

CONTRIBUTION OF ANTHROPOLOGICAL APPROACH TO MIGRATION STUDY

**The case of temporary industrial labour
migration in India.**

A field experience in Gujarat

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The contribution of micro qualitative approach to migration study has already been underlined : combining an anthropological type of observation with a quantitative demographic survey improves the understanding of mobility processes (HUGO, 1984). First of all micro qualitative studies conducted before larger scale surveys constitute an essential preliminary step in order to provide basic information on the study area and to identify the different forms of population moves and define the variables for which information will be collected. A quantitative migration survey will also gain to be completed by in-depth interviews with persons involved in the migration processes : this will enable one to better understand the phenomena under study and to test some specific hypotheses.

This being accepted for migration studies in general, in some specific contexts and for some peculiar types of migration, an anthropological approach turns out to be not only a valuable and advisable complement in the system of investigation but above all an essential component of the latter, due to the limitations of a sole conventional quantitative survey. In India this proves to be at least the case for the temporary industrial labour migration with accommodation on the site of work itself. The observation of this specific type of migration will form the subject of this paper, on the basis of a case study conducted in Gujarat (Western India). We will show what particular difficulties the identification and the observation of this temporary migration raise : what limitations a quantitative survey presents and what kind of more appropriate approach we have implemented in our case study.

This being part of an ongoing research for which the analysis of all the information collected is still to be carried out, this paper will be limited to the presentation of the methodological lessons drawn from our field experience.

Before dealing in detail with the system of investigation implemented, it is necessary to specify the general purpose of our research and to present the study area.

1 - CONTEXT OF THE STUDY.

1 - 1 - Purpose of the research

The case study to be presented here is part of a research concerned with dynamics of medium-sized towns and migration processes in India. Our project focuses on the interactions between spatial mobility and economic activities, in order to better understand some specific aspects of the dynamics of Indian middle-sized towns, as related to their surrounding rural environment. It aims to investigate the role of the labour

markets of industrial medium towns in population attraction and settlement, as well as the ways of insertion of the in-migrants in the urban labour markets.

This project will be based on a comparative study of two fast growing medium-sized industrial towns situated in the state of Gujarat (Western India) which is one of the most urbanized and industrialized states in India. The case study examined in this paper deals with the first selected town, namely Jetpur (in Rajkot district).

1 - 2 - The study area

Jetpur provides the illustration of a mono-industrial town based on a traditional activity : the dyeing and printing of textile. The industry developed since 1947 in its present form using the technique of screen printing (TRIVEDI, 1970) and it has been promoted by local entrepreneurs. Nowadays the number of industrial units amounts to 1200, all belonging to the small scale sector (1), and represents a maximum potential of employment of about 40 000 workers.

The considerable expansion of the industry over the last forty years is associated to the rapid population growth of the town, indicating a high in-migration. The population increased from 31 186 in 1961 to 41 943 in 1971 and to 63 074 in 1981 (year of the last census), which corresponds to a decennial growth rate of 34.5 per cent during the first intercensal period and of 50.4 per cent during the second one.

Today the urban and industrial spread of Jetpur also includes an adjacent suburb, Navagadh, and constitutes altogether an urban agglomeration with a total population of about 100 000 (2). The printing industry not only leads the entire urban economy and has attracted great numbers of migrant workers, but it also provides employment opportunities for the population living in the surrounding villages.

2 - IDENTIFICATION OF THE TYPES OF SPATIAL MOBILITY THROUGH A QUALITATIVE OBSERVATION AT A MICRO LEVEL.

In the case of the town under study, what are the types of spatial mobility to be considered in order to evaluate the attraction exerted by the industrial labour market on the surrounding and faraway populations?

(1) However, due to the common practice amongst the industrialists to divide their concern in small sized units, in order to avoid extra taxes and escape the labour legislation, these 1200 small scale units correspond only to about 500 individual entrepreneurs or familial industrial groups.

(2) This estimation is based on the provisional results of a household survey conducted in January - April 1988 (see sub-section 3-1).

One must answer this question before conducting any survey on the geographical mobility and the economic activities. Now, how can one identify the main types of mobility prevailing in a specific local situation?

2 - 1 - Limitations of the official population statistics.

The first work consisting in analysing the available secondary data, like census data and other official population statistics, proved to be too limiting as these data generally do not provide any information about the most temporary types of mobility. For example, till 1961 Indian Population censuses only recorded population moves as related to the place of birth, then in 1971 and 1981 migration data on the basis of place of last residence were added : while the first type of move does not account for the more recent movement of a person, the second type refers exclusively to a change in normal place of residence.

In a general way most of the types of circular mobility (daily, weekly, seasonal...) elude the official population statistics.

More over the administrative divisions used in the publication of the population statistics are not always relevant for the scope of a local study. For instance in the 1971 Indian census the migration tables at the level of the urban agglomeration were only available for cities of 100 000 inhabitants and above, and in 1981 for cities of 1 million inhabitants and above - which leaves the town of Jetpur outside the purview.

2 - 2 - Necessity of a qualitative observation.

Considering the limitations of the available population statistics, it was absolutely necessary to carry out a preliminary qualitative observation at a micro level, in the form of interviews conducted in the study area with local dignitaries, officials, industrialists, workers... In Jetpur this first one week phase proved to be very rich in information collected and quite decisive for the conception of the next phases of investigation. It enabled us to identify, in addition to in-migration which results in a durable or permanent change of residence into the town and could be detected from the high population growth rate of Jetpur, two other types of spatial mobility which are as well significant to appraise the population effects of the industrial labour market.

The first one is commuting or the daily journeys to work made by the workers living in the surrounding villages or nearby towns. The second one is the temporary labour in-migration without any permanent urban residence.

The industrialists interviewed during the first round of observation emphasized the importance of the commuters in the labour force of the printing industry in Jetpur : according to their estimates the proportion of commuters would amount to 50 per cent of the industrial workers. Though this figure may be quite approximative, commuting appears to be a very significant phenomenon in Jetpur and must be taken into account in order to evaluate the attraction exerted by the urban industrial market on the surrounding populations.

The other type of mobility identified in the course of the preliminary interviews corresponds to a relatively recent and still limited phenomenon which is, however, revealing of the way of recruitment of the industrial labour and could render an increasing trend. Since the mid seventies some industrialists have started recruiting workers from other states, mainly from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar (two densely populated states in northern India) and from Rajasthan (bordering state situated north of Gujarat). Most often these workers are recruited through intermediaries, contractors or recruiting agents. They are male adults and teenagers coming to Jetpur without their family, and the duration of their stay in Jetpur depends directly on the duration of their engagement, temporary by nature. They are housed in the premises of the plant itself and therefore they are not at all integrated into the urban population. They also return periodically to their native place for one or several months, usually every year. These temporary migrants who live on the fringe of the common urban residential system and moreover very mobile, are likely to be rather tricky to survey and measure.

This is precisely why we have chosen to focus our paper on the observation of this type of migration, in order to show how, in such a case, the contribution of an anthropological approach is decisive.

2 - 3 - Significance of the temporary industrial labour migration.

This specific type of migration is not only interesting from the methodological point of view of finding the most appropriate system of observation. In a study on the interactions between spatial mobility and activities, which focuses more precisely on the migratory attraction effect of the urban industrial market, the organized inter-state labour migration is also very meaningful.

In the Indian context more generally, one can also underline the significance of this phenomenon in the processes of labour migration. Inter-state labour migration corresponding to channels of recruitment organized directly by the employer or any intermediary recruiting agent is nothing

exceptional in India (JOSHI, 1987). Apart from the case of migrant workers from Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar in the textile printing industry, one can mention (concerning Gujarat more particularly) the migration of women labour force from Kerala for processing fish in other coastal states (MOULIK, 1984; MOULIK and RAJAMMA, 1987), the migrant labour from Bihar in the sugar cane factories of Saurashtra and from Maharashtra is those of South Gujarat (BREMAN, 1978), the inter-state migrant workers in the power-looms of the industrial town of Surat (SOUTH GUJARAT UNIVERSITY, 1984), the migrant workers from Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan in brick-kilns (YAGNIK and RANDERIA, 1987), the contract migrant labour on construction sites...

The frequency of this type of labour migration and way of recruitment - and some subsequent abuses - led the Indian Government to formulate specific legislation to regulate these practices and to give protection to the workers. Can be quoted in particular : 'The contract labour (Regulation and abolition) Act, 1970' and 'The inter-state migrant workmen (Regulation of employment and conditions of service) Act, 1979' (DHAGAMWAR, 1987; SHETH, 1987, SINGH, 1987).

Such migrant workers are quite likely to live on the site of their work itself.

Therefore, in the case of industrial migrant workers living in the plant premises, access to which is entirely under the control of the factory owner, the researcher willing to survey this specific population can expect to face the suspicion and reluctance of the industrialists who do not observe the labour laws.

3 - THE INTER-STATE MIGRANT WORKERS IN JETPUR PRINTING INDUSTRY : STRATEGY OF INVESTIGATION.

3 - 1 - General plan of observation (3)

As mentioned above, the inter-state temporary migrant workers were not the only category of migrants to be surveyed in our case study, and the system of observation implemented in Jetpur aimed to cover the diverse types of spatial mobility identified.

The system of investigation adopted combines several levels of observation (the town in its regional background, the industrial establishment, the household, the individual), as well as several types of approaches, quantitative and qualitative, thus enabling us to better grasp the various facets of the phenomena under study.

(3) For more information about certain points of methodology, see DUPONT, 1988.

As far as the field operations are concerned, these were carried out in four phases.

The first phase (already mentioned) consisted of a qualitative observation by the means of a few interviews aiming at a better approach of the field, and to sharpen, according to the local context, some concepts essential for our study and to define the relevant questions for the next surveys. It was conducted in the course of October 1987.

The second phase consisted of a quantitative survey on migration and economic activities, by the means of a household schedule with a limited number of questions, most of them closed ended. It aimed at describing the population according to its demographic, socio-cultural and economic characteristics and at providing information on in-migration as referred to the native place (along with the year and reason of in-migration into the town) as well as information on out-migration from the household over the last five years. These data will allow us to evaluate the relative impact of in-migrants in the urban labour force according to the branch of activity and the type of employment.

The population covered by the household survey included the population of the urban agglomeration as well as the population of the surrounding villages in order to take into account the great number of commuters working in the town. A sample of 10 per cent of the households in the urban agglomeration and five nearby villages was selected, and 2400 households schedules were filled from January to April 1988.

The third phase of observation focused on the predominant sector of activity of the town, namely the textile printing industry for Jetpur. The unit of observation was the industrial establishment, and 50 of them were randomly selected (4). Interviews with the concerned entrepreneurs were conducted in November-December 1988, in order to collect both qualitative and quantitative information pertaining to the migration and occupation biography of the entrepreneur as well as the setting up of the establishment, its economic characteristics and employment details.

(4) One establishment can correspond to several industrial units : we considered that all the units run by the same individual entrepreneur or the same familial group constituted a single establishment. Thus the sample of 50 establishments corresponds to 50 different parties (individual entrepreneurs or familial groups) and represents 10 % of the 500 distinct parties of Jetpur printing industry.

The last phase followed a qualitative approach, at the micro social level, and focused on the workers of the industrial sector. It was based on in-depth interviews conducted in April-May 1989 with a sub-sample of 64 workers and aimed at reconstructing the detailed migration and occupation biographies.

For each phase of field work we were involved as a participant observer during the entire operation, including for the more quantitative and larger scale survey. One should underline that a constant participant observation is the first way to qualify the data collected, the first anthropological approach one should adopt in order to improve any socio-demographic survey.

The outlines of the general system of investigation having been presented, now we will examine more precisely the specific difficulties of implementation we met with in the case of the temporary migrant workers living in the factories, and subsequently the contribution and limitations of each phase of observation and each type of approach.

3 - 2 - The household survey on migration and economic activities. - spatial delimitation of the area of observation.

Concerning the household survey on migration and employment conducted at the usual place of residence, the first precaution to be taken to ensure that the temporary migrant workers living in the factories will not be omitted pertains to the spatial delimitation of the area of observation. All the industrial zones should be considered as possible residential zones, and they were therefore included in the scope of the household survey.

- the unit of observation and of sampling

Another delicate point concerns the unit of observation and of sampling. In the migration and employment survey the population of reference is the de jure population residing in the urban agglomeration and the surrounding villages, and the unit of observation - as well as the sampling unit - is the household, defined as : 'a group of persons normally living together and taking their food from a common kitchen'.

In the case of the workers living in the factories, we considered that each team of workers, depending on the same supervisor, having the factory as common place of residence and taking their meals from a

common kitchen, formed a distinct household (5). Although these migrant workers do not intend to settle permanently in the town where they work under temporary contracts, the duration of their employment and stay normally exceeds several months, eight to ten at the minimum. Therefore they must be included in the de jure population of the urban agglomeration and be surveyed at their current place of residence, namely the factory.

- household sampling procedure and enumeration of the workers living in the factories.

For this survey a sample of 10 per cent of households has been drawn, covering all the blocks of the urban agglomeration and of five selected nearby villages. The primary step of the sampling procedure required the preparation of detailed maps for all the blocks. Then, with the help of these maps, a systematic sampling was carried out in every block, on the basis of a direct field counting of the households.

The preliminary cartographic work also provided a first hand qualitative approach of the area under study.

In order not to omit the workers living in the factories when counting the households and drawing the sample, all the factories were systematically checked. We took the opportunity of this methodical verification to conduct, in addition to the sample survey, an enumeration of all the workers living in the factories and to fill the household schedule for every team. As there is no information available concerning these inter-state migrant workers, we thought this would enable us to collect a first set of basic data on this sub-population, particularly interesting for our study.

- difficulties and limitations of the enumeration.

However, this attempt of an exhaustive enumeration cum survey of the workers living in the factories raised more difficulties than the survey in the private households.

First of all the migrant workers living in the factories are approachable only through their employers who control the access of the plant. In order to interview the team supervisors or the contractors, who were the appropriate persons to provide us the required information on the

(5) We also found a few migrant workers who brought along their wife and children (if any) to live with them in the factory premises : in such cases the worker was not enumerated in his team but in the household formed by his familial unit.

workers, it was first necessary to meet the owner of the factory and obtain his consent. The industrialists who do not respect the laws relating to the inter-state migrant workers and contract labour (see above) may be very reluctant to allow us inside the factory and collect information. And in the absence of the factory owner, the watchman or staff members will not take the responsibility to reveal anything and to allow us to investigate; in order to avoid any complication they may declare that there is no migrant workers living inside the factory.

During the survey we came across such situations of deliberate wrong information provided by the entrepreneurs or their staff : some industrialists pretended they did not engage any inter-state migrant workers, or that they used to have some before but all of them had left recently and returned to their native place, while besides we got evidence of the presence of such workers.

We could detect a few cases of misinformation and collect a minimum of data about the non-declared workers, thanks to the knowledge of the field investigators belonging to the place or the information provided by other informants, or through direct field observation.

However, in cases of negative answer while enquiring about the presence of workers living inside the factory, it was not possible to check systematically the veracity. Such verification would have required for each factory a delicate and careful investigation, time-consuming, which could not be realized considering the large number of factories and the time and cost constraints of the household survey.

Here we are broaching a classic limitation of any quantitative survey aimed at collecting data on a large number of individuals : taking into account the time and cost constraints inherent in any field operation, the requirement of a large sample does not allow one to devote too much time to each individual interview.

Coming back to the enumeration of the migrant workers living inside the factories, it is likely that some teams of workers have been missed out, due to possible misinformation. Nevertheless one can underline how the risk of omission can be limited by participating as a direct observer during the entire operation, and by working with field investigators belonging to the place and whose local knowledge can be used fruitfully.

Another limitation of an enumeration, cross-sectional by nature, is due to the high degree of mobility of the temporary migrant workers. They go and visit their native place regularly, generally once a year for at least one month. Now the supervisors or contractors do not necessarily report the absent workers as members of their team, as in fact there

is often no certitude about the duration of their absence or even their return. When they come back, the workers may also join another team or factory.

Besides, in case of slackness in the printing industry, if no more work is available for them, the inter-state migrant workers will not stay in Jetpur; they will leave for their native place, or another place in search of work. On the contrary, during the peak season, the contractors may call on temporary extra workers to face the surplus of work.

Now, the household survey conducted in Jetpur took place in the last year of a three year period of drought which severely affected the textile printing industry (DUPONT, 1989). Consequently the population of 1200 inter-state migrant workers enumerated in the factories at that time is probably a minimum estimate of the employment potential of the printing industry for this specific category of workers.

Therefore, a mere enumeration of the inter-state migrant workers living inside the factories can only provide a cross-sectional and partial measure of this sub-population, as the latter is affected by seasonal fluctuations and turn-over and besides the completeness of the enumeration is very difficult to ensure.

- contribution of the migration/employment survey conducted along with the enumeration.

In our case study, the limitations of the enumeration itself could be partly lifted by the migration and employment survey which was systematically conducted for the teams of migrant workers declared and enabled us to collect data on the mobility of this sub-population.

First of all the year of arrival in Jetpur will inform us about the duration of stay (not necessarily continuous). Secondly, the record of the workers who left the team over the last five years, along with their destination and reason of departure, will provide information about their out-migration from Jetpur as well as about their mobility between the factories within the urban agglomeration. Thirdly, the number of months worked during the previous year in the printing industry and the number of months engaged in a secondary activity if any, along with the corresponding place of work, will provide information about seasonal mobility and return to the native place.

Besides this appraisal of the mobility, the migration and employment survey constitutes also a valuable contribution by describing this

sub-population according to its demographic (6), socio-cultural and occupational characteristics.

3 - 3 - The survey of industrial establishments.

In the survey of industrial establishments, the questionnaire of the interviews conducted with the entrepreneurs contained an exclusive section on employment details, with a question about the place of residence of the workers, in order to distinguish the workers living inside the factories, the workers living in the urban agglomeration (in a place of residence independent of their place of work) and the commuters.

But, in a general manner, concerning the data on employment, the major problem of this survey was the under-declaration of the number of workers employed. That was in fact an expected difficulty : in India the application of the labour legislation refers to a large extent to the number of workers employed, with a first threshold at 10 workers (establishments using power) or 20 workers (establishments not using power). As a result, to avoid the various obligations attached to labour laws, the entrepreneurs do their best to keep the number of workers declared by industrial unit below these thresholds.

Concerning the inter-state migrant workers living in the factories for whom specific laws are instituted, some entrepreneurs simply do not declare them. In some of the establishments surveyed, we had evidence, from the enumeration carried out during the household survey, or from the visit of the factory, that inter-state migrant workers were living in the premises of the plant, while they were not reported by the entrepreneur during the interview.

On the contrary, in some cases, the interviews with the entrepreneurs during the establishment survey enabled us to detect some omissions made at the time of the household survey.

Unlike the household survey, the survey of industrial establishments consisted of a limited number of interviews (namely 50), but extensive ones. This provided us with rich information about the migration and occupation biographies of the entrepreneurs as well as the setting up of the establishments. But this survey proved to be rather disappointing as far as the employment data are concerned.

To collect reliable and relevant information about the workers - and particularly the inter-state migrant workers - the entrepreneurs are

(6) However, concerning the age structure, one can expect an over-reporting of the age of the teenager workers, child labour (below 15) being prohibited in the printing industry.

obviously not the appropriate informants, because of their suspicion for such enquiries, due to their non-observance of the labour legislation.

3 - 4 - Workers' migration and occupation biographies.

- general organization of the survey.

The detailed biographical interviews concerned the workers of the prevailing economic sector in the town, namely the printing industry. A sample of workers was selected in order to represent the different categories of workers in respect to their occupational group in the industry as well as their place of residence and geographical origin (native urban residents (7), in-migrants-mainly local or regional - who have settled in town, inter-state migrants living in the factories, commuters living in the surrounding villages).

The sample was drawn from the individual file of the household survey, following the method of quota. Thus, for each worker to be interviewed we had already in hand his household schedule, filled during the migration and employment survey.

All the interviews were conducted by myself along with a research assistant-interpreter, at the place of residence of the workers, by the means of a detailed questionnaire with open ended questions. The interviews dealt with migratory paths, occupational mobility, the reason of in-migration and the choice of the town - or the reason for not migrating and the preference for a rural residence in the case of commuters, the insertion into the urban labour market, the working conditions, the relations entertained with the native place, and the future plans. 64 workers' biographies were collected, 12 of them concerning inter-state migrant workers living in the factories.

- necessary adjustments for the interviews of the migrant workers living in the factories.

The peculiar situation of the inter-state migrant workers living in the factories led us to bring some modifications in the above general scheme.

In their case we did not pre-select the workers to be interviewed from the individual file of the household survey, as it did not seem appropriate for two reasons.

Firstly the high degree of mobility of these workers, in Jetpur itself

(7) It should be noticed that, in a study focused on labour migration, it is equally important to collect biographical interviews of non-migrants, in order to better appraise the specificity, if any, of the migrants' strategies, in particular concerning the insertion into the urban labour market.

from one factory to another, and between Jetpur and their native place, increased the risk of not finding the pre-selected individuals.

Moreover we had also to consider the possibility of refusal coming from the factory owner. In order to limit this possibility, we listed the factories employing inter-state migrant workers (50 distinct establishments), based on the information collected during the previous surveys, and we selected a few factories where the entrepreneurs proved to be particularly co-operative. Previous surveys equipped us with the experience of locating factories which employed migrant workers performing specific type of work and recruited from specific region. Though we did not prepare a list of workers with names, we fixed in advance the number of workers to be interviewed for each type of occupation and region of origin, along with the name of the factories where they could be approached easily without objection from the owner.

The employment and migration survey conducted for all the migrant workers living in the factories (who could be enumerated) showed already that the inter-state labour migration corresponds to well defined channels of recruitment, with occupational specialization according to the region of origin of the workers : for example printers from Rajasthan, workers for ironing and folding the saris from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. The biographical interviews revealed further that the migratory paths leading to Jetpur and the way of recruitment in the printing industry are rather similar for the workers belonging to the same region of origin. Thus the level of saturation (8) in the information provided by these biographies was reached very soon. In order to lift this limit, we tried to find informants whose specific characteristics would allow them to supply additional relevant information as compared to the 'average' migrant worker.

In the course of the discussion with the workers we could identify such informants by a gradual approach and checking of information, and then traced them in Jetpur. This kind of approach enabled us in particular to go back to the source of certain migration channels by interviewing the pioneers.

Thus the method of investigation implemented goes beyond the usual practice of a survey based on a pre-determined representative sample of individuals : here certain exceptional informants were to be integrated in the survey in the course of the field observation.

(8) The saturation is 'the phenomenon by which over a certain number of interviews the observer has the impression of not learning anything new, at least as far as the sociological subject of the survey is concerned' (BERTAUX, 1980).

- limitations of the interviews conducted with the workers living in the factories.

For the workers living outside their place of work, in the urban agglomeration or the surrounding villages, the interviews conducted at their place of residence allowed them to answer in a more independent way than they would have done at the place of work. But in the case of the migrant workers living inside the factories, this condition of independence could not be fulfilled. Moreover the interviews of the latter could be arranged only through the factory owners whose authorization was required and who called the workers according to our specifications.

In a few cases, the entrepreneur or some member of the managerial staff even attended the interview, or at least a part of it. The employer's presence obviously caused a certain reserve from the workers' side, and in such circumstances we avoided asking certain questions likely to embarrass the workers (for instance about union, working conditions..). Some industrialists also added their own comments on certain topics of the interview. For example, some insisted on the fact that the inter-state migrant workers living in their factory had come on their own, which was most often not true, but enabled the entrepreneurs to consider themselves not concerned by the Inter-state migrant workmen Act.

Notwithstanding these limitations, the detailed biographies collected from the inter-state migrant workers allowed us to understand the logic governing their spatial and occupational mobility as well as the formation of specific migration and recruitment channels.

- contribution of the migration and occupation biographies.

While examining the contribution of the migration and occupation biographies in the case of a specific type of migration, one should also underline its contribution to migration study more generally (DUPONT and DUREAU, 1988, section C-4).

As compared to a quantitative migration survey (like the one conducted in our study) which allows one to measure the impact of migration in the observed population and to appraise the main characteristics of the phenomenon, the migration and occupation biographies collected by the means of in-depth interviews can provide a better understanding of the mobility processes through a qualitative approach. Not only it helps to interpret the results of the statistical analysis of the migration variables, but above all it enables us to reconstruct the migratory paths, to take account of the life space of the individual, and to reveal the interdependence of the migratory and occupational behaviours.

The qualitative analysis of the migration biographies allows us, firstly, to reconstruct the continuity of the individuals' spatial moves, while situating them within their familial and occupational life cycle. Taking account of the time and space unity of the individual paths (9) is a main step forward as compared to the cross-sectional surveys which can give only partial information on the migratory movements and lead ineluctably to a time division of the phenomenon, thus making it hard to understand the whole migration process.

Moreover, some migratory and occupational strategies can be understood only by considering the duration, the entire life cycle of the migrant and the whole biography of the individual. It can also prove necessary to go beyond the continuity of the individual migratory paths and to situate the account of the migrant's life within the history of the community to which he belongs.

In the case study of Jetpur the last remark applies for example to the entrepreneurs belonging to the Sindhi-Khatri community, originally from Sind in Pakistan: their families arrived as refugees in Gujarat after the partition of India in 1947 and finally came to Jetpur to resume the traditional activity of their community, the dyeing and printing of textile, and today these entrepreneurs form a weighty group amongst the industrialists of the town.

The introduction of the concept of life space also marked a considerable progress in the research on migration. Defined as 'the largest space within which most of the activities of a population are carried out' (BRUNET, 1975), or still as 'the space area where an individual performs all his activities (...) not only his places of passage and residence but also all the places to which he is related' (COURGEAU, 1980), this new concept allows to go beyond the reductionist view which consisted in relating each individual to a sole place (10).

Taking account of the life space of the individual appears to be of primary importance to study many forms of mobility, like commuting, temporary labour migration, chain migration.. etc- to mention only some forms of mobility observed in our case study.

Now the detailed biographical interviews are particularly suited to give us information on the migrants' conception of his life space and work space, thus making it easier to understand his pattern of mobility. Insofar as the geographical and socio-economic situation of an individual is

(9) Without yielding to the 'biographical ideology' revealed by BERTAUX (1980), namely to the assumption according to which any life shows unity and coherence, while, in reality, we deal rather with successive fragments of life (LE BRIS, 1981-1983).

(10) relating each individual to a sole place is the underlying assumption in the conventional definition of the migration as 'a change in usual place of residence'.

not always 'a status likely to be identified independently of the individuals themselves' for 'the individuals do not necessarily consider any move as a geographic mobility or any change in his social status as a social mobility' (COLLOMB, 1985), the conception of an individual concerning his mobility and his past and present places of residence is essential to understand his moves and their meaning.

For example, the in-depth biographical interviews carried out in Jetpur showed that for many in-migrants - and more specially the inter-state temporary migrant workers - the space as seen by the individual is organized by referring to the native place, which helps to explain, in particular, the formation and preservation of migratory channels between Jetpur and some specific places of origin.

Another strong point of the biographies results from the simultaneous and integrated collection of information pertaining to the different spheres of an individual's life and therefore from the ability to relate the events observed in each of them (occupation, family ...) and to study how 'these changes result in modifications of the individuals' integration in time and space' (COURGEAU, 1984). Then a framework of approach particularly suited for a detailed analysis of the interactions between migration and economic activities is available : the analysis of biographies can show to what extent the migratory and occupational paths interpenetrate, reveal the various types and functions of migration in the occupational strategies and more generally contribute to a better understanding of the decision making processes in these two fields.

However, the migration and occupation biographies are totally effective only if one can replace each of the stages of the individual paths within its social and economic background in order to better understand the determinants and functions of migration.

In a study on labour migration focused on a specific town, this can be definitely done to explain the population movements affecting the town under consideration. Thus, in the case study of Jetpur, the persons interviewed had in common the fact of having chosen the same town as their place of residence and/or place of work, which allows us to integrate the local economic and social conditions into the analysis of the individual strategies. The analysis of the biographies can therefore give us information not only on the internal logic of the individual behaviours but also on the dynamics of the local population. This type of approach will help us to determine to what extent the spatial and labour movements observed in Jetpur correspond to the attraction exerted by the urban economy, and can in return stimulate the urban development.

CONCLUSION

The case study detailed in this paper has shown how the integration of an anthropological type of observation in a demographic study of migration can improve considerably its conception as well as its reach. First of all a preliminary qualitative observation conducted at a micro level proved to be absolutely essential in order to identify some specific forms of temporary moves highly significant for the studied area but which elude the official population statistics.

Then, in the last phases of the investigation, in-depth interviews aimed at collecting migration and occupation biographies can provide a better understanding of the logic governing the different forms of spatial and occupational mobility, by enabling us to reconstruct the continuity of the migratory paths, by taking account of the life cycle of the individual, and by revealing the interdependence of the migratory and occupational behaviours.

Though the last methodological remarks could apply to any migration study - in particular all labour migration studies -, in some specific cases like temporary industrial labour migration in India, with accommodation on the site of work itself, the contribution of an anthropological approach appears even more valuable due to the limitations of a sole quantitative survey.

In the case of Jetpur, the enumeration cum survey of the inter-state temporary migrant workers proved to be particularly difficult, as these migrants live on the fringe of the common urban residential system, are very mobile, and moreover are approachable only through the factory owners who control the access to their place of residence and work. However, even during the implementation of the quantitative migration survey, the quality of the data collected could be better controlled and improved by participating as a direct observer during the entire operation.

Thus, in a system of investigation combining quantitative and qualitative approaches, the qualitative observation should not be only limited to some specific phases, but should also imply the alertness of the researcher as a permanent participant observer during the entire range of field operations, in order to minimize the distance between the office and the field, to fill the gap between an investigation scheme finalized at one's desk following rigorous pre-determined scientific criteria and its concrete implementation and necessary adjustments in the field.

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CONTRIBUTION OF ANTHROPOLOGICAL APPROACH TO MIGRATION STUDY

The case of temporary industrial labour migration in India - a field experience in Gujarat.

by Véronique DUPONT

SUMMARY :

This paper shows an illustration of the contribution of anthropological approach to migration study, in the specific case of temporary industrial labour migration in India. It is based on the methodological lessons drawn from a field experience, part of an ongoing research on the interactions between spatial mobility and economic activities in medium-sized towns in India. The case study presented concerns a fast-growing industrial centre specialized in the textile printing industry, namely Jetpur in Gujarat (Western India). Its main objective is to investigate the role of the urban labour market in population attraction as well as the way of insertion of the in-migrants in the labour market of this town.

The system of observation adopted combines several types of surveys: a preliminary phase of qualitative observation, a quantitative household survey on migration and employment, a survey of industrial establishments, and a collection of workers' migration and occupation biographies.

The paper examines more precisely the implementation of each phase of investigation, along with its contribution as well as limitations, in the case of one specific form of labour mobility observable in Jetpur : the temporary migration of industrial workers, coming from other states and living inside the factory premises.

The essential role of a preliminary micro qualitative observation in the identification itself of this type of mobility is first of all underlined. It is also shown how the enumeration and survey of the inter-state temporary migrants proved to be particularly difficult, as these migrant workers live on the fringe of the common urban residential system, are very mobile, and moreover are approachable only through the factory owners who control the access to their place of work and residence.

Taking account of the limitations of a quantitative approach, the decisive contribution of the migration and occupation biographies collected through in-depth interviews is put forward. It is shown how the latter can provide a better understanding of the logic governing the spatial and occupational mobility by enabling us to reconstruct the continuity of the migratory paths, by taking account of the life space of the individual, and by revealing the interdependence of the migratory and occupational behaviours.

APPORT DE L' APPROCHE ANTHROPOLOGIQUE A L'ETUDE DES MIGRATIONS

Les cas des migrations temporaires des travailleurs de l' industrie en Inde - une expérience de terrain au Gujarat.

par Véronique DUPONT

RESUME

Cette communication montre un exemple de contribution de l'approche anthropologique à l'étude des migrations, dans le cas spécifique des migrations temporaires des travailleurs de l' industrie en Inde. Elle se base sur les enseignements méthodologiques tirés d'une expérience de terrain faisant partie d'une recherche en cours sur les interactions entre mobilité spatiale et activités économiques dans les villes moyennes en Inde. L'étude de cas présentée concerne un centre industriel à croissance rapide, dont l'économie est spécialisée dans l'impression du textile : Jetpur, dans l'Etat du Gujarat (Inde de l'Ouest). Cette étude vise principalement à s'interroger sur le rôle du marché urbain du travail dans l'attraction et la fixation de la population, ainsi que sur les filières d'insertion professionnelles des immigrants.

Le système d'observation adopté combine plusieurs types d'enquêtes : une phase préliminaire d'observation qualitative, une enquête quantitative migration/activité auprès des ménages, une enquête auprès des établissements industriels, des entretiens biographiques approfondis auprès de travailleurs. Cette communication examine plus précisément la mise en oeuvre de chaque phase d'investigation, ainsi que son apport et ses limites, dans le cas d'une forme spécifique de mobilité observable à Jetpur : la migration temporaire de travailleurs de l' industrie, en provenance d'autres états et logeant dans l'enceinte de l'usine. Le rôle essentiel d'une phase préliminaire d'observation qualitative dans l'identification même de cette forme de mobilité du travail est tout d'abord souligné.

Les difficultés particulières rencontrées lors du dénombrement et de l'enquête de ces travailleurs migrants sont ensuite exposées : elles tiennent aux solutions de logement transitoire en marge du système d'habitat urbain commun adoptées par ces migrants, à leur forte mobilité, et au fait que ces travailleurs ne sont accessibles que par l'intermédiaire de leur employeur, qui contrôle leur lieu de travail et résidence.

Considérant les limites d'une approche quantitative, la contribution décisive des biographies migratoires et professionnelles recueillies au moyen d'interviews approfondis est ensuite mise en avant. Cette méthode apporte une meilleure compréhension de la logique des différentes formes de mobilité spatiale et professionnelle, dans la mesure où elle permet de restituer le continuum des cheminements migratoires, de prendre en compte l'espace de vie du migrant, et de mettre en évidence l'interdépendance des comportements migratoires et professionnels.