

# The Migrations in the Old and the New World

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**Abstract:** *In the last four decades, the US and the Western societies have become the main destinations for the new global migration flows. The new immigrants come from America and Asia and many other regions of the world, while in the 19<sup>th</sup> century the immigrant mostly came from Europe. The new immigration in Western Europe is a case of a radical change from the European immigration history in the rest of the world. The different races conditioned by the new migration movements has changed the essence of the old religious pluralism – it went from cultural to ethnic pluralism. Nowadays, people in the Western world find their spiritual fulfilment mostly outside the traditional religion and religious situations. Some of them feel the need for belonging to certain institutions, while others are attracted by the eastern philosophic and ethnically-moral movements and doctrines, and both find their spiritual peace by practicing those philosophical doctrines and techniques. The modern world is characterized with pluralism and that is the reason why many worshippers most often choose and mix elements from various traditions, beliefs and philosophies.*

**Keywords:** migration, pluralism, religion, tradition, multifunctional societies.

## 1. Introduction

Analysing the migration processes is important for creating a complete picture of the events and movements of the people around the world, as well as the complex relations among them and the mixture of different ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious communities. In other words, these processes are essential in understanding how are the multi-ethnic and multifunctional societies created, and how do they function.

The migrations are an important factor that has clearly changed and is still changing the national structure of the countries around the world. There isn't a nation that can state that it has remained unchanged nor that it existed only on one exactly confirmed territory. History witnesses the spread and the movement of population around the world. All of these movements have helped to modify the new modern world and have caused deep and long-term changes in the way of life, in language, religion, type of culture, socio-economic structure and the political and administrative system.

In some way, migrations have created history and modelled the world in which we live. They are responsible for the social, cultural and economic changes in the world. The migration movements create a large diversity in the population of many societies.

People move from villages to towns, from towns to cities, from rural to urban areas, from one part of the country to the other or from one part of the world to the other. The last type of migration is especially interest. The reason for that kind of transnational migrations and any other type of migration are different. The immigrants are mostly trying to escape poverty, political insecurity or a war. The contemporary global migrations carry the well-known problems: on one hand the immigrants need to adjust to the new society, and on the other hand the society needs to adjust to them as well. It is of great importance the way on which the native residents react to the immigrants. Usually, the immigrants request self-determination and participation in the sources of power in that society. They are actually realizing the process

of de-territorialisation of the global society. That is a situation in which the place and the distance lose their meaning, because “there” is also “here”.

The migration communities establish churches, temples and mosques solely for religious goals, but they often serve as places for other functions such as: providing social services, educational and recreation centres, sources for humanitarian and politic mobilisation, and simply as a manifestation of an immigrant community and sense of belonging. One of the most notable ways that differentiate the contemporary international migrations from the migrations in the past is the regularity, the frequency and the importance of the relations that the immigrants maintain with their mother countries. Actually, it is the case of how is the contemporary world communicational connection. The immigrants use the advantages that are more available and more efficient models of global connections together with the new technologies, the Internet etc. One of the important social forms that goes together with them and constitutes that network is religion. The transnational immigrants use religious and other types of communication to help the world stay connected and create a unique social place by transporting of saint objects and sending religious representatives around the world, than through the religious gatherings (pilgrimage), the religious counselling online, sending money for maintaining the churches and the temples “at home”.

## 2. The migrations in the old and the new world

If we want to make an analysis of the process of migration in the past and now, we can start with prehistoric time. Actually there is an accepted agreement among the historians and the anthropologists that the climate changes (such as the melting of ice in Europe and the movement from the south to the north) were the cause for the large migrations in the prehistoric time. It is believed that the mass migration was ongoing all over the world at that time. For example, it is believed that the North and South America accepted Asian migrants during a few successive waves of migrant through the Bering Sea.

In many cases the migrations were a result of wars (the Mongol Empire, the Ottoman Empire, the movements in Africa – Bantus from Central and North America).

The most important moment in the history of migrations happened 500 years ago when emerged the European researchers who were carried by the idea of discovering new countries such as America and Asia, and the idea of making colonies. These transnational migrations were under the influence of strategically, economic and politic reasons. Some of those reasons are the following: acquiring a detailed and appropriate knowledge in Geography, production of detailed maps, presentation of new technology, new navigation instruments and larger, safer and faster ships. As a result of the increased needs of the labour market, a large number of men and women have gone as immigrants to America and then Asia and Africa. Some of them have travelled from one to other country in Europe. The increased production needs in the new colonies caused a shortage of working force which caused a completely new international migration: the slave trade. The first ship with slaves sailed from Africa to West India in the middle of the 16 century, and from that moment around 15 million slaves have been transported to America, the Caribbean or the Indian islands. After the slave trade was banned in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century appeared a new system which was the contract work. The workers accepted contracts for work in the transatlantic countries, but the work conditions were even worse than those of the slaves.

The industrial revolution had a large impact on the migration processes. In the period between 1846 and 1890, around 17 million people have left Europe and went to New Zealand. Most of them came from the British Isles, because of the fact that Britain was the first country that felt the effect of the industrial revolution. Also the number of the migrants in this period has increased to around 3.5 million as a result of the German terrorists. In the period between 1846 and 1939, around 50 million people left Europe. The most frequent destinations were the USA (38 million), Canada (7 million), Argentina (7 million), Brazil (4, 6 million), Australia, New Zealand and South Africa (2.5 million). Some of them went to Europe, while others searched for jobs or asylum in Britain, Scotland (around 700.000) etc. In the period between 1875 and 1914, 120.000 Jews from Russia found asylum in Britain. Also a notable number of Polish and Ukrainian migrants settled in Germany, where they worked mostly as agriculturists.

The modern legal immigration in that period gained an administrative frame. The first country that set the rules of who can and who cannot enter was the USA, and then Australia and Canada supported the criteria for entering the country with their own legislative.

The period between the two world wars was one of the few with a decreased international immigration. This was a result of the economic stagnation as well as the insecurity of the situation. In the period of the depression since 1930, the migration workers were seen as a competitors for the low-paid jobs and that increased the feeling of hostility towards

them.

The Second World War is also named as an important point of the migration history. The ruins of Europe were left by 1-2 million people. A lot of those refugees or victims settled in the USA, Canada or Argentina. Some of them found their place in Europe such as Belgium, France and Holland. Also it is worth mentioning that the British Government at that time made an employment offer to 90.000 individuals from the refugee camps from different locations.

The modern history of international migration can be divided into four periods. During the period from 1500 to 1800 dominate the migration movements in Europe which were caused by the colonization process and the economic development under the influence of capitalism. During the 300s, the Europeans moved to America, Africa, Asia and Oceania. Although the exact number of immigrants is unknown, the reflux was enough in order to establish dominance in Europe. The immigrants from this period can be divided into the four following classes: relatively large number of agriculturists, small number of administrators and craftsmen, and even smaller number of undertakers for the production of raw materials, and in some cases sentenced migrants sent to the international colonies for crime punishment.

Although the number of Europeans involved in farming was small, this sector had a large influence over the demographic history of America. The established plantations needed large quantity of labour workers with respect to the preindustrial technologies, and this has been partly covered by workers from East Asia. The most important source of workers was the slave market from Africa. Around 10 million African slaves were imported from America during a period of three centuries, and together with the European colonists radically transformed the race and the ethnicity of the new world.

The second industrial period of emigration started at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and is a direct result of the industrial development in Europe and the expansion of capitalism in the past colonies in the New World (Haton and Williamson 1998).

The period from 1800 to 1929 represents an economic globalisation characterised with massive streams of capital, raw materials and goods among Europe, America, Asia and the Pacific.

During the first era of globalization, small number of European immigrants went to the earlier European colonies that were in the middle of the industrialization and development. The US has absorbed around 60% of the total reflux of Europe, and around 25% of the immigrants were scattered among Argentina, Australia, Canada and New Zealand.

The fourth period of post-industrial migrations appeared during the middle of the 60s and the 70s of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The migration countries such as Italy, Spain and Portugal have started to get immigrants from the Middle East and Africa (Fakiolas) in 1995. After the escalation of the prices

of oil in 1973, some of the less developed countries in the Persian Gulf, that were rich with capital, started to sponsor the mass migration of labour workers Birks, 1980; Abella, 1995). Until 1980 the international migration have spread not only in Japan, but also in Asian and in the newly industrialised countries such as Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand (Loiskandl,1995; Hugo,1995 r.).

Although the roots of globalization lie in the end of the Second World War, it couldn't reach its full potential until 1990, because the Cold War cut off one third of humanity (the populations of China, the Soviet Union and its countries) from the labour market and most of the other countries were led into confrontations (throughout Asia, Latin America and Africa). After the end of the Cold War, the global economy finally has the chance to continue the development that was achieved in the beginning of the First World War. Since then, we have witnessed the evolution of liberal democracy among the trade nations, the consolidation of stable international institutions, the acceleration of the free trade and a new global security, regimes guaranteed by the hegemonic power of the USA. These changes were accompanied with an expansion of the international migration, structural transformation and an incorporation of the global market.

Until the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the international movements of the populations have grown into five notable migration systems.

The sociologic researches show that the immigrants tend to accumulate on both ends of the educational spectre. Some of them are university graduated that have fulfilled responsible positions and that are needed in certain sectors, while others are uneducated workers ready to do any kind of ordinary work. The European immigrants are often men at the age of 20-30, chosen by their family to go to "the promised land" and to later help other members of the family to come there, or at least to send them money. Usually when the immigrants regulate their status they invite their relatives and help them immigrate as well (Beil, 2009:335).

In Europe, just as in the US, the family gatherings are the largest source of legal migrations. Many migrants in Europe work for low payments, but unlike the USA, Europe has a high percentage of unemployment and more generous social system. However, the unemployment is more common for the immigrants than for the hardworking non-immigrants. Also some ethnic groups suffer more than other ethnic groups. For example, in Belgium the highest percentage of unemployment is held by the Turkish and the Moroccan ethnic groups (45% men, 56% women) compared with the 10% of the Belgian group (Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2007:45). This heats the negative stereotype for the immigrants as "parasites" of the social system. Also, in many countries, the immigrants are being accused of "stealing" at their workplaces. This also heats another powerful stereotype that the immigrants are criminals. The children of the immigrants have poor childhood, bad grades at school and have weak results on the labour market. This can become an enchanted deprivation circle where the crime (especially the

street crime) is often present (for example 8 of 10 criminals in Rotterdam, Holland are from the ethnic minorities). Naturally not all the Europeans accept these stereotypes.

### 3. Conclusion

The interesting thing that becomes visible in the globalised context are all of the variations of those institutions in the mother countries of the immigrants and in their new homes. The role of the religious institutions in the diaspora doesn't mean only to transfer the religion into practice as primarily connected to certain world regions, but all the religions so that the homogenous religious regions will become multi-religious. Also it is of great significance to realize different and new versions of these religious, and those that maintain their community through the transnational connections can have an influence on each other and on the original versions in the traditional remains. The transnational migrations do not influence only the space globalization of religion, but also contributes for further pluralisation or particularization of the universal religions in each part of the world. The population of each country consists of the antecedents that lived there centuries ago, those that have arrived first and those that are still arriving. Regardless of the differences in race or ethnicity among these minorities, their presence and the fact that they are accompanied with new immigrants each day (around 2 million a year from various places) are the cause for tensions and conflicts in many countries around the world. The migrants aren't being accepted and are mostly faced with misunderstandings, distrust and even pure hostility. Nowadays the experts usually point to the short-term weaknesses of the work force in combination with the increased age limit as the reasons that make immigration a necessity.

As a result to the fast development of technology in the last twenty years (telephones, internet, low-fare flights...), the immigrants are able to get into contact with their countries quickly. The migration leads to transnationalism, which is a process that enables the immigrants to create more complex relations that connect them to their homelands.

Nowadays the governments around the world face with bigger and more strongly expressed migration as a result of the globalization (ex: in 1965 the total number of migrants was 75 million, and in 2002 it increased to 175 million). In 1965 only small number of countries identified as destination countries. Nowadays almost every country has migrants and the traditional classification of the countries affected by migration is pointless, because most countries send migrants, get migrants or migrants go through the country. The migrations has always existed and appeared as results of various contexts and situations: invasion, violent emigration under threats, natural disasters, colonial settlements and even slavery. More famous and more modern thinking concerning the migration that has a primary meaning nowadays is the movement of people and families due to economic and social reasons.

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