

## Multiplication of homelands. Croatian diaspora: chronology, destinations, identity.

### Résumé

This book is intended foremostly for students of ethnology and cultural anthropology, but also for students of other related and similar studies, moreover for scientists, experts and all those whose affinities and interests are directed towards subjects that deal with the ethno-cultural identity of diaspora communities, and, therefore, migration studies and the related identity studies.

Apart from giving a sum-up of the knowledge the Croatian scientific production gathered on this subject so far and a discussion on the causes and consequences of migrations, a new dimension is given on the positioning of the migrants in their new surroundings, adaptation and other processes, and all that which came to the twenty-first century as a result of many a century of identification strategies and practices of those people and their life experiences. There are several topical units that come to focus while exploring those subjects. Thus, for example, we look into dimensions of migration movements in the context of geographical spaces and human potentials caught in migrations, structural characteristics of migrations, positioning of the migrants in their new surroundings, consequences in the domicile and migrational space, immigration politics of the countries accepting the migrants etc. Moreover, there are the reflections on the wholesome context of migrations, such as their causes and consequences. We start, that is, from the fact that migrations have a history that has been lasting as long as the human kind itself, and when it changed, the contexts of migrations changed as well, and hence the research discourses as well. Having in mind exactly that changeability, some earlier assertions concerning certain phases or types of migrations were revised. This refers especially to the migrations in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when, after the Second World War, devastated economies of many a country sought vast workforce. Afterwards, in 1960s and onwards, decolonization processes in the countries of the Third World also brought a large wave of migrations. Firstly, a large number of former “masters” was returning to their home countries. That is to say that the decolonisation process initiated an anticolonial revolution in many ex colonies, so a large number of people withdrew with their capital (in cases when that was possible). Their places were filled in by local workers (again, in cases when that was possible). However, there was a disturbance in the employment market in former colonies as well, so a certain number of people from them looked for (and got) work in the former metropolises. Even though half a century has passed since the decolonisation, this trend is present even today. An of course, there was a new a migration wave at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and the very recent one in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Same as it was with the discovery of the New World at the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, these two waves were caused by an entire series of events, like an avalanche. One of them are the social-political changes in the Europe at the end of the 1980s. That is, foremostly, the fall of socialism, that led the former socialist countries into a transition period. One of the consequences of that was the transfer of workforce, whose consequence, in return, were inner and outer migrations. Lastly, several ex socialist countries disintegrated (The Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia), with an escalation of war conflicts in some of them (for

example, on the territories of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, or in some of the former Soviet socialist countries) that initiated dramatical forced mass migrations. Disintegration of ones and foundation of others, new independent countries, as well as changes in the state/interstate boundaries, led to the formation of new minorities. Furthermore, European integration processes, from the union of the two German countries up to the union of the European countries into the European Union, caused the massification of the free circulation of citizens within the boundaries of the EU countries. Also, the deindustrialization of the Western European countries and the growth of new industrial economies created new ways for the migration routes. The economic recession in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century should be added to that, when the complete market was disturbed in all the parts of the world, the labour market included. The latest example of transcontinental migration waves, however, originates from the political and economical destabilization of a large part of the African and Arabic world (Libya, Egypt, Syria and other Middle East countries). But above all, we have here, for more than two decades, the presence of the “assembling” of the global market according to the demands of the neoliberal capitalism, i.e. the results of the political project of the neoliberal globalization, that turned the international migrations into a genuine dynamical machine transforming the world order in a political and economical sense. Thus, migrations grow more complex, more ambivalent, more accelerated, more differentiated, even more globalized. With the number of women taking part in those migrations, we can also discuss the feminization of migrations. Finally, there is the beginning of the politicalization of migration. They are becoming a part of a global transnational revolution that is reshaping societies and politics. As early as the 1970s it became more apparent that entire families migrate; “guest workers” evolved from temporary “guests” into migrants with the aspiration to settle permanently in the given migration area and become citizens of the country involved. From the perspective of the countries and societies they moved to, they were seen not only as a work potential strengthening factor, but also a possible factor of instability, fear, anguish, and even terrorism. They are viewed from the dichotomic aspect of citizens and others, legal and illegal immigrants. Bottom line, they were starting to be viewed as a factor of potential destabilization of national security and sovereignty. Those processes affected bilateral and multilateral interstate and regional relations, which have the tendency of forming collaboration between governments in order to improve the control over migrations and ensure the protection mechanisms of the overall national security and sovereignty. In this sense the status and the rights of the migrants are viewed, which are now surpassing the usual solutions, and pluralistic models of integration, which seemed completely appropriate in theory but proved not to be so in practice, are now being abandoned, radicalized or transformed. All this, however, does have vast repercussions in the context of identity. Questions are raised and answers are sought: do we keep the former one, the source identity, the domicile one (and with what mechanisms?), do we adapt it to the new conditions, do we change, develop, make progress?

This is the reason for this book to deal with how and in which way do the theoretical approaches to the research of all of these phenomena change, how the rhetoric on the destabilization of traditional relations reshapes itself, how new social networks are created, and finally, how the integration is carried out. It was pointed out, that is to say, that citizens of many European countries and their prominent political leaders are becoming increasingly suspicious towards the benefits expected to the thus far proclaimed (and desirable) multiculturalism and

that they are demanding significant changes to integration politics. In short, with the appearance of those new forms of migration and new views on migration regarding the identity and identification processes, the term of integration has been substituted with a new term: interaction. Namely, borders, in their essential meaning, are becoming more flexible than ever. The number of countries participating in the global migration system is ever growing, and the same goes for the differences in migrants' groups. Answers to those and similar questions are sought in this book, through various theoretical approaches to migration processes (for example, *neo-classical economic approach*, *dual labour market theory*, *theories on the new labour market economies*, that some theoretic call the theory of *the new migration economy*, *historical-structuralist approach*, *theory of migration systems and transnational theory*, *theory of network-mediated migration* et al.) indicating that the common terms such as *acculturation*, *asimilation*, *integration*, *migrant*, are being sidetracked in favour of: *incorporation*, *interaction*, *transmigrant*.

Therefore, the research questions of why people move, where they go and what happens after they settle down in a new destination, search for the answers on every side, trying to comprehend the perspective of an individual, family and household groups, as well as states on a micro-, mezzo- and macro- level. It was pointed out that in dealing with those subjects the research interests of many sciences and scientific disciplines are getting crossed-over (history, geography, demography, economy, sociology, ethnology, linguistics, politology, statistics...), so they truly have to be both multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary.

We reached the conclusion, therefore, that migrations, today more than ever, are part of the globalization processes and that they influence the creation and distribution of capital, merchandise, ideas, information etc. They are in the focus of international relations, they are the main factor of economical and political changes and one of the most important questions for the internal politics of the immigration-emigration countries. Since the consequences of migrations can be felt on both collective and individual levels, it is understandable per se that there are repercussions on the identity and identity processes. Namely, new, *migrational identities* are being formed. That is why a large part of this book is dedicated to the analysis of theoretical approaches to the identity research. In order to be as meticulous as possible, we start with earlier theoretical approaches that certainly gave an invaluable contribution to the subject, giving it a significant context, with many a postulate being still very up-to-date. Newer and new approaches are given in a chronological order, especially those that put those already mentioned terms in their research focus. The fact is, actually, that with time identities and traditional notions on belonging and adherence, i.e. identity, change. With the help of those we try to find an answer to a series of questions. For example, where (if anywhere) should we look for a migrants' identity? Does, maybe, being a migrant, in the identity context, means to be latently torn in an attempt to maintain the previous, original, autochthonic, domicile identity, to adapt it, change it, remember it, develop it in a new surroundings, in the sense of the inseparableness of both (all?) spaces and people in the surroundings that each of these men found themselves)? Are those scientists that speak of the fragmentary, hybrid and schizophrenic aspects of identity in the right, or are we simply dealing with masters of adaptation in cases of multiple homelands and native countries?

On the subject of identity, that became a central notion in social and humanistic sciences, it is said that it is: primordial, essential, constructed, debatable, complex, manifold, polisemi-

cal, broken, contradictory, flexible... and in any case an instable product of a series of social influences. The summary of all the theoretical approaches is, as the discussion in this book points out, as follows: identity is a form of group organization or a principle of society classification whose meaning can change in time and according to the situation; it is a fluid and unspecific aspect of society life that can be manipulated, with a different meaning in different situations, and, most often, it depends on the very people involved what it will be like. The approach insisting on borders implies that identity is an entanglement of changeable interactions sooner than an important component of social organizations. With its' postulates defining it as a community term, but also a delimitation category, those borders certainly do not vanish or exist per se, they are formed by people, regardless of the formal and informal cultural and ethnical differences and similarities. And in the interactive field of unity, delineation and personal differences, there are two main options: choice or imposture/competing.

Since identification processes today are most profoundly influenced by neoliberal globalization that creates the model of: "corporation multiculturalism that bring into question the pluralism of cultures due to the insatiableness for the profit of the *homo oeconomicus*, with a dangerous tendency of cancelling the cultural pluralism or bringing the latter in question...", changes in those processes are ever faster, results unpredictable, and challenges for the researchers irresistible. Namely, if by stressing the past experiences we wish to penetrate the place, the role and most importantly the transformation of the ethnical sentiment in a global reality, and thus directly consider the present situatedness of different identities or the eventual future, the intertwining of ethnical and cultural homogenization and divergence – the possibility of creating different research models is being created. Some point out that "cultures without memories" are being created, and some that modern identities are no pseudo-identities, but rather an authentical reflection of the reality or *an authentically new*.

Identity – and the ethnical sentiment in its wake – live in an objective cultural contents in which tradition has a special status, since it is (still) mostly from tradition that ethnical and cultural markers are being selected – media for ascription and identification. Not the original, but "original", i.e. modified and transposed into every forthcoming new age, since the "originality" is what we can perceive as the identity drama: *to be the same, but always in a different way*. Identity lives in globality and localism at the same time. In historicity as well, since, with a selective *re/construction* of the past, the revelation of references from the past and referring to them, every generation reflects itself in the modern times.

In the objectivity of these parameters there is also a nested subjectivity. Therefore, reflections on identity (in the way they are presented in this book) in a global reality, that often looks like a virtual world, the researcher is motivated to come to a fairy-tale conclusion: the genesis, the borders, the symbols and the common future, and, in the end, *the striking national customs* (as a knight from Senj Pavao Ritter Vitezovic put it more than three hundred years ago) testify that the stability of identification processes, as well as their final result – identity, in spite of everything, can be unquestionable for a long while.

When it comes to global migration waves, having in mind their relation with specific political and economic circumstances, the fate of Croatia changed during the course of the last few centuries. A separate chapter deals with emigration chronology, destinations choices and

the contemporary situation. With the expansion of Ottoman Turks in the 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century, the Croatian ethnical area was emigrational, on one hand, but the depopulated areas were soon inhabited by newcomers. Since the 18<sup>th</sup> century, it became an immigrational country again, which was mostly the consequence of the movement of the inhabitants within the borders of that time of the Habsburg, i.e. Austro-Hungarian monarchy. From the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the situation changed again. At that time, namely, an ever larger number of people chose to emigrate, and that trend reached its' peak at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Since the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century again, thanks to some specific circumstances in Croatia, but also on a larger scale, Croatia was both an emigrational and an immigrational country, as well as a transition country. Namely, as a consequence of the war after Yugoslavia fell apart, Croatia was caught in a wave of forced migrations (e/immigrations). Furthermore, there is a new phenomenon (to put it mildly) of irregular immigration, that may lead to the creation of "new" minorities in Croatia: for example, Chinese, Rumanian, Ukrainian, etc.

The creation of a large diaspora of the Croats began in the first half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The main cause, i.e. the triggering factor for those migrations and going away, was the invasion of Ottoman Turks. Since then, and all the way to the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, large groups of Croats left their domicile areas, moving in waves in several directions: to the Apennine peninsula, the Southern, North-Western, middle and Middle-Eastern Europe.

At the same time that the migration waves from the Croatian state and ethnical area moved towards the said destination due to the aforementioned expansion of the Turks, Coming from the South-East in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the rest of the Europe was taken with the discovery of the New World. Due to its' development potentials, America was deemed a "promised land" by all the immigrants, Croats included. Therefore, in parallel with the worsening of the economic situation in Croatia, the Croats were moving to both of the American continents, as well as Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, since the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards, in mass. After the First World War, when Croatia became part of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, the later Kingdom of Yugoslavia, the economic and socio-political situation in Croatia did not improve significantly, so new waves of transcontinental migrations began, as well as migrations to Western European countries, mostly to France, Belgium, Germany etc., countries that needed workforce due to the industrialization growth. Just after the Second World War, there were new mass emigrations from Croatia. Firstly, those who were leaving then were the political (anticommunist) emigrants, that went partly to the overseas countries, and partly to the Western European states. Since 1960s, they were joined by the economic migrants. The most numerous among them were the so-called guest workers, i.e. those who left for the Western European countries in the sixties. That is to say, the European capitalist economy was still seeking workforce, and socialist Yugoslavia failed to achieve "the society of full employment". Since they were situated in largest numbers in German speaking countries, the name of "guest workers" was given to them after the German word *Gastarbeiter*. For many, however, what was planned to be a temporary (i.e. guest) migration, due to a series of various circumstances, with or without an agenda, with the grant of the country they moved to, became/remained a permanent migration (this refers mostly to the first generation of migrants). In the same period, a significant number of migrants went towards Western European and overseas countries again, such as Australia, New Zealand, Canada, United States, and in 1980s

an ever growing number of economic migrants joined them. This migration is known in the literature, due to a symptomatically large number of highly educated people leaving the under-developed and developing countries, as the “brain drain”.

The latest migration phase started in the beginning of the 1990s. Those were the forced migrations from Croatian ethnical and state area caused by the war in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina after the disintegration of Yugoslavia. Those migrations were marked by the refugee waves leaving war afflicted areas. The largest number of them moved to the Western European countries and overseas states (United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand).

With the Yugoslavia falling apart, Croats remaining in former Yugoslav republics and the former province of Kosovo became diaspora. These are the Croats in the today independent countries of Serbia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Slovenia and Kosovo.

In the last decade or so, there is a specific practice of occasional and temporary economic migrations – departures to do seasonal work (legal or illegal). In this specific migration population there is a notable number of women, since there are many temporary and seasonal works suitable for women, such as taking care of elderly people, picking fruit, etc.

Compared to the previous times, there is a rapid change in structural characteristics of migrations and migrants in the recent times. First of all, migrations are now a completely global phenomenon, more global than ever. They do not follow the once usual pattern “South–North” or “periphery–centre” (though there were cases in earlier stages when the opposite happened, for example, the aforementioned migrations that followed conquests, colonisations, changes in world economy orders at different times etc.), they are actually going in all possible directions. The number of economic migrants is the largest, and the most important causes are globalization – when it comes to Europe, also the European integrational processes – global recession, as well as unstable political situation in certain parts of the world. The number of migrants going to other countries in order to gain education and/or specialization has increased notably. As for the migrants’ age structure, forced migrations excluded, what remains more or less the same is the fact that among them there are still mostly young and younger people. For example, according to the data of the Croatian Bureau of Statistics, about fifty thousand young people left Croatia in the last five years. These are highly educated people leaving for the Western European countries, and also the United States, Canada, Australia. Some thirty thousands, according to the same source, moved to the same destinations in the last three years. In a shockingly short time (in just several months) since the opening of the internet portal *Young ones, leave Croatia*, the portal gained the support of some forty five thousand people... Unlike the previous phases, there is now a vast portion of women in the migration population, and in some cases, due to the specific quality of the economy sector in which they seek work, they even outnumber the men. There is still a tendency for individuals to be moving out, but the number of entire families moving out also became larger. There is a drastic enlargement in the number of transnational migrants. The difference is in the level of education and professional status. It’s not the uneducated, i.e. unqualified/semiqualified people that are leaving, but the representatives of all educational and professional groups. However, due to an ever-growing rate of unemployment, the highly educated migrants, since 1960s up to today, more often and more commonly take on jobs for which their education and profession do not play any

significant role. It is not uncommon, for example, for Croatian barristers to wait in restaurants along the European highways, for professors to work as construction workers or drive taxis, for teachers to work as nannies (ever more often in very far-away destinations, such as China, for example), for doctors to “moonlight” at private consulting rooms of their European colleagues, for younger pensioner to pick strawberries or lavender during the season at German or other fields. Any job is, actually, for taking. Many a work is done “under wraps”. The greatest difference, however, is at the operational level. Thanks to the general knowledge, the knowing of foreign languages, touristic experiences etc., the decision to leave is taken without any greater or long-lasting consideration. Every opportunity is being seized as soon as possible. That is related to the subjective, i.e. emotional level, where we notice the absence, or at least the diminishing, of the trauma, anguish, fear, tears and nostalgia. Thanks to the communication technology, most prominently the internet, today people can get all the information to the smallest details, i.e. they are not moving to an unknown territory. The once sadness for being separated from one’s family is also gone. Thanks to the aforementioned technology, people have the opportunity to communicate with their family and friends on everyday basis, and relatively cheaply, mostly via Skype and various social networks. However, it is that very state-of-art communication technology that’s putting a stop to potential migration, which seems like something of a paradox. Namely, people that, in a certain context, might have been forced to become economical immigrants, are given the opportunity to work “from home” via modern technologies: a potential migrant can communicate with his subordinates and his superiors all over the world from his domicile village or town.

After an overview and an analysis of chosen, older and more recent theoretical approaches to the identity and identification processes research, and using them to comprehend Croatian diaspora communities, certainly, in the context of the given theories on migration mobility, we can notice the compatibility of theory and empirical data. We thus obtained a confirmation that a significant part of the theoretical postulates given by apostrophised theorist are very much true and actual in identification strategies and practices. Naturally, they all depend on a series of circumstances, for example, on the time spent in the migration area, on the number of people in a migration group, on space dispersion, on the economical status, on the politics of the countries involved, etc. However, premordialists are in the right when, among different sorts and dimensions of identity, they stress the high positioning of particularly ethnical, and they claim that one’s own group (narrow and wider family circle, and family-friendly-homeland-regional “chains”) is the sanctuary that gives to individuals and collectives a social, psychological, and even economic stability. That is confirmed by the almost equal importance of the once *boarding-houses*, fire brigade, charity, sports and cultural organizations, as well as the modern ethnical institutions and contemporary media, for example internet portals were the community is “practiced”. The interactionists are also in the right, pointing out that the true locus where identity is formed is the border, and in that context they move the focus of such a view, i.e. they are shifting it from culture (exclusively or prevalingly) to the interaction between individuals and groups, claiming that identification processes are in fact a form of borderline transactions. Also, those theorists such as situationists or, for example, instrumentalists, who point out the importance of the context and the hierarchy in power relations, or even ethnosymbolists, who give special attention to the feeling of continuity that is generated by the intertwining and the “interplay” of ethnonyms, myths, history memories, elements of

joint culture, link to the homeland and solidarity. However, a special point is made by the theorists of various neo-directions who are proving just how and in which way do identities depend on individual freedoms, but such freedoms that are (still) partially limited by, for example, collectivism. The same cannot be said, however, for those who, on the other hand, claim that the origins are no longer important (“who we are and where we come from”). To be specific, this analysis shows that *this* question is still very relevant and that by answering *these* questions we gain an incredibly significant capital. We can manipulate it as a medium that helps us present ourselves and we “do what we do” with it in a very conscious way. It was shown, that is, that thorough identification strategies and practices such as cooperation, mutual solidarity, joint long-term planning etc., destabilize theories on de-ethnicalization and, at the same time, create innovative progress through a *desire* for unity within one’s own group, and then, consequently, with other groups they interact with. Lastly, the least right are those who proclaimed the traditional culture, i.e. folklore, to be a passatism, i.e. an inappropriate medium for contemporary identification practices. Admittedly, not in all, but in most of the Croatian diaspora communities all over the world, it is obvious that the interest in folklore does not diminish. On the contrary. However, it is a folklore that is very much transformed, retraditionalized, and most importantly: internationalized.

We can say, therefore: whether it is via tamburitza, or football, church, nostalgia, *ethnolobby*, the creation of “new unity”, or the constant maintenance with the enrichment of contents of the “old” customs (as witnessed by the two appendices to this book), and, as a rule, in every case via ethnical associations with their activities, we can see that (even) among the members of Croatian diaspora communities identification strategies and practices are focused on one’s “own” community just as much as they are focused on *transnational linking*. On the other hand, “country multiculturalisms” in the Western European countries have failed. Politicians are saying openly that “the immigrants are a necessary evil for Europe: unadjusted to the society, necessary for the economy”, so at this time it is somewhat uncertain how that linking will look like and what will be happening on social and other plans: integration or: ???

However, since people will keep on migrating, the ethnical picture of the world, as well as identities, will keep changing. Once: *conquista* and colonization. Today: their consequences and globalization. The British Office for National Statistics, for example, published data on the ethnical structure of the United Kingdom. According to those data, for December 2012, British Caucasians are no longer the majority in London. The majority is formed by the people of darker skin, most prominently by Indians and Pakistanis. Similar trends are notable in other larger European cities as well, for example, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Brussels, Paris, etc. In Rome, every third newborn is a child of immigrants, and according to the assessments of the *United States Census* Bureau, in some thirty years, Caucasians will be a minority in the United States of America.

Whatever they may be, identification processes, their continuity, re/creating, de/re/construction, as well as their diversity, are unquestionable. But the Earth is, after all, still a beautiful place to live, which enables the multiplication of homelands and fatherlands.