

Sara Petroccia, Vera Kopsaj

Encounter Between Cultures and Identities

**Cross-cultural communication
in the migration process**

Laboratorio Sociologico

Ricerca empirica
ed intervento sociale

FRANCOANGELI

Direttore Scientifico: Costantino Cipolla

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This book was written before the war in Ukraine

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La cura redazionale ed editoriale del volume è stata realizzata da Giuseppina De Simone

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*Introduction*¹

In this book we aim to analyze how the consequences of migration dynamics expand in multiple directions, giving rise to aspects that affect society as a whole i.e., individuals, communities, but also the associations, organizations and institutions that make it up and construct it in time and space, leading to two misrepresentations of migration processes: 1. Migration is independent of the activity of any other destination country; 2. Migration is independent of state and non-state actors.

According to the first representation, migration is considered independent of the activity of any other destination country while, in reality, it is positively associated with poverty and unemployment, which are the main causes of emigration. The situation is actually much more complex, since on the one hand, the opportunity to migrate is socially produced, on the other hand it remains a personal choice. This aspect is generally passed over in silence because migration flows share common external characteristics: they are essentially, though not totally, composed of poor people from less developed countries. This leads one to think that poverty and unemployment are the springs for making the decision to migrate. In reality, many countries with high rates of poverty and unemployment are not countries of emigration. In many countries, emigration is a recent phenomenon, whereas poverty has existed for much longer. Therefore, a number of conditions must be met for poverty to be an impetus to migrate, and even then, only a minority of people from the lower and middle classes would really consider migration as an option.

Migration processes, in time and space, show that they do not represent an indistinct way out of poverty and unemployment, but follow the path of

¹ For a more correct attribution, Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, and Final remarks have been written by Sara Petroccia; the Introduction, Chapters 5 and 6 have been written by Vera Kopsaj.

past colonial relations or new links between countries in the globalised economy.

The second misrepresentation concerns the analysis of migration separately from state and non-state actors, despite the fact that the latter play a key role in migration processes. This leaves out decisive factors.

In this book, push-pull factors will also be analysed. The push factors that determine the decision to migrate include high population density or high population growth, poverty, unemployment or lack of future job prospects, political and ethnic repression or violence, armed conflicts, environmental destruction and natural disasters. The pull factors – the factors that make the destination country attractive in the eyes of potential migrants – are the demand for labour, availability of land, possibilities for economic development, political and religious freedom and security. These factors may be real or only imaginary. However, this approach does not consider all aspects of the issue. Poverty per se, for instance, does not drive people to emigrate. Middle-class people emigrate more often than marginalised people: their more stable economic status, together with better education and easier access to information, facilitates emigration. Very often the poorest are the last to leave; in general, conditions of former impoverishment have never been sufficient to induce emigration flows alone. Therefore, it is necessary to take into account the social stratification in the countries of origin, as well as the historical and economic relations between the countries of departure and arrival.

Every migratory flow is the result of the interaction between micro and macro structures: the social origins of migrants, their habits and beliefs, their social networks and so on, are found in the microstructures, while the macrostructures are determined by the economic policy of the world market and the historical and current relations between emigration and immigration countries, based on cultural, colonial, political and trade relations. Migration can be supported or hindered by the laws, structures and policies of the regions of origin and destination; settlement is controlled in the same way. The causes and effects of migration can only be further understood by considering all these factors. The consequences of migration involve both emigration and host countries and, in order to benefit both sides in a possible return, three conditions must be fulfilled:

1. Migrant workers must have broadened their skills abroad;
2. The knowledge and skills acquired must match the needs of the homeland;
3. Migrant workers must be willing and able to apply their new skills in their own country.

Six chapters are presented in this book.

The first chapter offers a global overview of migration in recent decades, analysing migration flows, political power, and the models adopted for migration management in America, Asia (Japan, China), and Europe (France, Italy, Germany, Great Britain). What the chapter seeks to emphasise is that migration is a fundamental human right that must not be caused but, if it occurs, must be supported by both countries of origin and host countries.

The second chapter focuses on the Mediterranean basin and analyses the complexity of the migration phenomenon and the mechanisms that regulate migration in transit. It focuses on African countries that reach Europe and the factors that drive them to migrate. Among migrants who reach Europe through irregular migration flows, two broad categories can be recognised: those of an economic nature and those fleeing situations of war or violent conflicts, whose protection is the primary mission of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

The importance of networks in supporting migration is discussed in chapter three. The arrivals and departures of migrants, the previous migration experiences of other individuals, the links established between places of origin and destination, the existence of support resources, the support of family chains and information flows appear to be at least as important as economic factors. All these factors are supported and nurtured by the migration network.

The fourth chapter analyses the concept of the *World system* (Wallerstein) and the *Global village* (McLuhan), repositioning migration within these two images. The concepts of globalisation and border maintenance seem to contradict each other. This chapter also addresses the concept of migrants' cultural and social capital and the ability to benefit from it, and proposes a discussion on the possibility of going beyond the concept of social capital. The main point of this chapter is that, despite the importance of cultural capital during migration, if it is not incorporated and institutionalised within the native population, articulated discrepancies may be even greater in migrant populations.

The fifth chapter analyses the migration path of Albanians to Italy and Greece over the last 30 years. Several issues are discussed, such as why immigration to this country has not yet stopped despite the country being considered safe. The analysis focuses on three significant migration flows (1991, 1997, 1999) involving the two host countries examined. The concept of social stigmatisation is seen in relation to social openness and closure. Improved immigration laws and migration flows from other countries in

Italy and Greece transformed Albanians from foreigners to model immigrants. This chapter will also discuss the concept of identity in relation to European migration laws.

The issue of Covid-19 and its impact on migration are addressed in chapter six. The pandemic interrupted one of the most important agreements in the history of global migration: the ‘Global compact for migration’, which had set 23 goals to be implemented in 2020. This chapter also discusses the withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan and its impact on migration.

The final remarks examine the possibility of a new scenario to address the new dimensions of global immigration. Assuming that global immigration leads to a more widespread phenomenon of individuals with multiple national backgrounds and identities, existing models of citizenship may be inadequate. It is therefore necessary to find a supranational citizenship model in which individuals are identified by transnationality. Transnational identities are possible due to global communications, global trade and migration, which generate global nations and social movements that should give rise to a broader identity and awareness.

Our heartfelt thanks go to our professor Costantino Cipolla for having guided us along the difficult path of professional and human growth over these years.

We, the authors, hope that this book is only the starting point towards increasingly consolidated results in the service of social research and as a thank you to those who have believed in us.

*1. The impact of cultural heritage on migratory processes*¹

1. The international migration processes: three cultural steps

According to the United Nations estimations, the total migrants in the world in 2020 were about 281 million², a bit less than 4% of the total world population³. Of these, nearly 58% lived in the developed regions, while the developing regions hosted 42% of the world's total. Of the 140 million international migrants living in the global North in 2015, 85 million, or 61%, originated from a developing country, while 55 million, or 39%, were born in the North. Meanwhile, 90 million, or 87%, of the 103 million international migrants residing in the global South in 2015 originated from other parts of the developing world, while 13 million, or 13%, were born in the North.

Between 1990 and 2015, the number of international migrants worldwide rose by over 91 million, or by 60%. Much of this growth occurred between 2000 and 2010, when some 4.9 million migrants were added annually, compared to an average of 2.0 million from 1990 to 2000 and 4.4 million from 2010 to 2015. Between 1990 and 2015, the developed regions gained 58 million international migrants, or 64%, of the 91 million added worldwide, whereas the developing regions added 33 million, or 36%. While the North gained the larger number of international migrants between 1990 and 2015, from 2010 to 2020 the average annual increase of the migrant stock in the South exceeded that in the North: 2.9 versus 1.2%, respectively. The increase in the number of international migrants in the de-

¹ The data in this chapter, for which no other primary source is indicated, have been sourced from <https://archives.un.org/>

² <https://www.un.org/en/desa/international-migration-2020-highlights>

³ About 7,794,799 million. United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2019). World Population Prospects 2019, Online Edition. Rev. 1.

veloped regions resulted from the increase in the number of migrants from countries of both the South and the North. Of the 58 million international migrants added in the North between 1990 and 2015, 44 million, or 76%, were born in the South. The remaining 14 million international migrants, or 24%, originated from a country in the North.

Table 1 – World Population and number of international migrants for years 2016-2020

<i>Year</i>	<i>Population</i> ⁴	<i>Number of Migrants</i> ⁵	<i>Percentage</i>
2016	7,464,022	244,000	3.2
2017	7,547,859	258,000	3.4
2018	7,631,091	259,000	3.3
2019	7,713,468	271,000	3.5
2020	7,794,799	281,000	3.6

Source: Author elaboration based on the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, and IOM data.

Every area of the world features both an outwards and inwards migration movement, at the same time. Many countries serve as transit areas and final destinations at the same time (with the exception of the United States and Australia, which are and always have been only final destinations in the migration process). Today’s migrants are in search for a better job, high salaries to guarantee security for their families and themselves (one of the reasons for migration beyond labour is, in fact, family reunion). Migrations create the global society inside which migrants move and become the globalization’s actors.

As for the role of the State in the elaboration and implementation of the migration policies, there are three processes that deserve special attention:

The first regards the transfer of some public authority components to actors other than the State: they are first of all supranational organizations, such as the European Union, the World Trade Organization (WTO) or the recently constituted International Criminal Court (ICC), relevant for its potentially universal jurisdiction. In the specific case of migrations, it is necessary to consider the growing role of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in the management of the immigrants and refugees flows

⁴ United Nations Population Division. Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *World Population Prospects 2019*. Retrieved June 2, 2021, from <https://population.un.org/wpp/Download/Standard/Population/>

⁵ https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/wmr_2020.pdf

and, to some extent, of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

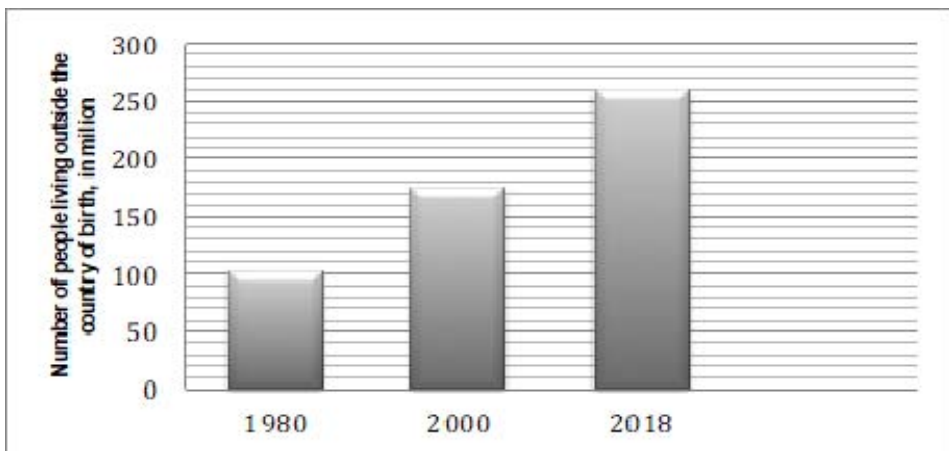
A second aspect concerns the deregulation of the public sector activities; these phenomena have often led to a privatization of several governance functions, which used to be a prerogative of the state bureaucracies. The internationalization of trade and investments represents a typical case. As of today, a growing number of cross-border flows is managed by businesses, markets and free trade agreements. This is the case, to be further studied, of the specialized workers' movements, in the framework of trade or investment agreements, particularly the WTO's, and of regional free trade agreements, such as the NAFTA in North America and Mexico.

The third and last aspect refers to the significant increase, in number and typology, of the political actors active in debates and in the public choices concerning immigration, a common phenomenon in Western Europe, North America and Japan which has definitely increased for the past two decades. These developments are particularly evident as far as the European Union is concerned. As a matter of fact, the creation of one single market has underlined the crucial importance of people's mobility under its several aspects. During the first stages of its existence, the European Commission did not have any legal competence over the cross-border circulation of people, and had to develop it progressively. Therefore, the communitarian institutions gradually went into deep of Visa policies, borders control, family reunions, economic migration and integration policy regulations, all of which used to be exclusives of the national States in the previous years. There are many obstacles that prevent a quality response to present migration issues. Figure 1 and 2 offer a general picture of global migration data. According to IOM data (2018), shown in Figure 1, in 2018 the total number of people living outside the country of birth was estimated at 258 million, compared to 173 million in 2000 and 102 million in 1980, respectively.

IOM researchers estimate that somewhere between 35 and 40 million people migrate globally every 5 years. The median age of international migrants is 39 years, 48% of them are female, and 14% of international migrants are younger than 20 years⁶.

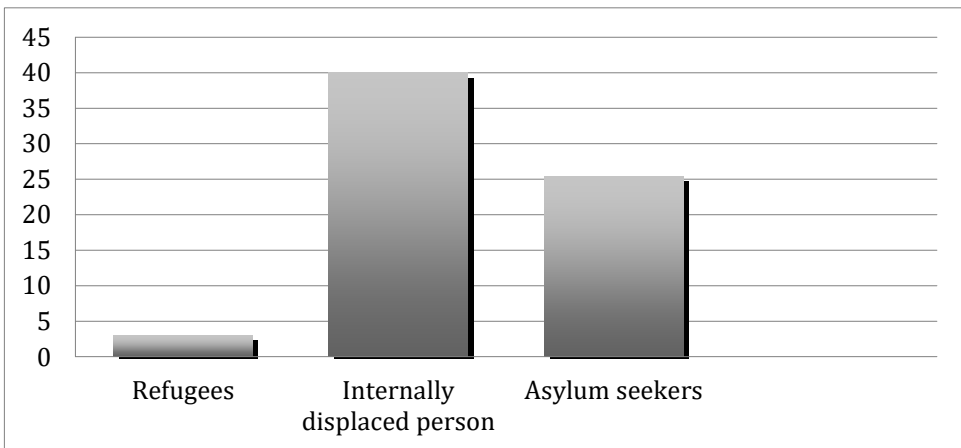
⁶ International Organisation for Migration, 2018. International Organisation for Migration. Available at: https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/global_migration_indicators_2018.pdf [Accessed 12 July 2020].

Figure 1 – Total number of people living outside the country of birth⁷



Source: Author elaboration based on the IOM data (2018).

Figure 2 – Structure of population displaced by force in 2017 globally⁸



Source: Author elaboration based on the IOM data (2018).

Figure 2 also shows that a large number of displaced by force people, is found in the category of ‘Internally displaced person’.

⁷ Cf. Zbornik Ekonomskog fakulteta u Zagrebu, godina 19, br. 1., 2021.

⁸ Cf. Zbornik Ekonomskog fakulteta u Zagrebu, godina 19, br. 1., 2021.

2. US immigration models

From the end of the 1960s, the United States started to show some major changes in their immigration models. At the same time, an exceptional change in the regional composition of the migration flows was recorded. In the 1960s, about two thirds of the total immigrants arriving to the United States were from Europe. From the 1980s on, the great majority of immigrants would come from Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, instead. Another relevant feature of the new immigration is the increasing credit of women. In the following table, we represent as, in the 1970s, over the total immigrants from different nationalities are woman. Moreover, women represented more than a half of the 290,000 immigrants admitted in the non-preference category, that is, the vacant positions if the preference quota are not totally covered.

Table 2 – Immigrants women from different nationalities

<i>Country name</i>	<i>Percentages</i>
Philippines	60
South Koreans	61
Colombians	52
Haitians	52
Hong Kong	52

Source: Author elaboration based on the work of Ehrenreich B., Hochschild A. R. (2003).

Although immigrant women were still entering the country, depending somehow on other immigrants, a modest but increasing number would start being admitted under the status of employed worker. Women represented 45.6% of the total legally admitted immigrants to the United States between 1972 and 1979, within the qualified and generic workforce category, which the United States were lacking⁹.

Another feature of the new immigration is the tendency to concentrate in a few particular regions of the United States. The Abstract of Reports of the Immigration Commission shows that the majority of immigrants of the past century were directed to New York, Pennsylvania and Illinois. Still nowadays, these destinations, along with California, receive more than half of the immigrants arriving in the United States. Only another quarter is directed to New Jersey, Illinois, Florida, and Texas. According to the United

⁹ Cf. Ehrenreich B., Hochschild A. R. (2003).

States census in 1980, about a fifth of the total US resident born in foreign countries were living in New York and Los Angeles, while in the same year, these two cities were gathering only 1% of the total native population of the United States.

As a conclusion, in 1987 immigrants constituted maximum 10% of the US population, but represented 30% and 15% of the population respectively in New York and Los Angeles¹⁰. The compact concentration of immigrants in the big US cities may seem like a challenge to any economic explanation, at first sight. The main reason for new big immigration flows continuing to arrive was the fast expansion of low-salary job offers and the market precariousness itself, which supported the growth of new industries in the main cities. The changes in the labour demand lay at the basis of the new migration waves in the United States. The increase of low-salary jobs partially derives from the international economic processes which have conveyed the investments towards the countries with low production costs, nurturing a disqualified industrial sector, featured by growing low-salary jobs, mostly performed by generic workforce. This sector has been created in the US economy from the organized convergence of three tendencies.

The *first* is the social re-organization of the work process, based on the always more common practice to subcontract production and services, and on the sweatshops and cottage industry expansion.

The *second tendency* is the work process technology, which has downgraded the qualification levels required for a number of tasks, absorbing the abilities in the machines and computers.

The *last tendency* is the rapid growth of high-technology industries, employing a large number of underpaid production workforce. The new, low-salary jobs attract a great number of immigrants and the rapid growth of some specific sectors has determined the creation of many new jobs, especially in big cities: New York and Los Angeles ended up in managing the global factory network. From the end of the 1970s, these tendencies have prompted a growing polarization in the profit structure in the United States, moving towards a decrease of the average salaries and an increase of the higher salaries¹¹, but above all to a definition of the role the United States of America have been playing in the globalized world since World War II, in the economic, political or military field.

¹⁰ Sassen (2003), p. 67.

¹¹ *Ibidem*.

2.1 The American political power

Starting from Marx, power has always been a subject of sociologic interest: Marx was the first to focus the attention on classes and the property of the production means, and then Weber considered the fight for power as a way to obtain other advantages both in economic and non-economic terms. Foucault (1972) analyzes the constructive force of the discourse through which we know the world, by comparing it against the negative and more limited force of the sanction. A characteristic of these approaches is that they do not consider power just in terms of State, but also outside the governmental institutions.

While Marx focused mainly on capitalist industrialization and class relations within core European states, the world-system perspective developed in Wallerstein 1974 sees the core/periphery hierarchy as a central structure for capitalism. What had occurred in the non-core was peripheral capitalism and it was necessary for the reproduction and deepening of capitalism. Marx had defined capitalism commodity production based on wage labour. The world-system theorists have argued that modern slavery and serfdom constituted forms of peripheral capitalism. The Marxist view of modern societies in constant tension between the owners of the means of production (capitalists) and labour (workers/proletariat) resulting in class conflict is expanded to the whole system, except that labour relations in the non-core involve a greater degree of coercion. World-system analysis constitutes a significant modification of traditional Marxist principles that includes the non-core as a systemic aspect of capitalism. The world-economy cycles through periods of growth and expansion (A-phase) and periods of stagnation (B-phase), which is primarily explained through the work of, Joseph Schumpeter, originally published in 1939¹², and, later, Ernest Mandel (1975).

¹² Schumpeter thus introduces sociology as an indispensable science in economic indispensable in economic analysis to the point of formalizing economic sociology. Schumpeter understands that the best object for analyzing the relationship between the social variables of socio economic development is innovation, an epoch-making evolution, almost in the Copernican sense, as a distortion of the coordinates of a system. Thanks to Schumpeter, experts and scholars have understood that it is not necessary to have the illusion of perspective and opt for capitalism or socialism, as they are no longer two mutually exclusive alternatives. Schumpeter thus becomes the one who, at the end of the end of the 1940s, at the beginning of the Cold War, he had already defined its main points, that is, that the Soviet Union and the United States would find themselves engaged in a very powerful tug-of-war military, technological, economic, political and even social, political and also social not because they were antithetical but because they were structurally and functionally too similar (cf. Petrucci, 2018).

In order for sociology to understand and analyze the world power and the new global forces, it cannot avoid observing the American political and military power. Some aspects of the US supremacy are specifically sociologic: they do not only involve the military hard power or the State sovereignty, but also the cultural and political legitimacy, the soft power, which are traditionally key sociological issues. According to Nye and Ikenberry¹³, the United States have a sufficient call force to get free from the hard power. The public image of America varies according to the State and the line of conduct adopted with regards to the American culture. The hostility toward the United States is not univocal, but varies depending on whether the population in question is integrated or not into capitalism or democracy, but also on the global political- military situation and the changes in the US politics on the different geographic areas. The American relationships with the other areas of the world are therefore variable, and although they are often unilateral and conflictual, we cannot say their power is finding expression exclusively under these forms. Ikenberry claims that the advantages the United States are benefiting from will allow them to keep prevailing, regardless of the hard power practice; the American power expansion took place after the years of the European colonialism, with modalities aimed more at the possibility of gaining access to the other side of the world, rather than of exerting a territorial control, by generating a considerable call for attention with regards to the rest of the world¹⁴.

The soft power concerns the exertion of an attraction and persuasion force, based on values or culture, or on the attraction which a Country's political and economic system represents, and it consists in convincing people to act in a specific way because it is right, or preferable, by achieving the targets using persuasion, and not military force or economic sanctions.

According to Sassen (2008), Nye interprets power with a sociologic approach, affirming that it has collective and social dimension, which are as important as a Country's institutions and values, culture and image. Power does not only involve force, but also culture and legitimacy. However, some nations and societies believe that capitalism, democracy and individual freedom are a challenge to social values and to ideals of freedom based more on social principles than on economic ones. Those countries deem the American values and achievements unacceptable. As a matter of facts, the United States are a flourishing Country, yet oppressed by inequalities, poverty and violence.

¹³ Cf. Martell, 2011.

¹⁴ Cf. Martell, 2011: 324.

The American power is divided into economic, military, political, and ideological power. The United States have had the economic supremacy in the production, trade and financial fields, since 1945. Some of the less rich countries are getting economically powerful and create blocks with mutual agreements, also in contrast to the American imperialism. The United States seem however to have no rivals as long as the military aspect is concerned. They share this position with other powers, but to a lower extent if compared to the economic sphere. Mann believes that the distinctive feature of the American military power does not lie in the nuclear weapons or the amounts of active soldiers in the army.

The US global deployment and first of all the big technological process in armaments information, are the key factors at the basis of the American military power. Therefore, the United States can be defined as more powerful than dominant in the economic field, but such an affirmation does not fit also for the military field, where they prevail over the other forces on a global level. As far as the political power is concerned, it would be a mistake to underestimate the political power of the United States: they can act their way inside international organizations such as the UN Security Council, or even bypass them, and act unilaterally. However, the American political power also appears limited in certain cases, as for example they struggle to bring peace and to impose a political order to the other States; therefore, the United States are politically powerful but their power do not always enable them to reach their targets. The United States pursue their scope also using ideological methods, even if the growing global diffusion of the American media and culture does not always work in their favor. The American ideological call is self-harmful in a way, for example when it calls for the values of democracy, freedom and defense of human rights, because the media contribute to spread these ideas as if they were American, but at the same time they show they are left disregarded. In many countries, there is very little documentation available about the issues the United States stigmatize, and the global communication means often point this out. In sum, the United States are facing a strong and growing economic competition from some areas of the Far East, and China is actually the second economic power after the United States; with regards to the military field, the United States prevail over any other nation, but from a political point of view they confront some difficulties in achieving their targets on a global level; lastly, despite having access to media divulgation, they have not reached a wide legitimacy as they could. The civil society expresses opposed feelings about their imperial role, and it is hard to pursue certain targets without any soft power.