

Social Issues

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Edited by

Georgeta Rață and Patricia-Luciana Runcan

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FOREWORD

This collection of essays gathers papers dealing with different social issues formally grouped under *Faces of Migration* and *Vulnerable Populations*. Though, in general, *social issues* are distinguished from *economic issues*, both migration and vulnerability have economic causes.

The first chapter presents the different faces of migration – both seen (Delia-Ioana Nadolu, Maria-Ana Georgescu and Emilia Herman, Florentin Vlad, and Beniamin Lup) and unseen (Ramona Malița), analysing the socio-economic causes and consequences of migration and, implicitly, of urban depopulation in Romania and of human trafficking approached from a double perspective (as a modern form of slavery and as an infringement of European Values).

The second chapter attempts at identifying the mechanisms used in social issue societies in the construction of identity, from a double perspective: diachronic (Daniela-Mihaela Spînu-Dumitru, Alin Gavreliuc and Dana Gavreliuc) and synchronic (Claudia-Anamaria Iov, Lavinia-Elisabeta Popp and Felicia Andrioni, Amador Jimenez-Garrido and Eufrazio Perez-Navio, Claudia-Livia Andrițoi, Marian Mihăilă, Ștefan-Sebastian Maftעי, Ștefania Bejan, Dănuț-Ioan Crașovan and Delia Tomici, Maria Constantinescu and Cornel Constantinescu, and Dan-Ioan Dascălu). The elderly, the homeless, the immigrants, the minorities (the Roma) are scrutinised with emphasis on the network society, on the right to self-determination, on social integration, on trauma.

The third chapter focuses on personal issues rather than social issues. The essays deal with such issues as work-family conflict and couple's satisfaction with life (Delia Virgă, Silvia Rusu and Roxana Sârbu), problem behaviour in autistic children (Laura-Cristina Oprică), intestinal Giardiasis in institutionalized elderly patients (Iosif Marincu, Ioana Todor and Mihai Mareș), respiratory pathology in residents living close to lignite quarries (Delia Nica-Badea), chronic alcohol consumption in patients with liver disease (Elena Toader), and political persecution and extradition of criminals (Claudia-Livia Andrițoi and Adina-Iulia Nicolae).

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CHAPTER ONE

FACES OF MIGRATION

JANUS BIFRONS,
OR THE UNSEEN FACE OF MIGRATION

RAMONA MALIȚA

Introduction

Francophone literature is a particular, special and provoking case in the concept of migration, involving other adjacent notions such as linguistic identity, bilingualism, expatriation, exodus, diaspora, etc. The multitude of (in)congruent purports shows the researcher various insights and triggers unforeseen, complex constellations, since the phenomenon itself—francophony—is full of meanderings that can be read not only from an aesthetic, ethic or moral point of view, but also from a political one. A visual reading of the francophone world map makes visible the extended geographical space of the seventy-eight countries acknowledged as operating under the aegis of the French language, from the Tropic of Cancer to the Tropic of Capricorn, passing through cultures, religions, climates, races of people, mentalities, customs, politically-coloured governments, different morals, being surprising, unequal and even opposed at times; in other words, it is odd and fragmentary. Nonetheless, for the informed eye this map represents the maze of a certain literary typology, characterised by strong personalities, specific themes and motifs, Nobel prizes for Literature, aesthetic paradigms that are canonical for the present literature, and, above all, the generous concept of *humanitas*. Our research focuses on the aesthetic literary illustration of four social concepts—transmigration, statelessness, multilingualism and bilingualism—in francophone literature. The devastating experiences that lead to the hurting/injuring and finally the loss of the inner identity, the social maladjustment or the mere refusal to adapt, and the compulsory belonging to a territory—the community of diaspora—that the family imposes on its immigrant members are the means by which we investigate the characters of some francophone novels using obvious and certified auctorial autobiographical insertions. This interdisciplinarity is based on the relation of (in)congruence between the biography of the author as an emigrant, the fiction of the text published in diaspora, the reception of the

message in the reference community, the formation of an aesthetic and social horizon of expectations, and the creation of a public opinion.

Research Methods

The comparative analysis is the one through which we build relations of congruence, incongruence, inadvertence, convergence or divergence between novels dealing with the theme of migration on the francophone territory in general, and on the Arab land in particular. The novels we refer to are *Amours sauvages* by Calixthe Beyala,¹ *Ils disent que je suis une beurette* by Soraya Nini, and *Beur's story* by Ferrudja Kessas. **The thematic analysis** brings a special input in detecting forms, shades, surrogates, types, structures and literary *autobiographemes*, together with the social spreading of the phenomenon of migration. **The historical paraliterary analysis** explains, fathoms, sustains and exploits the literary fiction in the aforementioned novels.

Discussion

Non nova, sed nove. Our research, starting with a literary approach and announces some social phenomena of the present day, is an interrogative-ascertaining approach implying a triple vector: *Primo*: in which way do the social and the historical aspects influence the literary? *Secundo*: to what extent are the macro-historical elements present in the micro-history (in the concrete destinies of the characters/people)? *Tertio*: to what extent is literature received in a society prepared (or not) to accept and benefit from the presence of the immigrant with (or without) a legal residence? The specialists judge that the predominant themes of the francophone literature—the identity quest, the woman's status, the social opposition white vs. black people, social, racial, and sexual discrimination and interbreeding—are the parameters through which the destiny of the characters is drawn, whether they are main or secondary characters, they are always immigrants in the novel (Puțan 2008, 2010; Marcu 2011). Living in a country, France, that states which is the right path, but itself walks the wrong tracks, the characters, sitting psychologically across a watershed of age (forty years old), understand the West through the rapport of colonizer-colonised, even though they have left the native territory. The new territory is usually Paris, which appears as a very different psychological reality, even unrecognizable, different from the idyllic, touristic image, embellished by the travel agencies, from the vacation adventures or from the melodramatic French and foreign

literature of the nineteenth century. The French capital in the novel of the immigrants and expatriates emerges as polymorphous, ethnically coloured, filthy and malodorous, where black, white and Asian people, from the four corners of the Maghreb, search for a better life, a certain welfare for their families. But are they ready to integrate? The relation literature (fiction) and reality (social condition) leans towards a phenomenon well-defined by concepts such as transmigration and bilingualism that the new administrative space, the adoptive country, either assumes or not. From a social point of view, the character and the Romanian narrative landscape mirror the necessity of taking measures and represent a cry of revolt or incapacity/incapability towards some imperious desiderata. Internal state politics and campaigns of awareness raising and information addressed to the general population are promoted more or less intensively. They concern the benefits of foreign citizen integration and the advantages that their participation can bring to the development of the adoptive society, so that the two elements of the equation—immigrant and host—gain from a psychological, identity and economic point of view in the process of individual and statehood becoming. It is not by chance that the target group of such information seminars are members of the local authorities, journalists, opinion leaders, and non-governmental organisations who implement the integration of the immigrants. Culturally, the Romanian character emphasizes the difficulty of the reconciliation between two or more cultures of intersection—here the French culture with that of Maghreb—which consists of the availability of accepting, interiorizing and practicing elements of a culture that the expatriate considers to be foreign, uncomfortable and, above all, betraying the traditions. Here we add the painful phenomenon of bilingualism, so that the identity crisis with its behaviour implications is easy to understand as being part of the direct repercussions of some actions seen as invasive—the child or the youth goes to school with the white people, marries a white person (for instance the Pléthore—Eve Marie marriage in the novel *Beyala*). Between exoticism and curiosity, such literature is the tip of the iceberg of a prestigious social experience in which the francophone writer finds himself in this case, illustrating scripturally by inserting autobiographemes as a sign of his subjectivity. Returning to the immediate reality and eluding the fictional reality, we point out some practical aspects that the literary echoes involve. Demographic European studies monitor the categories of immigrants legally situated on the territory of the member states of the Union, organized or not in the diaspora, and identify the difficulties and the opportunities of the integration process, and announce aspects and models of intervention of the non-governmental organisations

regarding the process of social integration. Such measures are wished for and should be amplified, taking into account the fact that the frequent interactions between the immigrants and the autochthonous population have a defining role in the fundamental mechanism of integration, as they prevent negative phenomena such as discrimination, racism or exclusion. Literature, as the mirror of the social phenomenon, refers to the Italian *verismo*, but does not exceed the conceptual boundaries of the movement that Giovanni Verga or Luigi Capuano represent. From the perspective of *verismo*, literature claims its right to represent the whole reality, the way it is, without any idealisation, while the writer no longer invents but records; they are a chronicler, not a creator, and their work competes with the objective reality of the world. Together with Nini's novel, *Ils dissent que je suis une beurette*, and through Samia's character who belongs to the second generation of immigrants, the themes of alienation and loss of identity (Puțan 2011, 60), related to the migration phenomenon, are introduced. Raised between two worlds and two cultures, Samia is a deterritorialized creature, as she knows which one is the origin country of her parents, a place that she has never visited; still, she cannot integrate in the adoptive country since her parents want, at any price and with the risk of alienation, to raise her in the tradition of Maghreb inside the French society, in the Arab diaspora without the girl's consent. In her consciousness, at a stage of moral and axiological development, the Arab-Muslim culture and the culture of the West are not only in religious opposition, but there is also an administrative gap concerning the human rights: if the first is based on millenary traditions and patriarchal primacy, the second invests the woman with the same rights as the man and encourages the feminist movement. This contradiction seen from the point of view of an outsider engenders polemics, controversies or for-and-against dialogues; while seen from the inside it represents a cause of alienation, imbalance, uncertain identities, and psychological deterritorialization. Born in France, Samia bears the stigma of the immigrant—*beurette*—the daughter of immigrants that she cannot understand because she is a French citizen by birth, administratively speaking. She has not yet suffered the rupture from the Arab community for she is forced by her family—meaning the first generation of immigrants—to live by their millenary Muslim rules and customs, carefully preserved in the North African diaspora. Still, Samia is unable to understand the finality, sense and logic of those rules and customs in a society such as France, based on different axiological resources. On the social level, this literary autobiographic exercise casts light on a rapport of reversible vectors. On the one hand, it demonstrates a society that is not prepared to accept and benefit from the presence of

foreign citizens, while on the other it incriminates the unprepared immigrants, even those who are part of the second generation, who should integrate in the social time and space that they themselves have chosen. Samia's question "Which one is my country?" triggers the problem of social integration. The interrelated dimensions of this process could be organised in a system of axes, O_{xy} on the vertical, whereas on the horizontal we could have the social and cultural dimensions paired with the economic dimension and public opinion. The first of the four should describe in detail aspects such as the existence of friends, mixed marriages, social, racial, sexual discrimination, stateless people, etc. The second dimension should consider the time spent in the foreign country, the generation born there, the stage of foreign language acquisition (bilingualism would represent a real success of the integration, but not only from an administrative point of view, for, mentally speaking, the writer involves in the fiction and the personal diary usually using his mother tongue), etc. The public opinion dimension should take into account the autochthonous population's view of the foreigners, social representations and expectations, behavioural etiquette and accepted customs, stereotypes, etc. The urban outskirts, as a preferred space of the immigrant, of the stranger, where most of the time they are pushed to and marginalised in the adoptive country, are worth special consideration. In the novel, the territory of the city, negatively marked, and its periphery are places invested with ambiguous connotations; they are open-air prisons, oxymoronically speaking. This type of space is closely related to the psychological identity construction, namely the evolution (or is it the involution?) of the individual, whether they are a fictional character in the novel, or a member of an objective society. Malika and Farida, two female characters in the novel *Beur's Story* by Ferrudja Kessas, live in the outskirts, a place that, in the novel, is regarded as a carceral space (Marcu 2011, 93–98) and a symbol of marginalisation and exclusion of the young immigrants, people also belonging, in this novel, to the second generation. Conceived as a concentric architecture, this place is composed of several circles, differently structured according to their roles in the present and organised according to the scalar principle, going from narrow to vast—the house, the garden, the street, the neighbourhood, the outskirts, the city. If the interior of the house is perceived as a sacred place where the ancestral traditions are kept alive, traditions that have nothing to do with the axiological and moral values of the society in which the family lives (although they should), the street and the neighbourhood which, by superposition, comprise the outskirts, become a space where interpersonal relations seem completely eluded, replaced by misery, unemployment and

violence, while the school, the library—situated outside the suburbs—appear as spaces of the breakout from hell. The consciousness of the writer, which can be heard through her characters, operates in the immediate reality with various dichotomies in order to shape this place more accurately: inside/outside, open space/closed space, public space/private space, masculine space/feminine space, real-world space/imaginary space, social space/cultural space. All these types play an essential role in the identity of the characters, who will lay down their lives for their “mistake” of trying to understand why their conservative families do not want or cannot integrate into the French society to which they have emigrated from their origin country. What kind of preparatory activities could the decision factors—first of all the authority of the state—conceive to prevent some negative phenomena such as those described earlier that have premises in the immediate objective reality? Possible, virtual but practical, answers are: an intensive press campaign with communication simulations periodically broadcast in the written local and national press; video clips for television and radio spots; selecting media space providers to broadcast the campaign materials; building teams between partners belonging to different segments of the state: immigration offices, pro-health, pro human rights, pro children’s rights foundations and nongovernmental organizations, churches, NGOs, etc. to test the materials created (including the programmes) on the general population. If we were to quantify the relation social phenomenon-literary phenomenon, we can easily realise that the act of reception of a signifying form by the society, be it social or literary, is always a comparative one; that is, we integrate what we have seen and heard into a foregoing, familiar, interconnected and recognisable truth series as we intuitively seek for analogy and the antecedent. That is why we endorse the view that the thing one writes in literature as something plausible goes back to a not-too-distant kind of reality with which the writer starts a dialogue and which the state’s authority manages, which sociologists study, psychologists balance out, social workers improve, etc. We deem it necessary to bring to mind the institutional framework of the migration phenomenon whose parameters are in the structure of the EU member states under various forms and names. There should be two axioms on which underpin the social integration implementation: of all the actors involved in the migration phenomenon, the one which defines migration and the legal parameters thereof on its own soil is the state; the management of the migration phenomenon counts on the participation of all the institutions competent for this domain through a participative kind of management and through inter-institutional national and international cooperation, while the leading part falls to the home affairs ministry or the

ministry in question; this ministry coordinates a group of institutions which implement the national strategy regarding migration; in turn, these institutions and internal bodies are a part of or are subordinated to certain ministries and governments or are autonomous. Thus, the Ministry of Home Affairs has the following institutions that might launch social programmes for immigrants: the Immigration Office, Border Police Inspectorates, the Foreign Relations Office, the Centre for International Police Cooperation, and the National Agency against Human Trafficking. The Consular Affairs Office is part of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. On the other hand, the Ministry of Labour might have other institutions accredited to deal with immigrants by taking various steps as those mentioned above: the Labour Employment Department, the National Authority for Child Protection, and the National Authority for Handicapped Persons. A special role falls to the Ministry of Education, which in turn has special departments for pre-university education management as well as for foreign relations and higher education. The General Department for policies, strategies and quality management in health care is a part of the Ministry of Health; in addition to these ministries, the Institute of Statistics, answering directly to the government and the health insurance bodies, serves these persons' interests who, at least temporarily, are members of the social and religious communities and work and live in the adoptive country trying to integrate therein by living up to the values of the state into which they have emigrated.

Conclusions

Janus Bifrons, from the title of our research, refers to the dichotomy immigrant-emigrant as the two faces of the same individual who chooses to live in a geographical and statehood space different from the original space, for a longer or shorter period of time. "Immigrant," is an administrative term related to the country they have chosen to live in, and "emigrant" is a defining element towards one's own consciousness that they are displaced from in an existential familiar location. If literature can be one of the social barometers, then the identity issue, the psychological impasse, the deterritorialisation, the personal crisis, and the (un)assumed bilingualism are aspects that literature brings to the attention of the society through its characters and sees them as emasculating experiences suffered by the immigrant. The competent bodies, the ministries and the national agencies, the institutional media, the social programmes concerning the integration of the immigrants and the checking of the migration flow are instruments of the public authority through which the internal issues, such

as those previously described, can be solved, assumed, avoided, and ameliorated in the inward thought process of the immigrant who has the strength to integrate in the community. Starting from a particular case—the francophone novel—we believe that the few considerations made on the literary-social interdisciplinary theme that the sociology of literature mainly deals with are applicable to a larger category of immigrants, not only those coming from Maghreb.

Notes

- ¹ Calixthe Beyala, French writer of Cameroon origin, is the laureate of several important literary prizes: Grand Prix Littéraire de l’Afrique Noire 1993; Prix François Mauriac de l’Académie Française 1994; Grand Prix de l’Académie française 1996; Grand Prix de l’UNICEF 1998.
- ² Soraya Nini’s novel was published in 1993 in Paris, and filmed in 2000 by the stage director Philippe Faucon, titled *Samia*.
- ³ The novel of the North African writer of French expression, Ferrudja Kessas, appeared in 1990 through the prestigious printing house L’Harmattan.

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URBAN DEPOPULATION IN ROMANIA: CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES

DELIA-IOANA NADOLU

Introduction

Social mobility is a very important and consistent process in every society. For the last two decades, Romania's population has continuously decreased for various reasons. This chapter focuses on the demographic evolution of the urban communities of Romania in the last twenty-three years. The population decrease has affected all cities, and there are several main causes for this process: negative natural growth, out-migration, economic changes, urban sprawl, suburbanization, and so on. The consequences are multiple: changes to the work force market, the reconfiguration of urban services, social segregation, housing, brownfields and so on. For this research we used a statistical analysis of the official recorded data from the last two decades concerning the demographical evolution of the entire Romanian urban space (320 cities). As estimated results, the statistical analysis will try to identify some patterns of depopulation and group the cities in several classes related by the causes of depopulation. Starting from these patterns we will describe each cluster and present the main consequences of depopulation.

Theoretical Framework and Methodology

The urban communities represent a contemporary subject, very interesting for various scientific areas, including the urban sociology, social psychology, environmental psychology and cultural anthropology. At the global level, in 2010 the urban population became larger than the rural population (50.9%) (worldbank.org). The high density of urban communities and the accumulation of various kinds of social, economic, technological and cultural resources represent other relevant arguments for the importance of this topic. The city is not just a producer of resources but is also a very consistent consumer of resources. Thus, all over the

world any changes in the urban life generate significant consequences for the extended social spaces. When we have to deal with the growing of the city, the entire region follows it on the development trend. On the other hand, when we have to deal with the depopulation of a city the region can also suffer the direct consequences. The shrinking major urban area in North America (Detroit) or the massive shrinking cities of East Germany (Leipzig, Halle, Dresden) represent very eloquent examples of recent urban dynamics that have produced significant effects and were included in the public agenda of local authorities. Following the preliminary results from the last census (2012), the entire Romanian population maintains the trend of the last twenty years in decreasing. From 23,286,794 inhabitants recorded in 1992 the decreasing trend reached the value of 19,042,936 in 2011. Thus, in only two decades the entire population decreased by 18.2% (recensamantromania.ro). Of course, this phenomenon is not unitary at the national level. There are significant differences among the historical regions and between urban and rural communities. Several big cities have reversed the negative trend and started to recover the loss of population, but the differences compared to the 1990s are still significant. From a general point of view, the population decline represents a “normal” stage in the evolution of almost every city. However, the consequences of depopulation are very complex and cannot be ignored, especially by the agenda of local authorities. The manifestations of this phenomenon are connected with the processes of shrinkage, suburbanization and economic revitalization. The depopulation can be correlated with the process of gentrification (Voiculescu 2009; Chelcea 2000). Overall, the presence of these manifestations involves a direct intervention toward urban regeneration. The urban depopulation is a main indicator of the phenomenon of shrinkage. A city affected by shrinkage is not only at risk of depopulation but also from the pressure of other factors. The most important manifestations that can occur with depopulation are:

- Economic and financial problems—the urban depopulation can be directly influenced by the closure of the significant industrial facilities and this usually generates brownfields and an increasing level of unemployment. On the other hand, the urban depopulation generates a decrease in the local budget.
- Problems with urban facilities—the loss of population generates under-use of the entire system of urban facilities (water supply, sewerage), of public transportation, street cleaning, social services, etc.
- House problems—the increase of the vacancy stock, the disequilibria between offer and demand on the estate market, urban sprawl, etc.

- Social problems—the decrease of the population can generate social segregation, gentrification and the alteration of social cohesion.

Considering these aspects our project will focus on the following aspects:

- **Suburbanization** is a very consistent phenomenon directly correlated with the depopulation that has occurred for less than one decade around almost all large cities in Romania. One fully generalized characteristic of this trend is its quasi-chaotic development, without any planned urban scheme. Thus, the cities altered by the artificial communist urbanization process have discovered the possibility of spreading around and toward the closer villages. The urban sprawl assures a relatively quick deintensification of the city centre, but in absence of any architectural master plan the profile of the further suburbs is not based on sustainable principles. In recent years significant “living-room” neighbourhoods were built almost without any urban facilities. Now, the local administrations are trying to recover these gaps and work to extend the public services (as much as possible) and encourage the suburbanization of the commerce and services.
- The **gentrification** process represents another very important topic for various research projects. It can be used as an urban development tool but it directly involves the social segregation process that generates another kind of social problem that also must be solved. In Eastern Europe, after the political changes of 1990, in almost all cities a more or less consistent processes of gentrification occurred, especially against the working class inhabitants with low urban living standards. Even though these examples represent natural reactions of the communist policy to homogenization of the neighbourhoods by mixing populations from various categories, the relocation of the displaced population represents a very important subject with direct consequences for entire communities. Academic discourse has begun to approach the topic (Petrovici 2008) but it is still absent from the public policy.
- **Urban regeneration** represents a somewhat new subject found more frequently in the public discourses of recent years in Romania. The perspectives of developing further metropolitan areas include the urban regeneration of the inner city. Without the upgrading of existing buildings and their urban functionalities, the development of the city is just a theoretical plan. At this level another kind of special problem related to the ownership and use of built spaces is engaged. The public authorities have limited resources to press the private owner to update

their proprieties. The present day legislative system does not allow the city halls to intervene on the real estate market and to apply strategic actions to rebuild the non-functional spaces.

All these main processes, directly correlated with depopulation (urban shrinkage, suburbanization, gentrification, brownfields and urban regeneration), represent relevant contemporary topics for scientific interest and the administrative public policies. The sociological analysis and the main statistical facts can generate a map with patterns of urban depopulation in Romania. The interdisciplinary interpretation of the causes, correlative processes and consequences can offer delimitation between the shrinking cities and sprawling cities. This study is based on a secondary statistical analysis of the official recorded data concerning the evolution of the urban population in Romania.

Results and Discussion

From a general perspective, the Romanian urban population decreased from 1992 to 2012 by 23.3%, from 12,316,439 to 10,054,961. Meantime, the total number of cities increased from 255 to 320 (by transforming 65 large towns into cities). In this twenty-year period Romania lost 4.2 million inhabitants, of which 2.7 million were from urban populations. It is remarkable that most of the cities lost population during this period. The only cities that recorded an increase in population were Buftea (+2,561), Topoloveni (+579), Odovesti (+367), Bolintin Vale (+284) and Mihailesti (+151). In opposition, 50 cities lost more than 30% of their population (from 30% to 50%). We can divide the urban population into three classes: big cities, medium cities and towns (Table 1-1). Following the distribution it is obvious that the medium-sized cities have mostly lost population (26.6%). These cities, with populations between 20,000 and 99,999 inhabitants, are quite different to the rural living style (compared to the towns) and, on other hand, have limited alternatives (for jobs, for living, etc.) compared to big cities. In this category are included the mono-industrial cities (extractive and heavy industries) that were deeply affected by the economic changes of the last two decades. Petrosani had 52,390 inhabitants in 1992 and decreased to 34,331 by 2012 (a decrease of 34.5%), Vulcan from 34,524 to 22,906 (33.7%), and Lupeni from 32,853 to 21,986 (33.1%), etc. From a different perspective, the urban population can be divided by the NUTS II criteria into eight development regions (Table 1-2).