

International Emigration Networks of the Neamț Depression Population - Quantitative and Qualitative Assessments

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Political changes during the year 1989 brought a series of new courses and aspects for the Romanian society, international emigration that had economical purposes have an important role. Even if such population movements took place before, the proportion and the complex implications of the present ones are unprecedented. Even so, from the qualitative and quantitative point of view, Romanian emigration still remains a subject of supposition. Not even the latest census couldn't eliminate the informational twilight, the data regarding emigration for work being underestimated and, therefore useless. All these observations, sustain the necessity of obtaining persuasive data, the supplementing data method that was chosen in this case being that of *conducting rationed poll*. This has the advantage that, unlike the random one, gives more representative samples about the subject, relying on a pre-established principle. Thus, for the Neamț Depression there were recorded 1.388 individuals that, during the 1990-2003, left the country, the reason being exclusively the economic-financial one.

But, unlike the permanent emigration, temporary emigration (especially the international ones) is quasi-entirely a local manifestation, that generates many *social recipes*. Every potential emigrant wishes to have one or more sustainable elements (relatives, friends, neighbours) to facilitate his reaching the destination, to offer him a certain security in the uncertainty offered by his new condition. Practically, every individual wishing to go to work abroad intends to penetrate such a network¹ to assure his success (even if theoretically). The network has vital information about the ways to go – legal or, especially, illegally – about the hands wanted, the accommodation possibilities and about so many other things (how to send money back home, for example), the network assures the minimum existence. This primer - the one that the new emigrant has to learn quickly and profound – is extremely important, useful, especially when the emigrant doesn't know the language of the target country, moment during which is the network the one that intermediates the contact with the world. More, there is another advantage: generally, the network provides this help mutually to you, without asking for obedience (only loyalty) or reward, it doesn't commits you.

¹ In the speciality literature, both inside the country, and abroad, as well, for naming such social units either the term *network*, or the *emigration channel* (most used). We consider that a theoretical improvement is needed; while every network is also a channel, not every channel is a network – for example, "a tourism" firm without so many compunctions or a guidance organization *are* channels but they *aren't* networks at the same time. More, the network provides assistance a period after the emigrant reaches destination. So, we choose the network term, more fit to design this reality.

These discrete² but efficient networks structurally differ depending on the thing that binds them. From this point of view, taking into account a macroscopic analyse, the ethnic networks are the most important – not only the Romanian ones, but especially of the co-inhabiting minorities. In Moldavia, the Gipsy case can be easily identified,³ but establishing a general rule is risky. It is often said that Romanian Gypsies demonstrated an increased precociousness regarding international emigration, so that, today, they considerable amount in this field. Far from infirming the core of the statement, we do consider that some new opinions are needed, invoking as a reason the case of the spoon maker Gypsies from Petricani (mainly in the village of Țolici) where one cannot find the post-communist outbreak that was remarked by some other authors for the larger spaces, "the ebbs and flows" changing here only after the year 2002 (see figure 4). The reason of this delaying resides in the historical background of this community – former cloistral thralls, that, after they were released (having no other option) remained workers on the monasteries' domains in a less attractive territory, without no specific natural resources⁴ and without having their own land to work. The territorial isolation, as well as the socio-mental one of those in Țolici, even in comparison with the rest of the vilages in the commune, was sharpened by a pale educational process – the first school was founded here in 1914, after a half of the century of the one founded in Târpești (1859) or Petricani – Răbâia (1865). These multiple deficiencies were constantly accompanied by an endemic one, so that, in a first stage, these inhabitants had no financial resources to emigrate (fact that was previously stated). Consequently, the ethnic networks bounded together more slowly than those in Transilvania or on the Siret Valley. Obviously, the size of the community does matter, difficult to say in this case (at the latest census only a single person declared himself as being Gypsy⁵), as well as the bounds with the similar communities – pale and very rarely, given the conditions that, officially, there is no Gypsy community here.

Another theory that often appears in the literature treating the subject is that inside the groups with an increased confessional dissimilarity the emigration increases, and especially where there is a certain amount of neo-protestants. Even here, our discourse has as a base the Petricani commune, where such beliefs had in 2002 10,5% of the entire population (but the numbers rises to 33,5% in the case of the Țolici village). Even if these woreships came recently here (after 1990), they are able to secure a certain cohesion degree, an enclosure of the group, especially by forbeeding the exogamy and by the imposed presence to the religious sermons⁶. This neo-protestant channel is actice and dinamic enough, beeing able to assure jobs to the solicators, especially in the North of Italy, in pottery field or in the wood small workshops (fair and pragmatic choise, the

² From this point of view there is a certain syncretism due to the youthfulness of the emigration process, especially if we consider it on the scale of the entire country.

³ Dumitru Sandu, 2003.

⁴ Wood capitalization on a large scale is forbidden for those here because the nearby forests are in state custody, so that the gypsy inhabitants have to remain on craftsmanship and commercializing some wood things used in homes.

⁵ The most probable thing is that this strategy of declaring the nationality was imposed to the believers by the neo-protestants priests of the region.

⁶ Here we can add the envy of the orthodox community regarding the helping spirit of the neo-protestant community – a feeling able to develop a social binder of certain importance, but to split a group that was once united.

emigrants do not learn something new, but they practice what they had learned back home). In spite all these, the youthfulness of the community and, implicitly, of the pale relation with the brothers in faith in the West are some features that demand the changing of the initial theory in a study of a certain territory. We consider that this surplus of wariness is useful given the fact that almost all the authors that studied the subject of emigration forget the fact that these channels can be regarded *only in their initial phase*, the other steps of evolution being, in reality, more complex; most of the channels, no matter the beginning, become, in a short period of time, rather familiar channels, they cross together, constantly changing and connecting to other synapses with roots in the interior of the discussed region⁷. If the methodological procedure of taking out these networks has an advantage from a technical point of view, still "the blood voice" is the one that imposes in the end, this being the engine of the changing towards some symbiotic formulas such as confessional-familiar network or ethnic-familiar (there are – isn't it so? – mix families), that are much closer to the reality.

Leaving behind these theoretical considerations, the neo-protestant confessional networks have but 3,2% of the entire emigrants in the depression, but this low number is set off by a supplementary obedience (group and individual one), by a superior discipline, efficiency and output. Focusing the analysis on other fields, this rate shouldn't be neglected if take into consideration the weight of these beliefs of the population from here – 1, 45% at the last census. But, the cohesion and consistency features of these networks are proved (again) better by the Țolici village that sustain half of the networks cogulated in Petricani, to a population that is only 28,1% of the entire commune. At the same time, some other two rates illustrates this reality – the amount of integrating the Țolici emigrants in such networks raises to 83,3% and the average dimension of the network reaches the maximum degree for the entire depression and that is 3,75 individuals.

But the confessional networks, even if formed quickly, can be identified in the urban territory, as well, where, in spite of the fact that the weight and the dynamic of these religious beliefs are lower (92 individuals in 1992 and 108 in 2002), the starting point is characterized mainly by a less stressing poverty. Here, the adhesive ones, mainly Romanians, developed new emigration networks towards Spain and especially towards the United States of America (having as favourite a reaching point the city of Chicago).

Starting from these preliminary observations that show the subsidiary role (at least for the moment) of the population in the Neamț Depression played by the networks animated by ethnic or confessional resorts, we will draw attention towards the networks with maximum consistency, both in number and in the degree of loading – the family networks. The main feature of this type of network is an indicator that certifies and characterizes with accuracy the primary stage in which the emigration of a population is; We consider axiomatic the statement that the relative bondages between the individuals are always stronger than the ethnic or the confessional ones, so that they are rapidly and

⁷ There must be said that the analyzing of the emigration channels for a neighbouring territory implies the acceptance of some uncertainties, given the fact that some individuals might be connected to some networks outside the depression. But such deviations – unavoidable in such inquiries – are within the admissible degrees, the final conclusions not being seriously changed.

at maximum intensity speeded up inside these actions⁸. But, from the evolutionary point of view, most certain is that on the way the emigration phenomenon amplifies and gets older, the outrun of the family networks will lower to other types of networks' advantage, mainly the friend and neighbour networks. This happens – as we could see - either by changing, or simply by the growing of the implied amounts.

The evolution of the *neighbour networks* will be interesting to follow, but an analyse of such a type raises insuperable difficulties regarding the delimitation of the lines. More exactly, for a zone of old population – as that in the Moldavian sub-Carpathian is – the neighbouring and relation networking meet frequently and the individuals know (and recognize) exactly even the most distant relatives (either blood or in-laws relatives). More, we do not have the correct criteria to appreciate the neighbouring, even if they are immediate or more distant ones. We can not separate the streets (the lanes) and even if we could, what about the crossings? Near neighbourings place side by side, but they unite, as well, so that the delimitation could be only an artificial one, for the rural community in here does not contain cleavages. The only valid method to delimitate these networks can be found inside more isolated villages, but it's only for the oldness of the populating process that this kind of situation is almost absent in our territory that interests us.

Leaving these behind, one can observe that the pre-eminence of the family networks is proved, fairly, by the fact that, given the results of our study, 48,1% of the implied individuals come to such networks to leave, to temporary stay or to obtain a job in a foreign country (table 1). This general amount does not substantially changes not even when the analysis takes into account the two averages – 48,6% in Târgu Neamț and 47,7% in the rural region. The reason for this similitude is given by the fact that this is a small town, with human relationships based more on tradition – rural relationship, on outlook agreement and not in the least on the same productive economical-occupation⁹.

It is interesting to find out about the commune reparation, those that are part of the network, in general, and in familiar networks, in special. The conclusion that derives from analyzing the data in the figure 10 can be this: the more a commune is more advanced, richer, the more the percent of emigrants included in a family network (or confession-family one) is lower. We can say that where there is no need for more than an individual in a family to emigrate, poverty is not a real problem, there are methods by which those that remain home can round up their incomes. This theory can explain the number of only 42,7% in the Vânători commune, the 48,1% in Agapia or, on the other hand, the Petricani average of 70,3%. In the case of Grumăzești the high average of 55,1% is not a real indicator of the general poverty, but a reflection of the poverty in the village of Curechiștea, previously identified, as well, and of the high number of inactive individuals (but it could be because of the supplementary mercantilism of those in Topolița and in Grumăzești).

⁸ We have to mention that during this study only the networks based on direct and close relation will be analysed, eliminating in-laws – that have, certainly, an important role, but because of their large diversity are more difficult to correctly quantify. Otherwise, this method carries the feature of a scientific common law, as some other authors show (D. Diminescu – 1996, D. Sandu – 1999, S. Potot – 2000).

⁹ The psychologists sustain the fact that the outlook – individual and the collective one – is a result of the life experience (one's own experience or the common one). Regarding this, the community gathers more on natural and socio-historical conditions.

<i>Town/Commune</i>	<i>Emigrantes in the family networks (%)</i>	<i>Emigrants in the confessional networks (%)</i>	<i>Lonely emigrants or in other type of networks (%)</i>
Târgu Neamț	48,6	1,5	49,9
Agapia	48,1	0	51,9
Bălțătești	53,1	0	46,9
Grumăzești	55,1	0	44,9
Petricani	39,7	30,6	29,7
Vânători	42,5	0,5	57
Neamț Depression	48	3,4	48,6

Table 1

<i>Town/Commune</i>	<i>Average dimension of family networks (nr. of pers.)</i>	<i>Average dimension of confessional networks (nr. of pers.)</i>
Târgu Neamț	2,3	2,2
Agapia	2,23	0
Bălțătești	2,12	0
Grumăzești	2,53	0
Petricani	2,2	3,75
Vânători	2,2	0
Neamț Depression	2,3	3,17

Table 2

Still, this litmus characteristic regarding the emigration dynamics can be also found – in co-propriety – into another indicator: the average dimension of the network. The same logic – of the minimum number of individuals gone abroad for work needed by a family to obtain the hoped financial resources – leads us to the same dichotomy: home poverty (that is concrete one) versus the wealth (and this is relative) from abroad (table 2). It shouldn't be forgotten that the weak amount on a network unity can, in the same time, indicate the initial (juvenile) phase in which the emigration is found here in this moment, the average number is of 2,3 individuals/network being needed the title or *family regrouping* than that of network. Worthy of being remarked are the composite characteristics of these family networks, because, while in the case of the town the couple husband-wife predominates, in case of the village the most frequent are those of father-sun, brother-brother, and the others, types, the main family weight being lowered. This feature can be explained through the fact that, beyond the financial profitableness, in a

village administration even the presence of a single individual is imperative (this is a necessity but, also, the common outlook nobody will deny).

It is obvious that the singular analyses of the average dimension of a network is not enough to fully reveal the inner structural features, more information could be added by ponderate ordering of the networks due to the members number (figure 1).

From this point of view, as it can be observed – and as it was expected, in the same time – the networks' weight is proportionally opposite to their dimension, those formed of two individuals forming two thirds of the total. Given this average amount the exceptions can't be explained through a general logic; as we have previously done, each case needs an individual analyses.

Thus, a more balanced disposing of the networks depending on the scale that was remarked for Târgu Neamț – with larger weight for the substantial networks – indicates an early emigration beginning (on the local scale), this disposing, with the same explanation, can be found only in the Grumăzești. An interesting analogy – unprecedented in this study – can be found between Petricani and Vânători, in both cases the networks with four members being inferior to those with five or more members. The same point for these two communities is the presence of Gypsy community (102 in Vânători in 2002), but while in the case of the Petricani commune they are in the confessional networks, it is possible that in Vânători *pure ethnic networks* could be found, because the weight of the neo-protestantism is meaningless (0,4% of the entire population). Agapia and Bălțătești form themselves a couple – only the former having three members networks – as an effect of a certain socio-economical emancipation (for the former) and of tradition (for the latter) that, when they went together have slowed down, in a way, the migration dynamics.

In comparison with some other types, the family networks have a distinctive technical feature extremely useful to such an analyse: can be related to a whole that reaches us through official ways. In this case, they can be related to the average number of individuals per family, our choice stopping at the year 1997, with a central position in the line of our data (figure 2). From this point of view the relation between the number of family members and the number of network members is the one that matters. The obtained result indicating the way in which the families are affected by this self-imposed form of detaching (with social consequences easily to anticipate). Thus, the maximum amount is hold by the Grumăzești commune, where, when they appear, these networks attract nearly 77,4% of a family members, putting the other way, three of four choose emigration, but here the supplementary contribution of the Curechiștea village changes the numbers in an increasing way. Agapia and Vânători have lower weights that do not go beyond 70%, these three communes showing a modernism in behaviour. In this field, the town of Târgu Neamț stands on an intermediary position, with an average number of 69,1% of the members, most probably the percentage being given by a more diverse and substantial job offer. Finally, the line is closed by Bălțătești (66,7%) and Petricani (65,5%), tradition and poverty influence explaining (frequently) this situation. All these percentages can be related to a depression average of 70,1% due to the condition in which the average number of the individuals in a family is 3,28.

Except quality and quantity, networks are characterized, also, by time, by the time in which they form. One of the first observations takes into account that the distance between two consecutive steps does not depend on the financial success of the predecessor (predecessors), but by the gaining of a legal and work residential status. And given the situation that these wishes can not be reached only when the law permits, comes the idea that the networks birth is directly related to the emigrants acceptance and insertion changing issues: the identification of this functional amendment impose us a different treatment to the older networks, that have roots before 2000 and recent networks, in a different field. One can expect that the dimensions of such an ensemble to depend on the experience. This is verified – all the networks that have five or more members are prior to the key year 2000, their founders being 25 – 40 years old men that emigrated between 1993 and 1999. Between this period of birth, the networks seldom gained new members, so that the difference of the time period between the two steps is a real big one, from 3 to 7 years, this being a period of lonely emigration conditioned not only by the state uncertainty, but of the high amount of financial cost of the emigration itself. Another factor is the emigration experience that had no spectacular degree, fear of the unknown used to be higher than the will of financial success.¹⁰ Minimizing this incipient stage role would be a mistake; even if it didn't manifest by significant waves, it was one of information gaining, both for the beginners and for those back home – a real lecture for the next emigrants that were able to form themselves a less idyllic image of the Western Europe, a more real one and, consequently, a more useful one.

The above statement can be itself delimited into peaces if we take into account the human quality of the initial waves – of course, this would be an approach without any numbers and, consequently, exposed to critics. The usage show that the first to be exposed to the emigration infection are the well gifted individuals (hard working, earnestness, etc) and the others, as well, the lawless ones, both in moral and penal. In this first stage, mediocrity is not so well represented, it has – so far – only a role of an abeyance. So, relaying on this informational pioneer wave there were two different images about the Occident: of the potential success through honest work and of sudden "success" (quick but risky) through less honest deeds – earlier and more visible was the opportunism character of the second , issues fully illustrated by the European mass-media in the beginning of the '90s.

After the first two steps of the initial stage of forming a network were made (and they were quite slow), the third step in a quicker one not only due to the network's strength, but – in the case of the population from the Neamț Depression – due to the fact it was done in 2000 or immediately after. In the mean time, there came a new different generation of networks with some distinctive features – this is the more frequent couple network, but that does not have the advantage of a certain beginning at the destination (that pioneer of the family). There is an explanation for these is related to the networks' dynamic – as we could see in constant changing – meanwhile new types of channels being activated, friend and neighbour one, that take over the loading of the family networks. Obviously, the family networks do not disappear and, especially after 2002 there can be seen another step in its evolution – multiple members' coming, two (three

¹⁰ This statement is true only for those in the Neamț Depression, on the national or regional scale the situation being different.

rarely) individuals at the same time or at short periods of time. But this new stage has another feature, individual comings remaining the most important, with annual regularity.

All these ideas treat only about the emigration networks' dynamics and features as a whole, without taking into consideration their external location. This gap can be eliminated by the searching the external situations, taking into account the destination intensification age, as well as by the emigration law status.

Thus, first of all we will analyze Italian networks (the older ones) and the Spanish ones (the more recent ones) that were formed in similar cultural and social environments (host Latin people, highly catholic) and on the background of the less harsh emigration laws, at least comparing to those in Germany, France or Great Britain.

It is worthy to remark that these two states that receive a high number of emigrants are recent destinations including for the European people (or even from the entire world), in both cases the bursting of this geographic-human phenomenon happened after the fall of the communism¹¹. Opposite to these, there are countries that take their emigrants for a long time from some other sources and they have the experience of such a socio-economical abrasion made by these waves (France, Great Britain, Low Countries), or they preferred – by changing the law – a relative tolerance because of the problems generated by the recent regrouping of the abroad fellow countrymen (Germany, Austria).

Coming back to what we have intended, there can be remarked the fact that experience differences (the baking process) of the two sub-systems prove to be clearly shaped, easy to notice even at a superficial analyses. It could be anticipated that the Italian "roots" – older, broader and well anchored – to generate a superior networking, obvious both in the networks; dimensions and in their features in every place (figure 3). For the entire specific spreading area the network volumetric scale is completed, following a rather decreasing ordering, the depression marked for the three individuals networks being a consequence of the supra-representation recorded in the next superior stage (five or more persons) in Petricani and Vânători (as a proof of the ethnic factor in the final administrative unity). This is also the feature of the Târgu Neamț, but here, the early beginning and, consequently, longer "pregnancy" of the emigration phenomenon entirely explains such a weight ordering. There must be taking into account this ordering of the "Italian" urban networks is not found in the earlier analyses over all emigrants' networks in the town –this observation proves once again the temporal individuals' moving from here to Italy.

In the syncopated ordering that was previously remarked in a general level can be explained through other side of the reality – the local lacking of the network's crowning. Thus, the tradition potential lacking among the villages that form the Bălțatești commune can be seen this time, as well, both by the presence of the dual networks that are over the average (83,3%), and by the missing of the most consistent ones (those larger than four individuals), both situations can be found both in the village of Bălțatești and in Ghindăuani, as well, but having different explanations (that were shown more than once in this analyses). The absence of the last category (the joint one) founded in the case of Agapia has, probably, as reason the local financial opportunities.

Taking into consideration all these notes, there can be remarked an equilibrium in the scale classes ordering for the "Italian" networks, a feature that can be taken as an

¹¹ It will be interesting to follow Ireland's same evolution, that have many common features with the Italian and Spanish ones, but it is recently activated.

ambiguous one, but if we look comparatively is justified by the similar Spanish groups (figura 4). Spanish networks have a weak representation for the entire depression (a pale one) and have no more than four individuals, and in a specific analyses they can miss (is the case of Petricani and Agapia communes) or can have a fable shape (for Bălătești, Grumăzești and Vânători where the double networks' lift is at its highest). There is also in this given situation that the most important is the urban emigration, the one that have discovered and "infected" the rural population with the Spanish destination. The networks are described through three classes only for Târgu Neamț, classes that have opposite dimensions to their loading degree – relevant for the forming and the evolution way (a logical one) of such networks.

Given the data related to the states that have a lenient legislation regarding the emigration, we believe that is also necessary to analyse even the features of the emigration networks founded in the most reluctant countries to such movements.

From many of them we have chosen Great Britain and Germany, both with strict rules about this, harshly applied, but, also, with higher values regarding the Neamț Depression number of emigrants. As anyone can see in the two diagrams (figure 5 and figure 6), here, the harsh conditions of social insertion can seldom permit the forming of emigration networks, and if they are, they can be found in an incipient stage and formed of two individuals. In both cases there are differences, the only resemblance of the two situations is the city to which Grumăzești, Petricani and Vânători (for the "British networks) or Bălătești (for the "German" ones) are added. The existence of this syncretism in the networks' evolution, in spite of early goings towards these destinations (first of all to Germany), reveals – once again – the supplementary importance of the law factor in comparison with the economical/material one in founding of such functional systems (table 3). This logic explains the importance of integrating into the networks the emigrants that reached Cyprus (49%), while the percentage of France (40%) or even Belgium (18,2%) need individual research. While the main population that emigrate toward France is formed mainly by Gypsies from Țolici, the "Belgian" networks have older roots, prior to the year of 1989 (a fact confirmed also by the research in the field that I have done).

Destination weight of Neamț Depression inside the emigration networks(%)	
ITALY	56,5
CYPRUS	49
FRANCE	40
SPAIN	37,6
GREAT BRITAIN	21
BELGIUM	18,2
GERMANY	12,1

Table 3

Conclusions

The qualitative-quantitative research of the international emigration is a difficult, complex and almost impossible to standardize task; and this can be shown by the many variables that form the features/behaviour of each commune. Ethnic, confessional,

professional and economical (even minor sometimes) differences – all these reflected in the local outlook and habit that form a well shaped image – can increase higher, so that combining the same elements can often result different elements. In other cases, the analog reason-effect is just a curtain, for the way between the two points has different ways and, especially, functional explanations that blast out any trace of synonymy. In this maze, the full standardization is forbidden, and the help of some logical schemes can be useful up to a single level, from where "the noise" disturbs the research process. Thus, founding of a common theme is a risky wish, obstructed by the fact that it seems to go from one case to another and from one analyses to another, so that the only (and the most correct one) solution remains the individual understanding.

For the moment, on the national scale, the 2002 census and the Romanian Year-Book of Statistics (2003) allow us to know (but in a relative degree) *from where it goes and where it reaches*. But these limits are not enough for an exact understanding of the process, because there is a certain amount of deeds and reasons that can't be understood. But, there can be found some other answers through the conducted polls, to some other questions (*do people leave? or who and when do they leave?*). To a certain scale, these gaps can be filled up by the data numbers of the Western European institution (especially those in Italy) that analyses emigration, but they have a limited utility because the results are only for the whole (legal) Romanian emigration from a certain village – and this is enough for the given country's government, but it hides entirely the historical, economical and cultural differences of the native place.

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