

Remus Gabriel Anghel and István Horváth (coord), *Sociology of Migration: Theories and Romanian Case-Studies* [Sociologia migrației: teorii și studii de caz românești], Iași: Polirom, 2009, 310 pages, ISBN 978-973-46-1304-5

Review by Marius I. TĂȚAR

Transnational migration as a complex global phenomenon has important influences on both host countries and countries of origin. Worldwide, there are about 191 million migrants and displaced persons and some 30-40 million unauthorized migrants, according to OECD figures published in 2009¹. Moreover, data on international migration to OECD countries emphasize an important trend: the number of migrants has steadily grown between 1990 and 2000, a net average of 2.5 million migrants moved from the less developed to the developed regions of the world every year². In addition, more countries are involved in the global mobility process and this trend increased along with the liberalization and democratization processes that occurred in the last 20 years in Europe and other parts of the world. The importance of these developments is also reflected in the

¹ See the OECD study: *The Future of International Migration to OECD Countries*, OECD, 2009, 281 p., available at:

http://www.oecd.org/document/2/0,3343,en_2649_33707_43483586_1_1_1_1,00.html

² Contrary to these figures, Thomas Faist argues, in his contribution to the book reviewed here, that although the absolute number of migrants increased, the percentage of migrants compared with the total population of the World remained more or less the same, in the last 50 years. The conclusion drawn by Faist is that of a relative immobility on a global scale which contradicts the view of a growing mobility worldwide. However, the data provided by Faist indicates a steadily increase of the percentage of migrants in the population of developed countries: from 3.4 percent in 1960 to 9.5 percent in 2005. Basically this means that in developed countries there are three times more migrants relative to the total population of these countries, than were 50 years ago. The implications of these figures are that transnational mobility is unevenly distributed among regions, with developed regions (especially North America and European Union) facing increased numbers of migrants coming from several less developed regions. This inter-regional trend might be obscured, if we look only at the global level.

growing number of studies and analyses concerned with migration from Central and Eastern Europe to other regions of the world and especially to countries of the European Union.

The book *Sociology of Migration: Theories and Romanian Case-Studies* coordinated by Remus Gabriel Anghel and István Horváth is a recent illustration of researchers' increasing interest in understanding European migrations. In their *Introduction* to the book, the coordinators explicitly emphasize the migration of Romanians as one of the main migration processes from the eastern to the western part of the continent. In order to provide and synchronize a variety of perspectives and topics, the editors have selected various contributions of academics, researchers and PhD students both from Romania and abroad. Basically, the book is a collection of studies grouped into four sections (Theories of Migration, Ethnic Migration in Romania, Models of Romanian Migration and Global Dynamics, Effects of Migration) which aim to introduce the reader in the complexity of migration phenomena, by providing a dialog between theories and case studies. The book starts with a review of the main theories of migration, followed by an overview of the migrations from Romania in the last fifty years. In the second section it explores the first migrations from Romania after 1989, which were mainly ethnically based. The book continues then with an analysis of the massive migration of the Romanian workers to Italy and Spain especially in the last decade. The last section of the book evaluates the effects of migration and remittances on developing tourism in certain areas of Romania and the influences of migration on economic development, social change and social learning of democratic attitudes, values and norms. This last section comprising two articles is explicitly named *Effects of Migration*, although an evaluation of the effects for different categories of actors is present in each of the case studies presented also in the other parts of the book.

Probably the main contribution this volume brings to a better understanding of the complex phenomena of contemporary migrations rests especially in pointing out the puzzle like picture of Romanian migration, contextualized within the broader framework of Europeanization, globalization, trans-nationalism and social changes' theories. The complexity of this picture and the variety of analytical approaches is enriched by the professional and academic background of the contributors (sociologists, anthropologists, political scientists, geographers, researchers in international institutes and organizations dealing with migration issues) which contributes to the interdisciplinary character of this book.



Even if different authors speak on different voices and from different theoretical and methodological perspectives, the volume still keeps a certain degree of coherence and logic. Moreover, it provides a series of valuable case studies, useful for disentangling the meaning of various types of Romanian migrations in different periods.

Even if this book brings a valuable contribution to the understanding of different patterns of migrations from Romania, I believe it has two main shortcomings. The first one regards the lack of some basic migration data. For instance, one interested in Romanian migration would legitimately expect in a book on this topic to find some answers to such questions as those raised actually by Sorin Antohi in his *Afterword* to this book: how many Romanians migrated abroad in the last two decades? How many have returned to Romania? In this respect, the editors only assert, in their *Introduction*, the scale of migration in the Romanian society by pointing out that “*millions of Romanian citizens had relatives with shorter or longer migration projects*” [italics mine] (p.9). The second shortcoming refers to the relatively retrospective approach, which the structure of this book seems to ensue. Even if the editors acknowledge in the *Preface* the potential reversal of migration trends in Romania, from emigration to immigration, there is no article in the book explicitly dealing with the potential of Romania to become a host society for external migrants. How prepared (institutionally, socio-economically, culturally and politically) is Romania to revert from sending to host country and to accept/integrate the new potential external migrants? These questions approach migration as a dynamic process and point to a prospective analysis of the new migratory challenges Romania faces. I believe that even tentative answers to such questions could have increased our understanding of the unfinished migration story told in this book.