

Mieczysław Kowalski\*

MIGRATION AND STABILIZATION FEATURES  
OF RURAL POPULATION IN POLAND

Accelerated migration from agriculture and villages to industry and towns has been one of the basic social processes in the postwar Poland. It has been taking place all the time although with varying intensity. In the second half of the seventies, this process was considerably accelerated. Migration in the opposite direction continues to be insignificant.

Migration is a complex and diversified phenomenon strongly affected by economic and psychosocial factors. Although it is an expression and a form of development of a society, it is simultaneously difficult to assess explicitly in given circumstances its scale, causes, mechanisms, and multiple consequences. Critical opinions with regard to migration appear with increasing frequency in Poland and concern especially preselection of migrants from definite social and demographic categories, being unfavourable for rural areas.

Migratory processes are an object of studies conducted by different sciences, which usually adopt a macrostructural approach and are based on statistical materials provided by population censuses or registers (demography, economics, geography). The contribution of sociology should lie primarily in microstructural analysis of the migration phenomenon at the level of individuals, families, and local communities. Major problems here include description of migrants' social structure,

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\*Institute of Sociology, University of Łódź.

determination of the scale of migratory intentions and selection processes, identification of objective and subjective factors promoting migration and spatial stabilization.

Sociological studies may be focussed not only on an aggregation of real migrants but also on the entire rural population from the point of view of migration or stabilization plans or declarations. These plans and declarations should be treated into two ways; as an expression of undertaken life decisions the accomplishment of which is striven for, and as an expression of an attitude of considerable dissatisfaction with one's own life situation largely determined by the type of dwelling environment. Such an attitude, however, is not always of decisive importance in decisions concerning a real change of the environment. Accordingly, a distinction should be made between objective migration (actual change of dwelling place) and subjective migration - negative attitudes or alienation from one's own environment along with a desire to change it despite circumstances hampering it or making it impossible.

The above problems were an object of empirical studies carried out in almost 50 villages in different regions of Poland in 1977. They encompassed 1664 married couples between 18 and 65 years of age. Thus, the sample represented a professionally and personally stabilized part of rural population among which migratory trends are generally much weaker. Such a character of the sample is specific in the case of migration problems since in this aggregation there are excluded in advance two basic and strongest mechanisms of rural-urban migration: through the education system (young people) and through marriages (first of all, women). It should be added here that although the methodological structure did not envisage obtaining a representative sample, the structure of the analyzed aggregate according to age, educational background, and main source of livelihood (agricultural, nonagricultural) corresponds generally to the structure of the entire rural population in Poland. The above circumstances voice in favour of a definite interpretation of the discovered phenomena.

There will be discussed here two groups of problems:

1. What were the scale of migratory intentions (firm and po-

tential), directions and conditions of migration as well as reasons of remaining in the village?

2. What characteristics of individuals and families, and what environmental factors were promoting migration and what factors had a stabilizing impact, in other words - what were the statistically discernible correlates of migratory intentions - spatial, demographic, social as well as subjective ones being expressed in general attitudes and preferences in relation to the rural or urban type of dwelling environment?

It can be generally said that - especially taking into account the above mentioned character of the analyzed aggregate - the scale of migratory intentions is very wide and their spatial, demographic and social structure seems to be unfavourable for the village. Those who were firmly resolved to emigrate ("I shall certainly move out of the present place of dwelling within the next few years") represented almost 7 per cent of the entire aggregate while potential migrants ("I may move out") constituted a further 12 per cent. It should be added here that among those in favour of territorial stabilization ("I shall certainly not move out" - 81 per cent of all) as many as 19 per cent were not taking into account a possibility of migration only due to lack of possibilities or unreality of such plans in their life-situation (usually advanced age).

For those resolved to leave their present place of living there was determined the direction of planned migration: only in 5 per cent of all cases it was another rural area, and in 95 per cent of cases - towns, especially small and medium-sized towns situated in a given region. Almost all respondents in this group were able to list definite names of their future places of dwelling which points to their firm resolution to migrate. Incidentally, it appeared that a phenomenon of horizontal migration from one village to another, quite significant according to statistical data, is mainly connected with contracting marriages as in our aggregate of family-stabilized population there absolutely predominates migration direction from village to towns.

In turn, potential migrants were asked what their emigration from or remaining in the present place of dwelling depen-

ded on. In most cases, the most important factor was obtaining housing or an appropriate work in the town, and moreover basing their future on plans and future of their children as well as difficulties with selling their farm. Thus, these were objective and not subjective barriers, which just proves that this group also represents largely negative attitudes towards their local environment, and that these are subjective migrants. Simultaneously, however, the fact that fulfilment of the indicated conditions was considerably independent of the respondents themselves served to strengthen potentiality of their migratory plans.

Finally, persons decided to remaining in the present place of their dwelling were asked to justify such decision. From among factors linking them with their village they would generally list diverse favourable components of their objective life situation. In fifty per cent of all cases that would be ownership of a house or at least a flat (regardless of its technical standards), and in the other fifty per cent the professional situation - possession of an agricultural farm or of an appropriate work. Only a third part of the aggregate indicated, moreover, their positive subjective attitude to the existing situation - satisfaction, being accustomed or attached to it.

Thus, generally speaking every fifth family was planning to move from the village to the town within the next few years, while remaining in the countryside was mainly connected with a realistic assessment of their own life situation with a purely positive selection occurring more rarely.

Further analysis of migratory intentions involved examination of statistical correlations between the discussed declarations and selected characteristics of differentiation of the rural population. Its aim was to determine such factors and characteristics which promoted migration and such which promoted spatial stabilization. As statistically significant there were considered to be these relationships for which  $p < 0.10$ , which means that probability of error does not exceed 10 per cent (in most of relationships discussed below it is even smaller than 1 per cent). In turn, strength of a relationship was determined by the value of V Cramer's coefficient. The obtained

results will be discussed in three groups of factors and characteristics connected with migratory trends: socio-demographic, spatial and personal.

In the group of socio-demographic characteristics, declarations concerning migration or stabilization were most strongly connected with belonging of a family to a definite socio-professional group and with possession of own house (V Cramer's  $\chi^2 = 0.20$ ). There was clearly observed the following order of socio-professional groups, beginning with those in which orientation at stabilization was strongest, and ending with those in which migratory intentions were strongest: individual farmers, agricultural workers in state enterprises, clerical workers with lower qualifications, people no longer professionally active, peasant-farmers, workers employed outside agriculture, clerical employees with high qualifications. If we just take into account the three basic segments of the social structure of the Polish village i.e. individual farmers, workers and clerical employees, we shall find that migratory intentions are growing just in this order. It is all the more important that in each of these groups a bigger inclination towards migration was displayed by their higher segments while willingness to stabilize by the lower segment. Thus, those who wish to leave the village more often than not are clerical employees of a higher category rather than those of the lower, qualified rather than unqualified workers, farmers having bigger farms in comparison with those having smaller farms. Although greater inclination to stabilization among individual farmers should be treated as a favourable phenomenon, the discovered phenomenon taken as a whole creates a negative perspective for the village i.e. that of outflow of intelligentsia and more dynamic social groups.

The housing situation of a family proved to be another factor exerting a powerful influence on the analyzed phenomenon. Strictly speaking big inclination to migrate is characteristic for these families which were renting private or state flats, while orientation at stabilization was connected with ownership of a house or flat by a given family. It is worth noting that the standard of the flat, its size and equipment with technical

facilities were quite unimportant along with the family's material situation measured by level of money incomes per family. This statement points at one of fundamental instruments in the state's policy aiming at curbing too big outflow of population from rural areas and promoting a desirable structure of migrants. This instrument is a definite policy of preferences for private housing construction in villages. In Poland, ownership of a house or flat will most certainly belong to factors stabilizing most strongly the place of dwelling for many years to come.

Two other characteristics connected with migratory intentions are the age and the educational structure of population ( $V$  Cramer's = 0.19). These relationships are of an explicitly linear character and their directions cannot be surprising: the more frequent propensity to migration the lower the age group and the higher the educational-level category. Such selection of migrants is quite easy to understand, and it is enough to remember here that exactly these age groups have quite big real chances of moving to the town and - what is more - link that with social promotion even though it may be felt only subjectively. However, from the point of view of the village it cannot be assessed in any other way but as predominantly negative, as it leads to rapid aging of the rural population, and undermines chances of reducing socio-economic and cultural differences between the village and the town.

Spatial factors describe migratory intentions, to a lesser degree, than the above discussed socio-demographic characteristics, but nonetheless they play an important role. The most important one among them are territorial origins of a family ( $V$  Cramer's = 0.17): readiness for stabilization is displayed mainly by those who have been living in a given village since their birth, while those who have come from towns wish to migrate most often, and moreover the shorter time they have lived in a village the higher their desire to migrate is. This testifies to difficulties and long duration of the process of adaptation to the rural environment. Regional differentiation is also quite significant: ( $V$  Cramer's = 0.14) - from rural administrative communes (encompassing usually several villages) in

which every tenth family wishes to emigrate to communes in which every third family wishes to emigrate. In some of them, there can be observed a process of depopulation of villages. Similarly those who commute to work in distant villages and especially towns reveal a bigger inclination to emigrate from villages (V Cramer's = 0.11). On the other hand, the type of the village in the sense of its size, socio-economic infrastructure and its location within a settlement network is of no major significance.

The next group of factors are those of more personal nature connected with migratory intentions. It is characteristic here that a much bigger role is played by the subjective attitude of people to their own life situation than the prevailing image of life in the village and in the town, and its evaluations. The intention of remaining in the village is much more often revealed by those who find their village to be the best dwelling place for themselves (V Cramer's = 0.28), those who are satisfied with their present place of dwelling (V Cramer's = 0.25), who would like their children to remain in the village (V Cramer's = 0.18), and finally those who are more content with their present work, living conditions, and material situation (V Cramer's = 0.18). On the other hand, those willing to emigrate most often include people who find the town to be the best dwelling environment for them, are dissatisfied with dwelling in their village, with their work, material and housing situation, and would rather have their children live in the town in future.

A much weaker, although similarly directed correlation can be observed with regard to general evaluations of the village and the town. Bigger orientation towards stabilization was connected with attributing to the village its supremacy over the town in at least one out of the following three areas: material living conditions, social relations or possibilities of participation in the culture (V Cramer's = 0.11) as well as with a better evaluation of concrete components of material living conditions in the village in comparison with the town (living costs, housing conditions, accessibility of shopping and service centres, natural environment, spatial development - V Cramer's =

= 0.11). It is interesting to note here that in such a detailed comparative approach to the village and the town there were not discovered any relationships with migratory intention in the social and cultural sphere (through listing and evaluating definite components of these spheres).

All in all, it testifies to a decisive role of the self-appraisal of one's own life situation in migratory intentions with a smaller role played by prevailing stereotypes of the village and the town. There was also revealed a great significance of material living conditions as against a low significance of comparison between the village and the town with regard to difference in social relations and cultural distances. Accordingly, the latter one is excessively overestimated in general discussions as a hypothetical motive in escape from the village.

The above statistical analyses allow to determine a set of characteristics of families prompting migration to towns or stabilization in the village along with directions of their impact on migrants' selection process. The phenomenon in question is most strongly promoted by a number of attitudes towards one's own family's living situation, orientation of its environmental aspirations towards the village or the town, and evaluation from this vantage point of one's present dwelling place, material situation, housing and professional situation, future of children. The second group of characteristics strongly differentiating migratory tendencies are socio-demographic factors: belonging to specific socio-professional categories, possessing own house or flat, age and educational background. Further on, a weaker although also quite significant is the role of spatial factors such as territorial origins, region of the country (but not type of a village), commutation to work. Finally, general stereotype evaluation of the rural and urban types of dwelling environments are least significant although also in this case the aspect of material living conditions is statistically significant.

These groups of characteristics, depending upon their value in the case of a given family, induce migration or stabilization to a degree corresponding to the indicated sequence. Accordingly, it may be said that migrants are for their most part

characterized with: recognition of the town as the best dwelling environment for themselves and their families, strong dissatisfaction with dwelling in a given village, and with a number of other components of their life situation (work, material, situation, housing conditions), lack of their own housing (renting), belonging to a category of highly qualified clerical workers, peasant-workers or qualified workers, lower age and higher educational level, living in a given area not from their birth, living in the northern or western Poland, commuting to work, general recognition of the supremacy of the town over the village especially in the sphere of material living conditions.

On the other hand, orientation at stabilization usually prevails in the case of those who: consider their village to be the best dwelling place for themselves and their children, are very content to be living in this village and with other components of their life situation (work, material status, housing conditions), own their houses or flats, belong to the category of private farmers, agricultural workers, clerical workers with lower qualifications or no longer professionally employed, are older and less educated, have been living in a given area since their birth, live in central or south-eastern Poland, do not commute to work beyond the territory of their administrative commune, generally recognize supremacy of the village over the town especially in the sphere of material living conditions.

The above analysis indicates that only some of these selection processes can be estimated as favourable or, at least, less indifferent from the point of view of development and future of the village (e.g. bigger stability of private farmers or outflow of bi-professional population). However, there prevails negative selection of migrants with regard to its consequences for the village reflected in bigger outflow of younger and better educated population, depopulation of certain regions etc. Statistical data reveal that the rural-urban migration process has been considerably checked in the period of Poland's economic crisis i.e. since 1981. However, a reverse trend can hardly be expected. What is more - our latest studies from 1983 confirm continued appearance of strong emigratory drives from villages although their accomplishment becomes somewhat postponed

in time. This would indicate existence of "postponed migration" phenomenon, or anyway subjective migration and alienation of important social categories from the rural environment.

Mieczysław Kowalski

#### CZYNNIKI MIGRACYJNE I STABILIZACYJNE NA WSI POLSKIEJ

Przyspieszona migracja z rolnictwa i ze wsi do przemysłu i miast jest jednym z podstawowych procesów społecznych w Polsce powojennej, a odwrotny kierunek przemieszczeń jest nadal bardzo słaby. Skale, uwarunkowania i skutki tego procesu trudno oceniać jednoznacznie. Nasilają się jednak krytyczne opinie o niekorzystnej preselekcji migrantów z określonych kategorii ludności. Potrzebne są empiryczne badania skali dążeń wychodzących ze wsi oraz czynników sprzyjających migracji lub stabilizacji. Zagadnienie te podjęto w badaniach ogólnopolskich w 1977 r. Struktura naszej zbiorowości (1664 małżeństw) odpowiada według wieku, poziomu wykształcenia i źródła utrzymania strukturze całej populacji wiejskiej kraju.

Stwierdzona skala zamierzeń migracyjnych jest bardzo znaczna, a ich struktura przestrzenna, demograficzna i społeczna wydaje się generalnie niekorzystna dla wsi. Zdecydowani migranci ("na pewno wyprowadzą się") stanowili 7% całej zbiorowości, w tym aż 95% wybrało miasto (zwłaszcza średnie i blisko położone), a tylko 5% - wieś. Dalsze 12% całego zbioru to potencjalni migranci ("być może wyprowadzą się"), dla których głównym warunkiem realizacji zamierzeń było uzyskanie pracy lub mieszkania. Wreszcie zdecydowani na stabilizację (81%), wśród czynników wiążących ich ze wsią, wymieniali głównie obiektywne składniki swojej sytuacji życiowej (własny dom, gospodarstwo, praca), rzadziej zaś ujawniali pozytywny stosunek do tej sytuacji (przywiązanie, zadowolenie, przyzwyczajenie). W tej grupie 19% nie zamierzało migrować jedynie z braku takiej możliwości. Zatem ogólnie co piąta rodzina planowała w ciągu kilku lat przejście ze wsi do miasta, zaś pozostanie na wsi wiązało się głównie z realistyczną oceną sytuacji życiowej, a rzadziej było pozytywnym wyborem.

Analizy statystyczne pozwoliły ustalić zespół cech rodzin sprzyjających migracji lub stabilizacji. Były to, poczynając od najważniejszych: przynależność społeczno-zawodowa, własność mieszkania (ale bez znaczenia jest jego standard, podobnie jak dochody pieniężne), wiek, poziom wykształcenia, pochodzenie terytorialne, region kraju (ale nie typ wioski). Znacznie silniejsze tendencje do migracji wystąpiły wśród wyżej wykwalfikowanych pracowników umysłowych, chłopów-robotników i robotników wykwalfikowanych, rodzin wynajmujących mieszkania, młodszych i wyżej wykwalfikowanych, przybyłych na dany teren, na obszarach Polski zachodniej i północnej. Natomiast orientacja stabilizacyjna cechowała rolników indywidualnych, robotników rolnych, pra-

cowników umysłowych o niższych kwalifikacjach i nie pracujących zawodowo, rodziny posiadające własne mieszkania, starszych niżej wykształconych, zamieszkujących dany teren od urodzenia. Mniejsza, choć także istotna, okazała się rola czynników subiektywnych, takich jak zadowolenie z różnych składników sytuacji życiowej, czy stereotypowe oceny wiejskiego i miejskiego środowiska. Kryzys gospodarczy Polski w rzeczywistości znacząco zahamował proces migracyjny, ale ostateczne badania sygnalizują utrzymywanie się silnych dążeń wychodźczych ze wsi i wskazują na zjawisko niejako "odłożonej migracji".