COMMENTARY

The immigration scholarship of Stephen Castles

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Stephen Castles, who has been a leading migration scholar and migration theorist for five decades, has passed away aged 77. From 1986, Stephen was the Director of the *Centre for Multicultural Studies* at Wollongong University, Australia. In 2001, Stephen then moved to Oxford University as Director of the Refugee Studies Centre and worked at Oxford University till 2009 when he returned to Australia to take up a position at the University of Sydney until his retirement in 2017. Stephen has left a legacy of a remarkable contribution to an understanding of the complex, changing dynamics of global migration, the ways that this migration transformed sending and receiving countries and the lives of migrants themselves.

Immigrant Workers and Class Structure in Western Europe (Castles & Kosack, 1973) – his first major contribution to the field – was very influential and made Stephen's reputation within the global migration research community. Embedded in a Marxist political economy theoretical framework, the focus of the book is how the logic of the global capitalism (how the international mobility of labour for capital accumulation in Western Europe) situates immigrant workers into the class structure of Western European countries in an inferior, racialised position. Here, class politics matter, the other side of the coin of migrant labour and capital accumulation, with attention on the way that trade unions respond to migrant labour and the way in which immigrant workers are incorporated into the working class as inferior strata. The book provided detailed historical background and empirical trends on migration flows as well as a focus is on the lives of migrant workers and their families: housing, education opportunities for themselves and their children and social aspects of their life. The prejudice against and the racism that migrant workers face in the countries into which they settle is a critical part of the contribution of the book, leading to the conclusion: 'immigration helps to stabilise the capitalist order, not only economically, but also politically' (Castles & Kosack, 1973: 481).

His second major book contribution to the field – *Here for Good Western Europe's New Ethnic Minorities* (Castles et al., 1984) – addressed the increasingly important issue of temporary migration, a theme that he returned to in later books, including *Back to the Future? Can Europe meet its Labour Needs through Temporary Migration?* (Castles, 2006). His book *Citizenship and Migration: Globalisation and the Politics of Belonging* (Castles & Davidson, 2000) was at the cutting edge of the citizenship debate that still resonates strongly in Australia, Europe, Scandinavia and North America. Stephen's publications addressed the increasingly important issue of forced migration to Europe (Castles & Van Hear, 2005), including *States of Conflict: Causes and Patterns of Forced Migration to the EU* (Castles et al., 2003). Stephen's global focus shifted his gaze to sending countries and fieldwork in Africa and the relationship between global migration and development in *Migration and Development: Perspectives from the South* (Castles & Delgado Wise, 2008).

The Age of Migration – first published in 1993 and now in its sixth edition – is still the most influential migration textbook in the world and has been translated into Spanish, Italian, Turkish, Polish, Japanese and Taiwanese Chinese. A review of the changes in the contents to The Age of Migration over these editions provides some insights into the changes in the global migration field – its changing dynamics and global geography, theory and practice. The first chapter of all editions succinctly reviews global trends and developments in global migration accompanied by informative graphs and figures. In the first edition, box sections cover the gulf war and the collapse of the Berlin wall. In the fifth edition, the box section profiles the Arab Spring. The 'Theories of Migration' chapter has developed considerably over the editions. Whereas the first edition then had a chapter on the formation of ethnic minorities, the fifth edition has a chapter on 'How Migration Transforms Societies'. The sixth edition gives increased attention to non-Western regions and perspectives. It critically evaluates different categories used to describe migrants and analyse migration, including 'climate refugees'. Contemporary topics included are anti-immigrant politics and Islamophobia; migration policies under Trump; large-scale refugee movements; the growth of new types of mobility for such purposes as education, marriage or retirement (de Haas et al., 2020).

Stephen's contribution to Australian immigration research, policy and debate is probably not as well known internationally. His decade and a half at Wollongong University (1986–2001) coincided with the strongest period of Federal Government support for multiculturalism under the Hawke and Keating Labor Governments (1983–1996) and the early period of its demise under the conservative Howard Government (1996–2007). Stephen's role as the first Chair of the Board of the *Australian Bureau of Immigration Research* had a substantial impact in placing the Bureau as a respected and influential international agency and had an important impact on Australian immigration policy. He established the Asia-Pacific Research Network while Director of the Centre for Multicultural Studies at Wollongong University, part of his insistence on including the global south in migration research.

Stephen's first Australian book – *Mistaken Identity: Multiculturalism and the Demise of Nationalism in Australia* (Castles, 1988) – was a very original, critical evaluation of the theory and practice of Australian multiculturalism, situated in the context of Australian history and politics. *A Shop Full of Dreams: Ethnic Small Business in Australia* (Jock Collins et al., 1995) investigated the history of Greek, Italian, Chinese and other immigrants who set up their own business – cafes, restaurants, fruit and vegetable stores – in response to blocked economic mobility they experienced because of formal or informal racial discrimination in the Australian economy and society. The common denominator of both books is the agency of immigrant workers struggling against substantial barriers to make a better life for themselves and their families in Australia. *Immigration and Australia: Myths and Realities* (Castles, 1998) was a very clearly written summary of the changes in Australian immigration policy and in the lives of Australian immigrants and the key policy debates and policy possibilities that arose.

In his last book, written at Sydney University – *Social Transformation and Migration: National and Local Experiences in South Korea, Turkey, Mexico and Australia* (Castles et al., 2015) – Stephen returned to the themes he addressed in his first book but in a different way: this time the key focus is not the labour market and migrant workers per se but the transformation of the places of migrant settlement and of migrants' lives post-migration.

One of the key features of Stephen Castles' immigration scholarship has been the collaborative nature of his research. This is seen in the wide range of co-authors in his published work. Another has been his innovative, shifting focus, cannily anticipating new major global migration trends and issues and cutting the cloth of the theoretical lens that would be necessary to understand and interpret these trends and develop policy responses. A sociologist, Stephen always located his research in social theory though with an interdisciplinary focus, critical to a phenomenon such as global migration that transcends traditional disciplines. Another is the increasing global span of his fieldwork, of his focus on sending as well as receiving nations and his insistence that many nations are both. The global South is increasingly featured in his published work over the decades. The other constant in his career has been Stephen's focus on policy implications and the importance of policy development. His insights and advice were eagerly sought by national governments and transnational institutions.

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