaic, stagnant regions to modern ones, representing an advance in the development of capitalism: "Migration means transferring workers from regions that are not well integrated into the market to others that are and in which a more purely wage-earning workforce is created" (Lopes, 1976: 64). Similarly, for Singer (1973) the creation of regional inequalities can be looked upon as the main driving force of the internal migration that accompanies the capitalist mode of industrialization. He examines the factors that drive people off the land and into the city, which he sees as of two kinds. First there are factors of change, "which result from the introduction, into both town and country, of relationships based on capitalist production, leading to the expropriation of small landowners and the expulsion of tenant farmers, sharecroppers, and other cultivators who do not own their land" (38). Second, there are factors of stagnation, "which are manifested in the form of increasing population pressure on arable land, which may be due as much to a physical lack of usable farm land as to its monopolization by large landowners" (38). Singer emphasizes that the parts of the country where the factors of stagnation predominate are generally those in which the population depends on subsistence farming. The limitations of this sort of production, due to lack of land and difficulties in obtaining credit and marketing crops, mean that such regions provide a labor force for the large landowners and are also a source of seasonal migrant workers (39).

Here I shall be asking how the forces of change and of stagnation can operate simultaneously in the same area. My research in upstate Paraíba in the 1980s showed that the decline of cotton cultivation was accompanied by

the modernization of the ranching industry through improvement in the quality of the cattle and an expansion in the planting of pasture. I shall be arguing that these two factors are firmly linked, with some areas being affected by the growth of capitalist production relationships and other areas in decline because of the absence of any change. According to a critique of this dualist perspective developed by Oliveira (1977a), internal migration is itself a mark of industrial development. Thus, when a coffee-growing region is turned into a manufacturing one, the regional division of labor begins to be redefined throughout the nation. The role of the Northeast in the systematic regional division of labor becomes, from this angle, that of constituting the industrial reserve army's reserve. "Migration from the Northeast to São Paulo has become a formidable factor in filling the jobs created by industrialization and helping hold down the real wages of the whole workforce" (Oliveira, 1977b: 37).

This redefinition of the regional division of labor is seen as having contrasting effects on development in the two regions, with the Southeast driven toward growth and the Northeast toward stagnation. It is not that one region is backward and the other modern but rather that capitalist accumulation gives rise to internal contradictions that create inequalities of development within the socioeconomic space. Oliveira overcomes the dualist paradigm by explaining that the less developed regions have been produced by the dynamic of capital and are not the product of stagnation. His understanding of interregional migration, however, is similar in some respects to the dualist interpretation in that he sees the less developed regions as reserves of manpower for the sectors and regions in which hegemonic capital is concentrated. There is, therefore, a functional relationship whereby the less developed regions are deprived of their resources, in this case manpower, to sustain the expansion of the more developed ones.

The paradigm of the production of regional disparities is relevant to an understanding of the migration of significant numbers of people from the Northeast to the Southeast, but there will be a gap in it unless the significance of migration for the individual actors in this social process is taken into account. This is where I want to emphasize studies that focus their analyses on the conditions of social reproduction of family groups and, in particular, those that show that internal migration in Brazil provides rural families with an important survival strategy (Garcia, 1989; Menezes, 1985; 1997; Woortmann, 1990). This perspective recognizes that migration is not merely the transfer of manpower between the less developed regions (which drive it out) and the more developed (which attract it), nor is it simply a movement between archaic sectors and modern ones, with the social agents themselves just passive victims of a process determined by the social structure or the process of capitalist accumulation. The social agents of migration—the

migrants—do not look at themselves in this way but rather see themselves as workers, settlers, smallholders, stonemasons' apprentices, tenant farmers, gold prospectors, or whatever, who, to ensure their survival and that of their families, use various strategies, whether in their "place of origin" or their "place of destination." They are not passive victims but active participants in a process that is not exactly migration but rather an effort to maintain or improve their living conditions.

Analysts point out that ever since the 1970s there has been a sizable group of workers who migrate repeatedly as a survival strategy. This challenges the classical notions of migration as having an origin and a destination, with the traditional places of destination being thought of as places of "attraction" and those of origin as places of "expulsion." These ideas of origin and destination, backwardness and modernity, conceive of space as static, a geographic condition rather than a social one. The pronounced circularity of people's movement in space is a challenge to the researcher's methodology. Gathering data to measure the statistical significance of such a phenomenon calls for something much more complex than a demographic census or a survey (Martine, 1982: 5).

My own choice of methodology has been that of studying the migration paths of individuals and families in an attempt to identify multiple migrations over a life span. I have used as my case study a group of 20 peasants, migrants from the *agreste* (semiarid savanna) region of Paraíba, aged between 20 and 77 years. The data were collected in 1995 and 1996. These peasants' migration patterns capture a multiplicity of intersections between the histories of individuals and those of the families and social groups to which they belong.

MIGRATION PATTERNS AND THE CONNECTIONS BETWEEN SOCIAL SPACES

Observing the migration patterns of the 20 individuals studied, we find that they have migrated a number of times in their lives, sometimes to harvest sugarcane in the neighboring state of Pernambuco and sometimes to seek work in the big cities of southern Brazil, mainly São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. The complexity of each individual's history of migrations calls into question certain traditional notions, among them the idea of phases in the migration process, with a temporary migration usually being followed by a permanent one, and the idea of a definitive transfer of population from the countryside to the towns. A family from a rural area that at one stage in its life undertook a long-distance, long-term migration to a big city can still come back to the land of its birth and resume planting small plots of land,

combining this with the head of the family's seasonal migration. We shall analyze migration patterns over time.

FROM 1930 TO THE EARLY 1960S

People who migrated during the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s tended to make only one type of migration, either to Rio de Janeiro or to the sugar-growing zone of Pernambuco (see Table 1). Arnaldo (case 1), 77 years old, first migrated to cut cane in 1930, having been taken there by his father when he was 12. His case confirms that there was seasonal migration from the savanna region and probably from other parts of Paraíba to the cane fields of Pernambuco earlier than the 1930s (Andrade, 1980), forming a traditional "migration corridor" (Silva and Menezes, 1999). In socioeconomic terms, this connection between the arid and semiarid zones of the Northeast, with their periodic droughts, and the humid zones of (originally) natural forest vegetation along the Atlantic coast has represented a complementary relationship in the Northeast of Brazil between the zone of smallholdings and latifundia and that of the sugarcane plantations (Suarez, 1977: 36–37).

Migration to the cities of the Southeast is part of an important flow that has been going on since the 1930s and increased substantially in the 1950s. Some migrants settled in their places of destination while others retained their roots in the land of their birth, returning to it several times. Such is the life story of Benedito (case 2), 72 years old, who migrated to Rio de Janeiro in 1951, 1957, 1961, and 1968, leaving his wife and children at home on his parents' land. With his savings he then bought a small piece of land. He has three daughters and three sons who themselves began migrating in the 1970s. In 1995 the three unmarried daughters were living in Rio de Janeiro as domestic servants. One of them had a son and a daughter who were looked after by Benedito and his wife. The son migrated to Rio de Janeiro in 1994, when he was 18, thus initiating a third generation of migrants. Benedito's three sons have moved to Rio several times and have also worked as cane cutters in the neighboring state of Pernambuco but, not having managed to buy any land themselves, have built homes on their father's property. Their migration pattern represents a tendency typical of the generation that began migrating in the 1970s.

A second example of migration to the Southeast in the 1950s is that of Davi (case 3), 54 years old. His father was landless, and he has 11 siblings, 5 of whom live in Rio and 6 live in the same Paraiban *município* (county). Davi worked in Rio from 1961 to 1975, where he learned to drive a bus. He managed to save some money and bought 20 hectares (50 acres) of land and 20

TABLE 1

Age, Category, and Number of Migratory Moves

Case Number	*Name*	*Birth Date*	*Age*	*Category*[a]	*Age and Year of First Migration*	*Place of First Migration*[b]	*Number of Migrations to Cane Fields*	*Number of Migrations to Rio*	*Number of Migrations to Other Places*
1	Arnaldo	1918	77	R	12, 1930	Cane fields	25	0	0
2	Benedito	1923	72	SH	28, 1951	Rio	0	4	0
3	Cláudio	1938	57	R	12, 1950	Cane fields	34	1	0
4	Davi	1944	54	SH	18, 1962	Rio	0	2	0
5	Edvaldo	1944	54	R	20, 1964	Minas Gerais	6	0	4
6	Fernando	1943	52	R	32, 1975	Rio	7	8	0
7	Geraldo	1947	48	R	18, 1965	Rio	19	4	0
8	Hélio	1947	48	R	17, 1964	Cane fields	22	2	0
9	Ivo	1949	46	SH	19, 1968	Rio	12	1	0
10	Jaime	1950	45	R	13, 1963	Cane fields	13	3	0
11	Luís	1950	45	SH	18, 1968	Rio	12	2	0
12	Marcelo	1951	44	R	20, 1971	Cane fields	8	4	3
13	Nivaldo	1952	43	R	18, 1970	João Pessoa	8	0	7
14	Oswaldo	1957	38	R	22, 1979	Rio	15	2	0
15	Pedro	1958	37	R	20, 1978	Rio	3	4	0
16	Roberto	1964	31	R	12, 1976	Cane fields	18	1	0
17	Sílvio	1965	30	R	15, 1980	Cane fields	8	3	0
18	Teodoro	1972	23	SH	16, 1988	Cane fields	5	2	0
19	Vladimir	1972	23	R	–	Cane fields	7	1	0
20	Wagner	1973	22	R	14, 1987	Cane fields	8	2	0

Note: Cases 1, 3, and 15 are three generations of one family (grandfather, father, grandson). Cases 8, 19, and 10 are brothers. Cases 11 and 18 are father and son. Cases 17 and 20 are uncle and nephew. Cases 5 and 7 are brothers-in-law.

a. SH, smallholder; R, renter or tenant farmer.

b. Sugar plantations on the north coast of Pernambuco.

head of cattle, becoming a successful smallholder by combining subsistence arable farming with cattle raising. He has two sons, aged 19 and 21, the elder of whom is studying agronomy at the Federal University of Paraíba. The careers of Benedito and Davi are examples of how in the 1950s and 1960s migration represented a real chance to accumulate resources to buy land, thus ensuring the reproduction of the status of peasant farmer.

The career of Cláudio (case 4) has been different from that of Benedito and Davi. Cláudio made his first migration, accompanying his father (Arnaldo), at age 12 in 1950 to work in the cane fields of Pernambuco. He has been to Rio only once and says he failed to adapt. This example shows the transmission of the migration experience over four generations: Arnaldo accompanied his father in 1930 and took his own son, Cláudio, in 1950, and Cláudio took his own eldest son, Roberto (case 16), when he too was 12.

FROM THE MID-1960S TO THE MID-1970S

Analyzing the 11 cases whose first migration happened in the 1960s or 1970s, we find that they are marked by multiple migrations to the sugar-growing areas and to the big cities of the South.[1] The first migration in most cases was to one of the southern cities. Most migrants worked in the Southeast in the 1960s and 1970s and went cane cutting in Pernambuco in the 1980s and 1990s (see Tables 2 and 3). In the first decades of the surge in migration between 1930 and 1960, the migrants, even those who went with the intention of returning to their home state, tended to remain in the southern cities because of the employment opportunities there. There was, additionally, the chance of acquiring the skills for a better-paid job because the labor market was still at a formative stage. In the memory of the migrants, that was a time when life in São Paulo "was good." Not only was the employment situation relatively good but migration was facilitated by the relative ease with which a plot of land might be bought and one's own home built on it. This possibility represented the main element in encouraging migrants to stay in the city permanently.

Among those migrating in the 1970s and 1980s, employment in industry was their great dream, as it meant the chance for better wages and access to health and social welfare benefits. The expectation was that of acquiring a "profession" (i.e., a specialized skill) by working in industry, an expectation based on the example set by friends and parents, especially by those who had migrated before the 1970s. As most of the migrants, however, had come from working on the land, few of them had any qualifications. This meant, as a

(text continues on p. 126)

TABLE 2

Places of Migratory Moves Over Individual Lifespans: Cases 1–10 (Age and Year in Parentheses)

Move	*Case 1 Arnaldo*	*Case 2 Benedito*	*Case 3 Cláudio*	*Case 4 Davi*	*Case 5 Edvaldo*	*Case 6 Fernando*	*Case 7 Geraldo*	*Case 8 Hélio*	*Case 9 Ivo*	*Case 10 Jaime*
1	Cane fields (12, 1930)	Rio (28, 1951)	Cane fields (12, 1950)	Rio (20–27, 1964–1971)	Other (20–21, 1964–1965)	Rio (32, 1975)	Rio (18–20, 1965–1967)	Cane fields (17, 1964)	Rio (18–30, 1967–1979)	Cane fields (13, 1963)
2	Cane fields (19, 1937)	Rio (34, 1957)	Cane fields (22 1960)	Rio (28–31, 1972–1975)	? (21, 1965)	Rio (34, 1977)	Rio (21–26, 1968–1973)	Cane fields (18, 1965)	Cane fields (34, 1983)	Cane fields (15, 1965)
3	Cane fields (20, 1938)	Rio (38, 1961)	Cane fields (23, 1961)	–	? (21–22, 1965–1996?)	Rio (34, 1977)	Rio (27–30, 1974–1977)	Cane fields (19, 1966)	Cane fields (36, 1985)	Cane fields (17, 1967)
4	Cane fields (21, 1939)	Rio (45, 1968)	Cane fields (24, 1962)	–	Cane fields (25–32, 1969–1976)	Rio (36, 1979)	Cane fields (30, 1977)	Cane fields (21, 1968)	Cane fields (37, 1986)	Rio (18–30, 1968–1980)
5	Cane fields (22, 1940)	–	Cane fields (26, 1964)	–	Cane fields (32, 1976)	Rio (38, 1981)	Cane fields (31, 1978)	Cane fields (22, 1969)	Cane fields (38, 1987)	Rio (31, 1981)
6	Cane fields (25, 1940)	–	Cane fields (27, 1965)	–	Other (40–42, 1984–1986)	Rio (43, 1986)	Cane fields (32, 1979)	Cane fields (23, 1970)	Cane fields (39, 1988)	Cane fields (32–34, 1982–1984)
7	Cane fields (39, 1957)	–	Cane fields (28, 1966)	–	Cane fields (52, 1984)	Rio (44, 1987)	Cane fields (33, 1980)	Cane fields (25, 1972)	Cane fields (40, 1989)	Cane fields (35–36, 1985–1986)
8	Cane fields (?, ?)	–	Cane fields (29, 1967)	–	Cane fields (52, 1984)	Other (45, 1989)	Cane fields (34, 1981)	Cane fields (26, 1973)	Cane fields (41, 1990)	Cane fields (37–38, 1987–1988)

(continued)

TABLE 2 (continued)

Move	*Case 1* *Arnaldo*	*Case 2* *Benedito*	*Case 3* *Cláudio*	*Case 4* *Davi*	*Case 5* *Edvaldo*	*Case 6* *Fernando*	*Case 7* *Geraldo*	*Case 8* *Hélio*	*Case 9* *Ivo*	*Case 10* *Jaime*
9	Cane fields (?, ?)	–	Cane fields (30, 1968)	–	Cane fields (53, 1985)	Cane fields (46, 1990)	Cane fields (35, 1982)	Cane fields (27, 1974)	Cane fields (42, 1991)	Rio (39, 1989)
10	Cane fields (?, ?)	–	Cane fields (31, 1969)	–	Cane fields (54, 1986)	Rio (47, 1991)	Cane fields (36, 1983)	Cane fields (28, 1975)	Cane fields (43, 1992)	Cane fields (40, 1990)
11	Cane fields (?, ?)	–	Cane fields (32, 1970)	–	–	Cane fields (47, 1991)	Cane fields (37, 1984)	Rio (29, 1976)	Cane fields (44, 1993)	Cane fields (41, 1991)
12	Cane fields (?, ?)	–	Cane fields (33, 1971)	–	–	Cane fields (48, 1992)	Cane fields (38, 1985)	Rio (31, 1978)	Cane fields (45, 1994)	Cane fields (42, 1992)
13	Cane fields (?, ?)	–	Rio (34, 1971)	–	–	Cane fields (49, 1993)	Cane fields (39, 1986)	Cane fields (35–37, 1982–1984)	Cane fields (46, 1995)	Cane fields (43, 1993)
14	Cane fields (?, ?)	–	Cane fields (35, 1972)	–	–	Cane fields (50, 1994)	Cane fields (40, 1987)	Cane fields (38, 1945)	–	Cane fields (44, 1994)
15	Cane fields (?, ?)	–	Cane fields (36, 1973)	–	–	Cane fields (51, 1995)	Cane fields (41, 1988)	Cane fields (39, 1986)	–	Cane fields (46, 1995)
16	Cane fields (?, ?)	–	Cane fields (37, 1975)	–	–	Cane fields (52, 1996)	Cane fields (42, 1989)	Cane fields (40, 1987)	–	Cane fields (46, 1995)
17	Cane fields (?, ?)	–	Cane fields (38, 1976)	–	–	–	Cane fields (43, 1990)	Cane fields (41, 1988)	–	–

18	Cane fields (?, ?)	–	Cane fields (39, 1977)	–	–	–	Cane fields (44, 1991)	Cane fields (42, 1989)	–	–
19	Cane fields (?, ?)	–	Cane fields (40, 1978)	–	–	–	Cane fields (45, 1992)	Cane fields (43, 1990)	–	–
20	Cane fields (?, ?)	–	Cane fields (41, 1979)	–	–	–	Cane fields (46, 1993)	Cane fields (44, 1991)	–	–
21	Cane fields (?, ?)	–	Cane fields (42, 1980)	–	–	–	Cane fields (48, 1995)	Cane fields (45, 1993)	–	–
22	Cane fields (?, ?)	–	Cane fields (43, 1981)	–	–	–	Rio (48, 1995)	Cane fields (46, 1993)	–	–
23	Cane fields (?, ?)	–	Cane fields (44, 1982)	–	–	–	–	Cane fields (47, 1994)	–	–
24	Cane fields (?, ?)	–	Cane fields (45, 1983)	–	–	–	–	Cane fields (48, 1995)	–	–
25	Cane fields (?, ?)	–	Cane fields (46, 1984)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
26	–	–	Cane fields (47–50, 1985–1993)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–

Note: In cases 2 and 9 the year has been inferred by the translator from the age given. "?" denotes a lack of information.

TABLE 3

Places of Migratory Moves Over Individual Life Spans: Cases 11–20 (Age and Year in Parentheses)

Move	*Case 11 Luís*	*Case 12 Marcelo*	*Case 13 Nivaldo*	*Case 14 Osvaldo*	*Case 15 Pedro*	*Case 16 Roberto*	*Case 17 Sílvio*	*Case 18 Teodoro*	*Case 19 Vladimir*	*Case 20 Wagner*
1	Rio (18, 1968)	Cane fields (20, 1971)	João Pessoa (8–12, 1960–1964)	Rio (22, 1979)	Rio (20, 1978–1980)	Cane fields (12, 1976)	Cane fields (14, 1980)	Cane fields (17, 1989)	Cane fields (16, 1988)	Cane fields (14, 1987)
2	Rio (26, 1976)	Cane fields (22, 1971)	João Pessoa (12–18, 1964–1970)	Rio (23, 1980)	Rio (23, 1981–1984)	Cane fields (14, 1978)	Cane fields (15–17, 1981–1983)	Cane fields (18, 1990)	Cane fields (18, 1990)	Cane fields (15, 1988)
3	Cane fields (31, 1981)	João Pessoa (22–24 1973–1975)	São Paulo (20–21, 1971–1972)	Cane fields (24, 1981)	Rio (27, 1985–1988)	Cane fields (16, 1980)	Cane fields (18–20, 1983–1985)	Cane fields (19, 1991)	Cane fields (19, 1991)	Cane fields (16, 1989)
4	Cane fields (32, 1982)	Rio (25, 1976)	Other (22–24, 1974–1976)	Cane fields (25, 1982)	Cane fields (31, 1989)	Cane fields (17, 1981)	Cane fields (20–24, 1975–1979)	Cane fields (20, 1992)	Cane fields (20, 1992)	Cane fields (17, 1990)
5	Cane fields (33, 1982)	Rio (26, 1977)	São Paulo (24–26, 1976–1978)	Cane fields (26, 1983)	Cane fields (32, 1990–1991)	Cane fields (18, 1952)	Rio (25, 1990)	Rio (20–21, 1993)	Cane fields (21, 1993)	Cane fields (18, 1991)
6	Cane fields (34, 1984)	Rio (27, 1978)	São Paulo (26–28, 1978–1980)	Cane fields (27, 1984)	Cane fields (35, 1993–1994)	Cane fields (19, 1983)	Cane fields (26, 1991)	Rio (22, 1994)	Cane fields (22, 1994)	Cane fields (19, 1992)

7	Cane fields (35, 1985)	Rio (28, 1979)	Cane fields (29, 1981)	Cane fields (18, 1985)	Rio (37, 1995)	Cane fields (20, 1984)	Cane fields (27, 1992)	Cane fields (23, 1995)	Cane fields (23, 1995)	Cane fields (20, 1993)
8	Cane fields (35, 1985)	Other (30, 1981)	São Paulo (30–31, 1982–1983)	Cane fields (29, 1986)	–	Cane fields (21, 1985)	Cane fields (28, 1993)	–	Rio (23, 1996)	Rio (21, 1994)
9	Cane fields (36, 1986)	Cane fields (32, 1983)	Cane fields (31, 1984)	Cane fields (30, 1987)	–	Cane fields (22, 1986)	Rio (28, 1994)	–	–	Cane fields (22, 1995)
10	Cane fields (37, 1987)	Cane fields (33–35, 1984–1986)	Cane fields (32, 1985)	Cane fields (31, 1985)	–	Cane fields (23, 1987)	Cane fields (29, 1995)	–	–	Rio (22, 1996)
11	Cane fields (38, 1988)	Cane fields (36, 1987)	Cane fields (36, 1989)	Cane fields (32, 1989)	–	Cane fields (24, 1988)	Rio (30, 1996)	–	–	–
12	Cane fields (39, 1989)	Cane fields (39, 1990)	Cane fields (37, 1990)	Cane fields (33, 1990)	–	Cane fields (25, 1989)	–	–	–	–
13	Cane fields (40, 1990)	Cane fields (40, 1991)	Cane fields (38, 1991)	Cane fields (34, 1991)	–	Cane fields (26, 1990)	–	–	–	–
14	Cane fields (41, 1991)	Cane fields (40, 1991)	Cane fields (39, 1992)	Cane fields (35, 1992)	–	Cane fields (27, 1991)	–	–	–	–
15	–	Other (42, 1993)	Cane fields (40, 1993)	Cane fields (36, 1993)	–	Cane fields (28, 1992)	–	–	–	–
16	–	–	–	Cane fields (37, 1994)	–	Cane fields (29, 1993)	–	–	–	–
17	–	–	–	Cane fields (38, 1995)	–	Cane fields (29, 1994)	–	–	–	–
18	–	–	–	–	–	Cane fields (31, 1995)	–	–	–	–
19	–	–	–	–	–	Rio (31, 1996)	–	–	–	–

rule, that their first employment would be in the building construction trade, considered as a stopgap until a friend or relative could get them a job in industry. Several researchers have shown that opportunities to rise occupationally are limited and that migrants tend to stay in jobs considered to need no qualifications (Menezes, 1985; Berlinck, 1977).

This social context has had its effects on studies of migration, urbanization, and changes in the countryside. One of the changes in migration patterns has been an increase in migration that is seasonal or circular or involves a return to one's home state. Research on migrants from the rural areas of Paraíba who lived in Greater São Paulo in the 1970s and 1980s has shown that difficulties with work and housing have encouraged return migration. A series of studies, newspaper articles, and speeches by trade-union leaders have shown that return migration has become a countertendency to the historical movement of the population toward the big cities (Amaral and Nogueira, 1993).

Several studies using the data of the 1991 population census show a substantial change in migration to São Paulo state. This state had, in the 1970s, a net immigration of 3,083,173, declining to 40,000 between 1980 and 1991. The Greater São Paulo area had a net immigration of 2,295,757 in the 1970s and a net emigration of 433,565 in the 1980s (Perillo and Aranha, 1992: 113–115). This shows that the state and its central metropolitan area are losing their importance in terms of absorbing the migration flows from both rural and urban areas. These changes have directly affected the rate of growth of the Greater São Paulo area, which fell from 4.46 percent a year in the 1970s to 1.76 percent a year in the 1980s. Research on employment and unemployment in Greater São Paulo in 1987 confirms the decline in immigration: "Martine and Peliano have found that in 1970 migrants with under two years' residence in Greater São Paulo made up about 13 percent of the area's economically active population. Seventeen years later, in 1987, such migrants made up 5.1 percent. In this comparison, however, the data for the economically dependent population do not provide figures for migration between regions" (Rodrigues and Ferreira, 1988: 575). These sets of research results show that São Paulo has not, since the 1970s, been offering good prospects for migrants. I have not, unfortunately, had access to studies on Rio de Janeiro, but considering that São Paulo's industrial sector has historically been larger than that of Rio, the changes in the two cities' immigration patterns are likely to have been similar.

While living conditions and employment opportunities have been declining in the Southeast of Brazil since the 1970s, with a consequent impact on migration patterns and the lives of the migrants, there has been an increase in the demand for seasonal labor in the sugarcane harvest in Pernambuco.

Cutting cane is a competitive alternative to migration to Rio and São Paulo partly because of the introduction of formal work contracts, which provide cane workers with the same labor rights as urban workers, such as paid holidays, two months' pay for working in December, and the Fundo de Garantia por Tempo de Serviço (Guaranteed Length of Service Fund—FGT), a form of social security. Nevertheless, the two migration destinations, the cane fields and the big cities of the South, remain plausible alternatives for individuals and families, and the choice between them is influenced by the work opportunities and living conditions they offer and depend on factors such as the migrant's age, the gender makeup of his family, and his observations and estimations regarding working conditions and entitlements. Some argue that there are no differences in wages and working conditions between the sugar mills and such urban employment as work in construction, in hotel kitchens, or as janitors, while others argue that work in the cane fields is harder than jobs in town. Workers in the cane fields are, for instance, affected by the weather (rain or shine), long hours, dirty work, physically hard labor, and poor-quality food, which the workers have to prepare themselves. Jaime (case 10) refers to wages paid by the sugar plantations as "cursed" in contrast to those earned in Rio, which are perceived as "blessed." He worked on the sugar plantations for 14 years and then went off to Rio when the sugar harvest ended. During all those years he had been able to maintain his family only at minimum subsistence levels, earning just enough to buy basic food and some clothing. Hope of earning more in Rio was what motivated him to long-distance migration. He and his wife hoped to buy new furniture and build a toilet with some of the money they would save.

Another point frequently argued by migrants is that harvest employment excludes two of the rights that are in the work contract offered to urban workers. The first is the right to a month's paid notice of dismissal, and the other is unemployment insurance. The lack of these two benefits is seen as a great drawback to work in the cane fields. Some workers exploit these contract differences in their moves between Rio, their home state, and the cane fields. Wagner (case 20) is unmarried and worked in Rio for a year. When he returned he stayed at home when migrant workers were being recruited for the cane fields because he was still receiving unemployment insurance.

THE LATE 1970S AND THE 1980S

The migration patterns of the members of the younger generation follow the same tendency as that of their elders; they also combine work in the cane fields and moves to Rio or São Paulo. However, their first migration is

predominantly to the cane fields. Beside the arguments already mentioned for the first group, their preference is due to differences between smallholders and tenants. It is important to examine the ways in which social differences among the peasants themselves influence the migration process (Garcia, 1989; Menezes, 1985).

The peasant economy of the savanna zone of Paraíba has traditionally been characterized by a combination of cash crops (especially cotton), subsistence agriculture, and the rearing of such livestock as pigs, fowl, goats, and a few head of cattle, some of which have outputs that can be marketed. With the loss of cotton as a cash crop, the peasants lost one of their main sources of cash income. In research carried out between 1982 and 1985 on peasants who had migrated from upstate Paraíba to São Paulo, I found that smallholders were better able to finance long-distance migration to Rio or São Paulo than those who farmed as sharecroppers or tenants (Menezes, 1985: 94–95). In research carried out in the savanna region of Paraíba between 1995 and 1997 I found that cash income varied according to the size of the plot and the number of animals kept. In one village, Sítio Salvador, the children of one smallholder who owned 10 hectares (25 acres) and seven head of cattle had migrated to Rio in the 1980s and 1990s and had never worked in the cane fields. The conditions of minimum subsistence in which landless sharecroppers lived made it more difficult for them to raise the cash needed for their first migration—to pay for bus tickets, documentation, clothes, suitcases, and food on the journey. For them, work cutting cane was the first step toward being able to pay for long-distance migration. The shift from short- to long-distance migration usually coincided with getting ready to marry. Analyzing the migration patterns of the children and siblings of the migrants interviewed, I found the same tendencies. The son of Fernando (case 6), who is 23, had worked on sugar plantations between 1988 and 1994 and then gone to Rio. Similarly, Roberto's three brothers, aged 28, 27, and 23, had all made their first migration, at 15, to the cane fields and then gone on to Rio, and Wagner's three brothers, aged 30, 25, and 23, had followed the same pattern.

To sum up, the sugar plantations of Pernambuco have represented an employment alternative for the rural dwellers of the neighboring state of Paraíba. The recruitment carried out by the plantations has created a connection between the counties the migrants come from and the participating sugar mills. Seasonal migration between the savanna zone of Paraìba and the forest zone of Pernambuco goes back to the early twentieth century. It is difficult to determine which migration pattern was most important in each period. If the 1960s and 1970s seem to have been characterized more by migration to Rio, the predominant choice in the 1980s and 1990s would seem to have been

seasonal migration to the Pernambucan sugar plantations. This tendency seems to apply as much to members of the older generation, who began migrating in the 1960s and 1970s and then turned to seasonal migration to cut cane in the 1990s, as to those of the younger generation, who began migrating in the 1980s and 1990s.

The crisis in the Pernambucan sugar industry, with the closing of mills and decline in the production of sugar and alcohol, has been causing a reduction in the recruitment of workers, both local and migrant. In 1993–1997 various Pernambucan sugar plantations recruited a yearly average of 500 workers from Fagundes, in the Borborema region of the Paraiban savanna. This amounted to 16.7 percent of the economically active male population between 16 and 60. In 1998 and 1999 only 100, or 3.4 percent of the economically active male population, were recruited in each year. These changes in the regional labor market have influenced migration routes. The drop in employment opportunities in sectors close to the migrants' places of origin have made long-distance migration (such as that to Rio de Janeiro) the most plausible alternative for a significant number of rural dwellers who in the 1980s and 1990s had preferred to work in the cane fields.

MIGRATION TRAJECTORIES AND THE LIFE CYCLE

Analysis of individual migration histories identifies some relationships between migration patterns and the life cycle, for example, long-distance and long-term migration before marriage and short-distance, seasonal migration afterward. It is important to emphasize that the identification of a relationship between short- and long-distance migration and marital status is derived from the objective possibilities of access to employment, in this case employment cutting cane in places near the migrants' home areas. Thus, for an analysis of migration trajectories, it is necessary to link these objective conditions with changes over the life span of the individual and of the family. In the case of the members of the younger age-groups, the most recent migrations are the ones they were making at the time I gathered the data, in 1995–1996. For the older age-groups the most recent migrations are their final ones. Of the group aged between 37 and 54 years (cases 5 to 15), cases 7, 9, 10, 13, and 14 went to Rio de Janeiro or São Paulo before marriage and after having worked in the cane fields. For the younger ones, aged 22 to 31, their life cycle also seems to influence their migration patterns.

Geraldo (case 7), a tenant farmer, went to Rio de Janeiro twice between the ages of 18 and 26. After saving some money, he returned home and

married Manuela in 1974. The couple moved to Rio, where they lived until 1977. Then Geraldo worked on sugar plantations until June 1995, when he moved to Rio again, leaving his wife and children behind. He returned a year later. His eldest son was then 17 and was preparing to go off to Rio himself at the end of the year. Geraldo made temporary migrations to Rio again in 1997–1998; his son migrated in 1997, returned in 1998, married, and then went back to Rio in 1999, leaving his wife and child behind.

Ivo (case 9) lived in Rio for 11 years, between the ages of 18 and 30. He married in 1978 and since then has combined seasonal migration to the cane fields with work on his own smallholding, where he practices subsistence agriculture and has four head of cattle, complemented by a small retail store at the side of his house. He bought his land in 1980 with money saved from his earnings in Rio and from the sale of a cotton crop. Every year between 1996 and 1999 he went to Rio but returned for the planting from March through June.

Jaime (case 10), Ivo's brother, started working in the cane fields when he was still a minor. He went to Rio in 1970, when he was 20, and returned in 1980, when he was 30, and immediately married. In contrast to his brother, he has not managed to buy his own plot but practices subsistence agriculture on the land of others. From 1980 through 1996 he went cane cutting every year. From 1996 to 1999 he worked in Rio, coming back to visit the family every year. His 18-year-old son, George, has worked in the cane fields for only two weeks and is planning to migrate to Rio.

Nivaldo (case 13) has had an unusual career. He left home at 8 and stowed away aboard a bus from Campina Grande to the state capital, João Pessoa. There a woman who owned a lunch stall found him running the streets and took him to live with her and help her run the stall. When he was 14 he got a job as a street sweeper for the João Pessoa town council. When he was 20 he made his first trip to São Paulo, returning in March 1978. He was married that August, and after a month he left his wife and returned to São Paulo, where he stayed for 18 months. From 1981 to 1993 he cut cane and cultivated small plots in the plantations of his home county.

Oswaldo (case 14) went to Rio for two years and then married. Since then he has worked in the cane fields.

As I have said, the older migrants tended to go to Rio in the 1960s and 1970s and in the 1980s and 1990s worked in the Pernambucan cane fields. Differences between the migration patterns of single and married men suggest that the life cycle also explains the choice between Rio and the cane fields, but some Paraibans continue migrating after marriage. For example, Fernando went to Rio and other cities between the ages of 32 and 45 and

subsequently made seasonal migrations to the cane fields. As I have pointed out, the correlation between direction of migration and marital status is clearer when there are employment opportunities in the regional market that compete with the jobs available to migrants in Rio de Janeiro. A reduction in the demand for labor in the cane fields results in a resumption of temporary migration to Rio as an important survival strategy for rural families in the savanna region of Paraíba. In this type of migration, men, both married and single, and unmarried women leave while married women and their underage children stay at home.

Analysis of the younger generation confirms the relationship between migration patterns and the life cycle. Members of this generation tend to migrate first to the cane fields and then, when they want to marry, to Rio or São Paulo. Roberto and Wagner are both single. They worked first in the cane fields and then, immediately before marriage, migrated to Rio. Roberto began cane cutting with his father when he was 12 and continued until he was 31, when he went to Rio. For the past two years he has been building his own house, but the small income from cane cutting has not been enough to finish it. Migrating to Rio is seen as a way to save some money to pay for the wedding preparations such as building a house, buying furniture, and paying for the civil and church ceremonies. Sílvio (case 16) and Teodoro (case 18) have gone through the same process. After working for some years on the sugar plantations, they both went to Rio the year before their marriages. Thus, migration to the big cities of the Southeast before marriage, whether as a first migration or later, is a recurring tendency in the careers of migrants. Married migrants are most likely to make short-distance, seasonal migrations, but there are variations from this tendency. Individual histories will depend on the social context of the places they can reach, family size and life cycle, and the migrants' own perceptions. These differences show that there is not just one migration pattern in relation to a life cycle but differing combinations of the available alternatives.

Analysis of individual migration histories poses a challenge to certain analyses of migration. Some have argued that seasonal migration is a first step toward permanent migration (Andrade, 1979; Ringuelet, 1977: 19; Goza and Rios-Neto, 1988: 508). This conception is also met with in studies based on the idea of migration as a gradual process of passage from small places to bigger ones (Butterworth and Chance, 1981: 69; Menezes, 1985: 85). Some families that seemed totally settled in Rio or in Brasília and were therefore characterized as permanent migrants have since returned to their homes and later migrated seasonally to work as cane cutters.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Analysis of individual migration patterns has shown that repeated migration is not a new phenomenon but one that goes back several decades. The sample of different age-groups has allowed us to outline some correlations between life histories and social structures, in other words, to sketch the migration patterns of individuals and their social contexts: long-distance and long-lasting migration from the rural areas of the Northeast to the urban areas of the Southeast was dominant during the 1960s and 1970s and short-distance brief (also called seasonal, temporary, or circular) migration to the cane fields of Pernambuco during the 1980s and 1990s. However, the tendency toward a dominant pattern does not signify that the alternatives are unimportant. The occurrence of multiple moves, whether in terms of the area studied or of individual lives, shows that there is no single pattern of migration in a particular period or over a lifetime.

In addition to the social context, individual migration patterns are influenced by the life cycle. I have shown that unmarried men are more likely to undertake long-term and long-distance migrations, while married men tend to go to places near their homes. These tendencies, however, present variations that will depend on the social and historical context of the destinations, family size, and life cycle and also on individuals' rating of their chances of surviving in relation to family needs. These variables show that there is no one migration pattern in relation to a life cycle but rather a diversified combination of existing alternatives.

NOTES

1. In my research on people who migrated from the Cajazeiras region of upstate Paraíba to São Paulo in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, I discovered that direct bus connections between Cajazeiras, Rio de Janeiro, and São Paulo date from the mid-1960s.

2. The 20 cases in the study are all male.

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