

## MIGRATION AND MOBILITY IN EUROPE

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Address at the 8. *Conference of South-East Europe Research Institution* entitled *Diasporas and Identity*, on 19 December 2012

*(Abstract)* Diasporas resulting from migration cause issues in internal and foreign affairs as well. These problems have to be faced by the community and the individuals. What happens if we disregard factors having an influence on identity? What opportunities arise by acknowledging technical developments? How long is a Hungarian and can a nation be wasted? Thinking about it determines Hungary's future, and we should consider the strategies of other nations too.

Key words: diaspora, immigration, homogenisation, multiculturalism, identity, communication

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*Good evening everyone and thank you for the opportunity!* First, I would like to point out that though in Hungarian we make a difference between the Greek word 'diaspora' and its Hungarian equivalent, in my opinion, they are still the same words and I use them keeping that in mind. I also want to stress that I'm just starting to realise I have been living in a diaspora although I didn't know about it. I thought I was just living, was it a diaspora? Let's just say that I was the happy endurer of the 54 years I spent in the United Kingdom and I can say I still feel at home and in a diaspora. In fact I want to point out that it is a very difficult concept to define from a social scientific point of view. Diaspora – it is hard to define in one word. I think we should approach the issue by saying that identity theory, sociology, demography and migration play important parts in how we try to apprehend the concept and the process.

The era of mobility brought along the acceleration of life, to begin with. Some kind of overpopulation in parts of Europe began in 18. century and these people were poured into America, Australia, New-Zealand and South-China as if they had been empty areas. There were natives, but they were killed or something else happened to them.

It is very interesting that a lot of German people immigrated in the second half of the 18. century and those who happened to go to a communist community can apply for German citizenship. Those who didn't, cannot. For example, there were two brothers, one of them went to Brazil, the other to the valley of Boga; one of them could apply for German citizenship, the other wasn't allowed to. What's the difference? A variety of issues: the fact where someone accidentally ended up raises legal and foreign policy issues in this case. So I think that it's worth approaching the topic from the viewpoint of migration, but of course I understand that different reasons, economic, political or religious ones can also motivate people to go elsewhere. I'd just like to stress that modernity accelerates and concerns more and more people. So let's look at the fact that Hungary's agricultural population was halved between 1950 and 1970. Hungary suffered huge internal migration.

Diaspora? It is the matter of consideration and definition, but migration is undeniable. Europe as a whole has actually gone through such a process in the past two centuries, the rural folk has become city folk and Europe managed to make city dwellers out of peasants. America also had to face that, but they cannot be called peasants, save southern states where there has always been a traditional peasantry. In American English calling someone a 'peasant' is insulting, instead 'farmer' has to be used.

It has also been implied that the rearrangement of borders may cause changes, I think it is relevant, too. We consider this a serious Hungarian issue, but I think other countries are involved as well. What happens to people who has gone somewhere else, left the crowd for some reason? I believe we can say that they live in a diaspora. What the given person would like to achieve is to be thought over. For instance, there are those who left not to be Hungarians any more, mainly in the UK. Diaspora? Or they are assimilating people who didn't want the Hungarian identity, so they left where they can feel French, German or American. Diaspora?

We know it well that the first generation assimilates, the second assimilates radically, and the third says: *my grandmother told me about a small country, who knows what it's called, Hungary?* There's an argument about what different generations think about their ancestors' step. And another key factor is that a community's solidarity and sense of belonging together is an important part of the social mutual, collective perception.

Every society, every community, collectivity, rationality is, as I believe, based on survival. Can a community say 'we have had enough of ourselves' and they give it up? Very rarely. Moreover, even those communities that knew their last days were coming held on. The case of the Germans in Prague, who knew that their days were over in 1917, is an interesting example. Some day they will be over. Some says that people were talking about the end of the world in the whole Prague German-speaking empire. Or the Serbs in Kosovo live in the same mood, can they sustain themselves? They lost in a demographic sense a long time ago.

Social (collective) reproduction is an integral part of the whole concept. I'd like to add that there's another important change, technology. I think communication with immigrants is much easier thanks to the Internet than in the days when there were only letters. You may still remember to post a letter. I also remember the typewriter. And this has another development too: those who live in migration often live in a dual communication area. They keep Hungarian, Polish, Latvian national communication, but also handle communication in the given country they live. In my opinion, it is hard to live in two systems. It is much more difficult than dual citizenship.

I have the impression that the majority of those Hungarians I meet in Germany, Belgium, the UK would like to return home. But they should follow what is happening in Hungary to decide if it's worth coming back at all. That is why I say that the dual communication area has a serious role. Host states don't really like that fact. Because they would like to homogenise, literally, those who live there. As a matter of fact, we do too.

A number of questions arises from a Hungarian point of view. What should be the relationship between Hungary and individuals living here for shorter or longer periods? We have already mentioned that. What kind of connection systems can we build? I have two suggestions: I have tried to sell the first one on many occasions and this is *hungarophony*. Why can't we create a Hungarian-speaking community? It includes diasporas, immigrants and Hungarians in the Carpathian-Basin, of course, who live in ex-communist countries and not necessarily Hungarians, but if they want to take part in such a process. For instance, I once met a Czech girl who spoke Hungarian fluently and had no Hungarian ancestors. Could she be given the Hungarian citizenship? It's also a good question.

It's interesting to check what kind of strategy other Central-European countries have developed. The Polish have a very serious strategy. From that point of view, the situation in Latvia is much worse than ours. The population of Latvia was 2.5 million in 1991. At least half a million immigrated. Twenty percent of the population. What happens to those who return home? Having different thoughts on what life is.

The Hungarian host system is unfriendly and exclusive. It's obvious that it often happens, since I have been to a lot of different countries. Those who were born here, those who lived abroad but came back and turned out to have been born in Hungary, but they are not real Hungarians. Serious issues may come up here, what if they come back en masse? We will have serious problems if we don't face the fact that despite we say all Hungarians are equal, this is not true even for a moment.

Many people in Transylvania say that they don't like Hungary, the Hungarians called them hairy-heeled which they don't like. They'd rather go to Germany where they are Hungarians and no difference is made. We also have a lot to do regarding our attitude toward the western diaspora and those living across the border. As far as I know, there are half a million people living in foreign countries for who knows how long. It is the direct result of the EU accession. Last year employment was possible in Germany, and from the beginning in the UK and Austria. I'm no longer surprised when I hear people talking in Hungarian on Oxford Street. 30 years ago it was unusual. When I was in Sarajevo 10 years ago I met a boy who said he was Hungarian. Very interesting – I said – he didn't speak a word in Hungarian. I didn't want to embarrass him so I didn't ask him who Petőfi was. This story is very interesting, his parents are Vojvodinian Hungarians who ended up in Sarajevo somehow, some day. His mother tongue is probably Serbo-Croatian spoken by no-one any more, so in Sarajevo he isn't Serbian, or Croatian, or Bosnian, but he is Hungarian, that is life strategy there. It's a kind of tactic, he might apply for Hungarian citizenship. What does his Hungarian identity mean?

In addition, there's the American issue, the hyphenated entity. If someone is not native English or Dutch, they have to take a hyphenated entity, namely Italian-American, Hispanic-American. When I first went to America in the 70's I met people who might have even kept a version of their Hungarian surname. It turned out that they didn't know anything about Hungary, their grandparents may have known something, but they didn't. Because it's necessary to choose some identity if you are not English or Dutch. The actress Meryl Streep is of Holland, for example. An extra identity is needed next to the American identity, because there is such thing even if they deny it.

A few more words on Great-Britain where I lived. When I went there after the war, everyone on the island was English, since North-Ireland was not included. The Scottish and the Welsh were upset about it. I remember discussions, once I met a lady somewhere abroad: *Are you English? No. What are you? I'm Hungarian. You sound English.* Well, yes. They don't understand it up till now. My English colleagues in the Parliament still don't know what to do with it. There has been a change since then and everyone is British, Brit, so that immigrants from developing countries can be integrated. They are Brit, not English or Scottish. About 10-15 years ago 60-70 thousand Pakistani Pashtun were living in Scotland and a young lady came with a television crew asking passer-bys with eloquent Glasgow accent if they accepted her as a Scotsman. (I grew up in Scotland, I understand the accent, but I guarantee if you were to be dropped in Glasgow by a parachute, You wouldn't). And the Scots said 'no'. So it's not the accent, but it's the racist attitude. They would have accepted her as a Brit for sure. It's very interesting. We may hear about brawls in pubs when Polish people sit in one corner drinking beer and local go there to start a fight. The Scottish have a perfect word for that, *stooshe*, I don't know if You are familiar with it. The Brits are unable to accept that foreigners come and they insist on speaking other languages.

A few words about borders. I think it's a very serious problem that we don't face what we did before 1914 when we talk about assimilation. How did we manage to assimilate many hundreds of thousands of people? They ended up in towns. Urban models, lifestyle models were Hungarian models. The problem is that in the case of Cluj-Napoca there is no urban model, but if someone from a village goes to Cluj-Napoca or Oradea, they will inevitably begin to assimilate to the urban lifestyle. In my opinion, the Hungarian elite living there has huge responsibility for not creating these models since 1989. I talked about it in Cluj-Napoca, they didn't like it, but I believe I'm right. We have seen it elsewhere. There's a Russian majority in Latvia's 7 biggest cities. If Latvians go to one of the big cities from villages, they go to foreign cities, so they rather go to the UK, because they speak English but don't speak Russian. I think the same applies to Felvidék (Historic Upper Hungary), except those places where there is critical mass.

There are diasporas in Hungary too. Not Hungarian diasporas, we have already mentioned neighbouring countries' benefit laws. What is your opinion about a Slovakian diaspora living in Hungary and having a connection with the Slovakian state? Do we accept that? I think it's obvious we don't. The South Slav diaspora is interesting. It's interesting it sustains itself. I think their school system also works pretty well. In the communist era it didn't work that well. There is something very interesting for me, I think I can call it a diaspora, the Islamic religious community. There are about 30 thousand of them, very few, but it's interesting that they have successfully integrated into the Hungarian majority. They did not in Germany, France or the UK. Is there a Hungarian secret? Well, I think mainly because they still live in a diaspora, but they keep their distance, I suppose religious, but they learn Hungarian and norms of the majority. I think it changes and depends on how many Iranian or Arab families live in a village, if one it integrates easily. If the critical mass is not formed, it remains a diaspora at best.

One last paragraph about multiculturalism. It was referred to in a question. Multiculturalism does not include the native European population, except the Romanians and to some extent the Jews, but not really. There are some anomalies too: in the UK the Irish receive multiculturalism only partially. The Turkish and the Greek in Cyprus partake in it, but the Polish or the Italians do not. At least half a million Polish people left after the war mainly with the army. The Italians started to immigrate earlier, but have never took part in the same multiculturalism. Albania is a contradiction. It inconsistently says that multiculturalism has nothing to do with what we think about. It's something intentional that concerns the developing world not the natives in Europe.

Therefore, we should clear the issue of elements sustaining identity, map what is happening in the west, and it changes rapidly. I think the Hungarian civil society is also responsible for something. If it is not established, we will not amount to very much. *Thank you.*

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Please refer to this essay as the following:

György Schöpflin: Migration and mobility in Europe. *Délkelet-Európa – South-East Europe International Relations Quarterly*, Vol. 3. No. 4. (Winter 2012) 3 p. Your cooperation is highly appreciated. *The Editor in Chief*