The Role of Migration and Culture in the Developing of Society

Samuiel Bâlc

ABSTRACT: The frequency and the size of the migrating movements of population over the historical eras have always been an impressive phenomenon. Voluntarily or forced, people have changed their place of living and work inside and outside the borders of their own countries, hoping to realize some aspirations, hoping in new opportunities or new assurances. The research made in the sphere of historical demography proves the influence of demographical variations, provoked by the phenomenon of migration on the historical development of society through interactions between economic, political and cultural factors. As a result of migration, the pluralistic society is more and more evident, regardless of what part of the world we are talking about. The modern human needs to cope with an avalanche of information, costumes, convictions and religions, that are not specific to the place in which he lives. The cultures that were characteristic to a people or to a geographical place are frequently crossing paths, coexisting in the same society and putting a lot of pressure on the formation of the individual.
KEY WORS: migration, culture, society, globalization, change.

According to Dumitru Sandală: „The migration, as a socio–demographic event, refers to the movement of a person or a social group outside of their original community, in order to change their permanent residency and their usual place of work."[1] The migration represents a social phenomenon, which grew in size exceedingly in the twentieth century. All along history, the migration

was determined either by the desire to conquer new territories, by the desire to have better revenues, to change one's social statute, to make a family whole again, or by the desire to know different societies and contemporary civilizations.

"The developing of the transport and communications industries, which facilitated mobility and long distance communication, have made it possible that in the twentieth century, the annual average growth of migration to be 2.6%, compared to a 1.7% average growth of the world population."[2]

Ștefan Ștefănescu remarks the fact that: „The modifications made in the structure of the population influence the apparition of new phenomena and institutions."[3] Citing the French historian marcel Reinhard, Ștefan Ștefănescu proves the importance of the demographic factor, the way in which the modifications made into the structure and movements of population influences the political structure, the administrative organization and the economic–cultural development of society over the historical eras: „Without some density of population the political structure cannot affirm itself, the administrative organization is not doable and the economic–cultural development is unconceivable."[4]

Aurel Drăguț was underlining the fact that: „At the beginning of the history of humanity, migration had a definite function, through it avoiding the consequences of ecological hazards, discovering superior conditions of living, assuring the continuity of human species."[5] We should remember that, in antiquity, migration was usually the mass movements of slaves or the transforming of the ex–soldiers of the conquering armies into colonials established in the occupied territories.

The migration of population and the assimilation of them by the peoples of the land have created in the Medieval period the demographic premises of the formation of the centralized feudal states. Economic development and especially city developments would have been slowed down by the presence of a sedentary population, incapable of reacting promptly in the presence of economic opportunity. On the other side, migration was the demographic support of industrializing and modernizing society.

Slowly, after the disperse of the migrating peoples, in the Medieval period migrations loses its violent trait and becomes a strong economic causality. Thus, Aurel Drăguț was underlining that: "The dominant current in the internal spatial movement is now the rural to urban migration, and in the external one, the intercontinental transfer."[6]

If until the nineteenth century the phenomenon of migration was mostly consistent of the transport of African slaves over the Atlantic, the emigration of whites having low numbers, starting with the nineteenth century we can talk about the beginnings of the modern period of migrations, consisting of a massive exodus towards the New World.

Important modifications in the phenomenon of migration are taking place, in volume but also in the intercontinental migrating direction, after World War II, when there takes place economic reinvigoration in the countries of Western Europe, because of the help and export of American capita. In this period, we observe a growth of internal migration, to the detriment of intercontinental migration.

The contemporary migration has a diversified character, the processes becoming more and more heterogenic under the aspect of destination and of the structure of the population involved. The number of women involved in the process of migration has been notified, number which was dominated in the past by men. The explanation given is the change in the structure of the population of the receiving countries, respectively the requests for care services provided generally by women, of the reunion of families, marriages, sex industry, facts that justify the growth of female migration.

The social categories involved in migration have changed exponentially, and also the reasons the purposes for these. Involved in this process are young people, old people, persons with no qualification or highly qualified. Besides economic objectives, the purposes are studies, family relations, the desire to know other societies and civilizations.

A different characteristic of contemporary migration is the change of the statute of some countries, countries from people used to emigrate to countries into which people emigrate. Thus it is the case for countries from southern Europe: Italy, Spain, Portugal.

It can also be noticed that, at the present, the developed countries are suffering a process of aging of the population, major imbalances between generations, all combined with the decline of fertility. Also, we can observe the decline of the active population which needs to support the growing inactive population.

At the same time, a different problem which appeared in the context of contemporary migration is multiculturalism, the cultural heterogeneity of the developing countries which sparks different problems. The integration, sometimes difficult, of immigrants who do not always conform to the expectations of the dominant model of the receiving countries, the building of parallel societies, true enclaves strongly differentiated culturally by the majority cultural model can provoke tensions or societal marginalization. The situation can also aggravate because of the intolerance of the majority society (racism or cultural racism), multiculturalism thus not being the solution for the problems raised by the phenomenon of migration.

Contemporary migration is also favored by the intensification of the process of globalization[7] and restructuring of world economics. The rise and quick developments of new cities or regions generates a permanent migration of different social categories towards these areas who need personnel for the financial, technological and scientifical services which they offer.

The typologies of contemporary migrations do not differ much from those of the migrations of other historical eras, being able to be interpreted, according to Anna Ferro, by:

- the nature of the borders which were crossed (internal and external migration);
- the temporary horizon of the migration (temporary or definitive migration);
- the degree of freedom which the immigrants have (voluntary of forced migration);
- the organizational form of the migration (spontaneous or with a contract);
- the legal status of the immigrants (legal or illegal);
- the organizational mode of the migration (individual or in groups).[8]

Depending on the form of the borders crossed we can distinguish between the internal migration, the movement of the immigrants being done between the borders of the same country and the external migration. The internal migration of the population is determined by causes that are socio–economic, political, educational or military. The speed of the industrializing process which requests new work forces, coupled with the promoting of a centralized economic policy favors more and more a migration from the rural areas to the urban areas. The privatization and economic restructuring programs, the rise of unemployment is the laws concerning property of land also favors the flux of the internal migration from the urban areas to the rural area.

The phenomenon of external migration presupposes the crossing of state borders, process which all modern countries want to control. Besides the difficulties of access in a different country, external migration also presupposes a juridical and sociological change of the individual who is subjected to a different normative regime from his country, enjoying less rights and less socio–economic, juridical and political options than the citizens of that country.

Depending on the horizon of the migration, we can differentiate between two types: the permanent migration and the temporary migration. The first consists of the definitive change of the country of permanent residency, and the second meaning just a residency in a country different than the one in which one has his permanent residency. In the contemporary world, the movements beyond the borders of people are generally less and less conditioned or administratively registered, the official statistics concerning the number of immigrants and emigrants never being in accordance with reality.

The insecurity generated by the political sphere is most of the times doubled by economic motivations. The economic migration has reasons that are predominantly materialistic, the migrants choosing locations or countries where material compensations are high, for the same amount of work.

The political migration appears in the context of not respecting some fundamental rights, unfavorable treatment applied to some minorities, or other similar practices.

The spontaneous migration is characterized through the situation of the emigrants who do not have exhaustive information about the receiving country, they have wrong information or are counting on the information received from other emigrants, they do not have complete documents, have little material resources, maybe not even personal or official contacts.

The migration that happens because of a work contract presupposes the existence of some contracts in the receiving country, contracts that inform, facilitate and even support the migration. This support, alongside other information, can mean material support or the facilitation of social and professional integration.

In the case of this type of migration the state can be involved as well, through specialized institutions which try to regulate or even control migration, the social networks of family or friendships. The support of the migration phenomenon does not only mean the facilitation of access in the receiving country, but also support with material means, jobs or accommodation.

This typology of migration is considered to be appeared because of the policies of the states that are involved in the process of migration, through which they have tried to control the flux of immigration, resulting with the term controlled migration. Depending on the effective mode of the unfolding of the process of migration we can distinguish between individual migration, seen more often before 1990, or the migration of ethnic, religious, political or personal groups.

The analysis of the theories of migration proves, according to Anna Ferro, that we cannot have predetermined laws of migration, these being a process of continual developing, governed by a series of structural factors of rejection or attracting, which determine the migrants to leave their place of residency, temporarily or definitively.[9] In the case of the rejecting factors we can enumerate: the economic decline of the area, followed by the rise of unemployment – loss of job, discriminatory treatments for political, religious or ethnic

reasons, natural catastrophes or military conflicts, the cultural isolation from the community, familial reasons.

In the category of the attractional factors, which favor migration, we can include the high job opportunities, the perspective of higher wages, family reasons (the perspective of marriage, the reunion of family), the existence of a richer society culturally speaking, or educational or recreation.

In the passing of history there have existed countless theories, classic or neoclassic, all of them proving that the phenomenon of migration, through its frequency and its implications, have constituted an important explanatory element of the structure and of the dynamics of demography, history, geography and economics. The phenomenon of migration modifies the social structures of the states involved in this process, the migrants being studied from multiple perspectives: sociological, economic, historic, geographical, but also from the perspective of political sciences.

Because of the growing number of the persons involved in the phenomenon of migration, the transnational migration can be interpreted as a type of globalization. In the evolution of population are intertwined three factors: birth rate, death rate and the special mobility of the persons. The growing of population has favored the slowing down of the aging of western societies through immigration. The growth of immigration was caused by the big differences between of socio–economic development that exist between the original countries and the receiving countries, by wars, especially civil wars, by ecologic catastrophes and by climatic changes.[10] Although the number of migrants has grown, the relative percent in the total population of the world has not increased significantly because of the growth of world population, transnational migrations not seeming to be spectacular anymore.

The main causes of emigration are economic, social, political or religious. The phenomenon of external migration, regardless that it is done in groups or individually, implies after all the uprooting, the leaving of the place of birth, of childhood, of work; it implies a lot of courage, decision, a more serious attitude towards life, asking for more initiative. The integration in a different society, with a different

style of living, culture and costumes, requires a lot of flexibility, implying generally the change of a career.

It is known that each person bears some traits of thought, of feeling and of manifestation, traits gained all along life. All of these individual particularities come from the social sphere in which that person has been raised and in which he gained life experience. The term that defines this aspect is the term culture.

According to Barnouw: "*culture is a complex full of knowledge, beliefs, art, law, morals, costumes and any capacities and abilities gained by a person, through which it identifies itself as a member of a particular society.*"[11] The definition given by UNESCO in 1982 in Mexico at the World Conference of Cultural Policies, was evidencing that:

> Through culture we understand today the totality of distinctive traits, spiritual and material, intellectual and emotional, that characterize a society or a social group. It involves, besides art and literature, the way of life, the fundamental rights of the human being, systems of value, traditions and belief.[12]

E. Schein was defining culture as being: "an ensemble of fundamental hypothesis that a group has invented, discovered or built to resolved its problems of adaptation to the surrounding habitat and of internal integration."[13] On a different note, Bouyer was defining culture as being: „the coherent ensemble of the mutual attitudes of the employees in the context of their productivity."[14]

One of the definitions of culture that is most often quoted in the specialized literature, belongs to Hofstede. According to him: „culture is a collective program of the mind which distinguishes between the members of a group or of a category and the members of a different group or category."[15]

Culture includes the meanings, the values, the convictions, the norms and the artefacts. Moreover, Liliana Ciascai and Iuliana Marchiş were saying that: „culture represents the core of individual and social identity and it is a major component of the reconciliation of group identities in the context of building social cohesion. The analysis of culture refers to all the factors that model the individual

traits of thought, of behavior, of feeling and of action (of the individuals as members of society)."[16]

The term culture thus represents a collective phenomenon that evolves in time and which involves a continual fluidity of past–present–future. It represents „*the totality of knowledge, skills and usual behavioral patterns which are mutual and which are transmitted by the members of a society*" (Ralph Linter).

Although the defining and the understanding of culture is important, the way in which these model us as humans is more important. Thus, Aurelia Bălan underlined that:

> The real value of culture is in its relationship with civilization, […] the substance of culture forms the spirit, its necessities, while the substance of civilization is formed by matter: the biological and the satisfying of its needs. . . . The two components of history, culture and civilization, needs to be then in permanent interaction, similar to the one between soul and body, to condition each other. . . . The civilized human is truly the educated one, the cultured one, the one with self–control and a noble behavior, a nobility acquired through culture, not only by simply descending from a family with noble blood.[17]

The case of group migration, or of the existence of a community made by those who previously left, makes the uprooting less painful in the socio–economic and cultural life of the emigrants who reached their new country.

In the context of political, socio–economic and cultural change, the ones that chose to emigrate have faced firstly problems of survival, the need of changing the mentality and traditional costumes, given the requirements of the new societies in which they need to integrate. The process of integration has always been long and sometimes painful, and sometimes disillusionment has crept in besides the personal and professional realizations, sometimes sacrifices needing to be done. As Gabriel Bădescu noticed:

> The transnational migration, temporary or definitively, for work, has diverse effects on the migrants and their families, which concern the change of their citizenship, the civic involvement, the attitude towards the minority groups, religious tolerance, family relationships. Concretely, work outside the country influences the level of social trust, because of life in a social sphere with trustworthy persons and efficient public institutions, not often being the case of confrontation with hostile local authorities or with an unfriendly local population.[18]

Following the studies made, it has been noticed that emigrants are more tolerant toward minorities, toward persons of a different ethnicity or a different religion and more likely to be involved in the political life or in the social–cultural life of the community. At the same time emigrants care more about schooling and are more flexible in their relationships with the members of the family, investing more trust in the children. Migration involves thus all the spheres of human existence: economic, political, religious and cultural, contributing directly and indirectly to the development of society.

NOTES

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[4] Marcel Reinhard, „Histoire et demographie", in *Revue Historique*, t. 203, 1960, 194.

[5] Aurel Drăguţ, International migration and the problems of development (Bucureşti, 1981), 16.

[6] Aurel Drăguţ, op.cit., 17.

[7] Ioan–Gheorghe Rotaru, "Globalization and its effect on religion", in *Jurnalul Libertăţii de Conştiinţă,* Mihnea Costoiu, Liviu–Bogdan Ciucă, Nelu Burcea (eds.), (Les Arcs, France: Edition IARSIC, 2014), 532–541.

[8] Anna Ferro, Romanians in foreign lands. A snapshot about the migration of brains (Iaşi, 2009),15.

[9] *Ibidem*, 34.

[10] Thomas Faist, *"*Transnational migration as a relative immobility in a globalized world", in *The Sociology of migration*, (Iaşi, 2009), 129.

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[16] Liliana Ciascai, Iuliana Marchiş, *Intercultural and media education* (Cluj–Napoca: University Press of Cluj, 2008), 8.

[17] Liliana Ciascai, Iuliana Marchiş, *Intercultural and media education* (Cluj–Napoca: University Press of Cluj, 2008), 9.

[18] Gabriel Bădescu, Oana Stoian, Andra Tănase, *"*The cultural effects of the migration of the work force from Romania", in *The Sociology of migration*, 279.