

Vale Professor Stephen Castles, 1944-2022: The end of an age of migration

What makes an ideal keynote speaker? Someone who gives a fantastic address that offers the audience an overview of their work linked to the conference theme, something up to the minute, something new, something engaging, something a little edgy, a bird's eye view of the issues at hand, without unnecessary jargon, but demonstrating keen insights, humour, passion and compassion. Someone who leaves the audience inspired, and a little star struck. But more than that, they should be present, engage with other presentations, ask gentle supportive questions, speak equally to high flyers and lowly PhD students, join in the social events, and share their wisdom with modesty ... basically they should be Stephen Castles at every conference we have ever had the pleasure of seeing him at.

So to talk of deep sadness and regret at the passing of Professor Stephen Castles seem like mere platitudes. We have lost a pillar of the Australian sociological community, and of the Migration, Ethnicity and Multiculturalism thematic group in particular, a truly global scholar, in both senses of the word.

His reach was broad. Originally trained in sociology, Stephen's exceptional vision and rigorous scholarship transformed ideas across disciplines as diverse as economics and geography, political science and cultural studies, history, anthropology and international affairs. The author of over 350 books, papers and chapters in a career that spanned over five decades, Stephen's work defined a field of scholarly endeavour, encompassing international migration dynamics, governance and policy, multiculturalism, diversity and plurality, migration and development.

He is best known to students for his co-authored book *The Age of Migration*, first published in 1993 and now in its sixth edition. A mainstay of many an undergraduate and postgraduate reading list, this seminal text has remained relevant throughout the years as its elegant, lucid and accessible style evidences a detailed knowledge of case studies from all continents combined with a rigorous devotion to the theoretical concepts that explain and link cases. Stephen's talent for straightforwardly summarising key complex global issues is evident in this classic text.

After taking his MA and DPhil at the University of Sussex, Stephen began his career teaching Sociology at the Frankfurt School of Applied Sciences. In 1986 he came to Australia as Professor of Sociology and Director of the Centre for Multicultural Studies at the University of Wollongong, later founding the Centre for Asia Pacific Social Transformation Studies at the same institution. He was elected a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences in 1997. From 2001-2006 he served as Director of the Refugee Studies Centre at the University of Oxford where he went on to found the International Migration Institute (IMI) and COMPASS with Steve Vertovec.

In 2009, Stephen returned to Australia as Research Chair in Sociology at the University of Sydney. During his tenure at Sydney, Stephen led an ARC Discovery Project featuring multi-sited fieldwork in Turkey, Korea, Mexico and Australia to understand Social Transformation and International Migration in the 21st Century. A festschrift conference and subsequent special issue of the *Journal of Intercultural Studies* (2018) in his honour contained some of the work from this DP. Stephen's mentoring has been appreciated by those involved in this study, as well as the wide range of other publications, supervisions, projects, and just casual academic interactions with which he has been involved.

A scholar's mark on the world can be measured by his metrics, with nearly 50,000 citations in Google Scholar. But it is also measured by his impact on people, evidenced in the multiple tributes to him on social media from friends, colleagues and former students, as well as those who knew him simply

through his work. All commented on his great scholarship and global impact, calling him a giant and someone who was always “on the right side of migration debates”, and recalled his personal gentleness, warmth and kindness. Ghassan Hage described him as “one of the fathers of migration studies as we know it.” Stephen’s mark on the world can also be measured by the relentless way he turned his intellectual energies to exploring and exposing structural inequality in all its manifestations. Beginning with his earliest research highlighting the classed exploitation of racialised immigrant labour in Europe, his work consistently sought to identify the operations of capital and power in the root causes of all forms of migration and to undermine lazy and prejudiced assumptions about migrants and their motivations.

Our thoughts are with his partner, Associate Professor Ellie Vasta, our dear friend and a stalwart of the TASA MEM thematic group, and with his children and grandchildren. We will miss you deeply Stephen.

On behalf of the Migration, Ethnicity and Multiculturalism Thematic Group