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Parag Khanna,
Move: Das Zeitalter der Migration

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Parag Khanna – just like Pankaj Mishra¹ and Raghuram Rajan² – represents a generation of young Indian observers of global change. Their popularity and recognition stems from the reflections on the key role of Indian soft power, the importance of talented migrants in promoting the image of their homelands, and the fate of migrants who decide to build their future abroad. Khanna's book, titled *The Future is Asian*, was published by Vector Publishing House in 2020, while the book dedicated to his academic supervisor David Held, titled *Move: How Mass Migration Will Reshape the World – and What It Means for You*, was published in German by Rowohlt publishing house as *Move: Das Zeitalter der Migration*.

The introduction to the book is accompanied by the author's several predictions, one of them being Khanna's reflections on where people will live in 2050. At the end of the book, there is an extensive list of sources and references to the

¹ See: P. Mishra, *Age of Anger. A history of the present*, London: Penguin Books, 2018.

² See: R. Rajan, *The Third Pillar. How markets and the state leave the community behind*, London: Penguin Books, 2019.

works cited. The core of the book consists of 15 chapters, the titles of which reflect the research field specified above: 1. Mobility is destiny; 2. The global struggle for young talent; 3. Nationalism and the lost battle for talent; 4. Generation move; 5. The next American dream; 6. Countries of Europe; 7. Bridges between regions; 8. North; 9. Will the South survive; 10. Asians arrive; 11. Retreat or renewal in the Pacific; 12. Quantum man; 13. Find your own identity; 14. *Pax urbanica*; and 15. Civilization 3.0.

As a strategic thinker, the author is interested in socio-economic geography – chiefly in political, demographic, technological, and climate issues – and applies this field of knowledge to demonstrate that mobility is the destiny of humanity, especially when it is faced with the need to tackle various threats and crises, such as pandemics, or catastrophes. Khanna also looks at the growing importance of the gig-economy in China and emphasises the role of not only migration to other countries, but also internal migrations, e.g. those that are taking place in China. He believes that “maybe today’s masses of international migrants are the most influential group in the world” (p. 36) and notes that the globe has been covered by zones (red, green, and blue), whose nomenclature refers to the conditions of functioning, the possibility of moving around, and the quality of life. In this way, J.R. McNeill’s hypothesis of the “great acceleration” and the growing relationship between man-technology and nature is confirmed. These bonds seem to have affected the silent generation (i.e. those born between 1922 and 1945) less and more, but play an increasingly bigger role on the next generations of Baby Boomers (born 1946–1964), Generation X (born 1965–1979), Generation Y (millennials), and Generation Z (the so-called “iGeneration”). Khanna points to the fact that while national identity was the element that dominated in the past, the importance of generational identity is what is coming to the fore these days. He refers to the research of Karl Mannheim and Ulrich Beck, who prove that intergenerational identity is built on the basis of common experiences. Such experiences can be the feeling of belonging to the precariat, or living according to the 996 model, which rests on the idea of working from 9 to 9, and getting 6 hours of sleep. The interdisciplinary value of the publication is further enhanced by the observations that not only the literary and the film world both participate in the transmission of intergenerational experiences, as evidenced by the overt reference that the book makes to the film *Parasite*, directed by Bong Joon-ho. Other common intergenerational experiences have become: global activism, endorsed by Greta Thunberg, protests against seniors (hashtag okboomer), the actions of cosmopolitan writers (Ian McEwan, Kazuo Ishiguro, Elif Shafak) and politician Sadiq Khan. Technological changes have paved the way for futuristic reflections and outlooks, in which the quantum epithet dominated, in relation to considerations about man, the world, the future, or physics. Global cities, such as Hong Kong and Dubai, have become habitats for all nations,

clusters of civicism. Having said this, despite the growing number of relationships of people from different parts of the world, the problems of ethnic ghettos still remain to be solved.

In light of the ongoing changes and processes pointed out from a sociological perspective, Khanna has decided to indicate four possible scenarios of the future: 1. The scenario of a regional fortress – similar to the *status quo*, where the rich countries from North America, Europe and Asia want to limit interactions and strive for closed systems; 2. The scenario of the new Middle Ages – with low migration, lack of investment in sustainable development, confiscation of energy resources, a wave of deaths caused by natural disasters, and the survivors of clusters in feudal urban regions, reminiscent of Hanseatic League; 3. The “Barbarians *ante portas*” scenario, in which civil wars are fought over water and other resources; 4. “The northern lights lovers” scenario of aurora lovers, which rests on a vision of solving problems, creating an archipelago of sustainable settlements, built on the basis of innovation, assimilation culture and demographic development. The analysis of these scenarios has given rise to the question of how Khanna defines assimilation and integration, and what tasks and challenges he sees for these processes.

Khanna notes that the consequences of the impact of population growth on security were analysed in the US already in the 1970s. For example, the *National Security Study Memorandum. NSSM 200: Implications of Worldwide Population Growth* (December 10, 1974) by Kissinger made recommendations for addressing the challenges of demographic change. Many of them, e.g. those related to the situation of women, should be implemented further, for example in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has caused an increase in violence in a number of areas (e.g. family issues, as well as professional and residential areas). Khanna also draws attention to the problems of stateless people (e.g. Palestinians, and Kurds). He cites Jonathan Haidt’s research, which shows an increase in a trend dubbed “anchoring globalization” among the mobile youth. He boldly and provocatively calls the generation of Erasmus children “the first generation of post-national Europe” (p. 92) and expresses the opinion that globalists accept realism more than nationalists. He takes a critical approach to populists – e.g. Latin American socialists, or Arab Islamists – and notes that liberals are winning in large cities, e.g. in Warsaw, Budapest, Prague, or Bratislava. He also points to the fact that many countries are reviving discussion on the obligation of military service, and the role of the army, mentioning the example of Mexico, where there is an ongoing debate about the use of uniformed forces to combat drug addiction and crack down on crime.

Khanna has become interested in the ways of using common goods and has referred extensively to the achievements of Michael Bauwens, an expert on technology and the impact of Peer-to-Peer technology on social movements, and Nobel laureate Elinor Ostrom, who deals with the methods of solving common

problems by local communities. He has also been inspired by the research of Alasdair MacIntyre, who looks at the importance of local communities, and Indian economist Raghuram Rajan, who focuses on inclusive localism. The essence of Rajan's reflections can be found in his conclusion that the state and the market should not dominate local communities.

In order to point out the positive role of mobility in improving the standard of living of American society, Khanna has referred explicitly to the views of Raj Chetty, an Indian-born professor at Harvard University. The trailer, the unquestionable symbol of American mobility, reflects the lifestyle of many Americans who have made bold decisions to find a place on earth for themselves, due to various circumstances of an economic, social or climatic nature. In American society, the story of Gloria Steinem, feminist whose autobiography *My Life on the Road* was cinematized in *The Glorias* in 2020, has become commonly known. Also in other countries, there has been a growing awareness that immigration policy is an element of economic policy, if only because of the growing shortage of caregivers of seniors. Among the people coming to Europe, there are not only many immigrants from the South, but also a large number of Americans. The arrival of migrants onto the Old Continent is often associated with the transfer of disputes from their countries of origin to new places of residence, including Turks living in Germany, who keep arguing about the policy of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. Another thing is that Khanna is critical of German politics, claiming that anti-capitalist populism prevails in Berlin. The expert underestimated the policy of the Alternative for Germany, accusing it of "political and economic Darwinism", reminded about the slogans like "children instead of Indians" spread across Germany, which accompanied the debate on immigration policy. Khanna notes that in the opinion of Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, German society is not tolerant. A closer observation of the attitudes towards migrants in Europe has led the strategist to conclude that other countries, such as Switzerland and Austria, are also adopting a stronghold attitude, their communities showing hostility towards outsiders. At the same time, the researcher noticed difficulties in the implementation of migration policy and is mainly concerned with assimilation policy, not integration policy. Mr. Khanna recalled that after the admission of people from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan to Europe in 2015, violence and resentment against migrants intensified, attacks on asylum centres increased and support for right-wing extremist parties went up. An example of actions taken towards immigrants presented in the book is the functioning of the Academy of Integration in Bergamo, Italy, where immigrants participate in courses that get them ready to start work.

The lack of water in Syria, Iraq, Iran or Pakistan and the rise in temperatures in many regions of the world have provoked Khanna to reflect on how people will use the Arctic in the future. The author has made reference to the *Climate Resilience*

Screening Index, considering the possibility of greening the ever-white territory of Greenland, and building a new Hanseatic League in the northern hemisphere. He has also wondered if the South would survive. He stresses the fact that a 2019 survey of the communities of Lebanon and Iraq shows that people expect the government to focus on economic policy, not religious policy. He warns that Egypt is becoming a civilization close-circuit territory, doomed to collapse as a result of the water deficit, and that the basic institutions in Egypt, such as the family, have been facing many crises, such as an increase in the number of divorces. Egypt's problem is the loss of importance of the Suez Canal. As in Egypt, Iranian youth are protesting because of their belief that there is no strategy for the future. Khanna also draws attention to the problems of South American countries, including Argentina, Venezuela and Chile. He focused not only on the challenges posed by the rise of populism and the migration crisis, but also analysed the actions taken in relation to the melting of the glaciers in the Andes. The water collected as a result of the warming process is essential for the life of people migrating to Santiago de Chile. The population of the capital of Chile exceeds half of the population of the state. The scale of migration in other regions of the world, e.g. in Asia, is also going up as a result of climate issues, along with the struggle for talent and growth opportunities. As a real futurist, the author points to the economic and demographic relations between Saudi Arabia and India, reminding the readers that about 4 million Indians live in Saudi Arabia. Khanna delves into economically motivated migration waves, whose major goal is to improve the comfort of life (e.g. better medical care); he also looks at the emotional motives, which include, among others, the need to build interpersonal ties. He explains that talent is characterised by statelessness: it can foster promotion, and it can be sold. In this way, he has taken up the topic of identity search, postulating the notion of "global passports," and implementing the *ius doni* scheme, based on the idea of citizenship through investments.

The book, undoubtedly characterised by outstanding erudition and filled with several insightful observations about the changes taking place in the world, has been written from the perspective of an Indian scholar who is interested in the fate of Indians scattered around the world. Khanna reminds the readers, among others, about the families of Sikhs from Punjab, who live in Northern Italy, and who are engaged in the production of Parmesan cheese. However, the author has also included a series of observations about the situation of families, generations, demands of protest groups and political parties from other countries. By reading the chapters, the readers get an opportunity to learn about the author's views on a number of issues, as on the one hand he draws attention to the growing importance of mega-cities, and on the other hand sees the advantages of living in small towns. The analysis of the content featured in the book confirms that as an expert on Indian matters, Khanna advocates the pursuit of a global community in which technologies will be

used to overcome the destabilisation caused by human and natural activities. He argues that we need innovation, which would connect the populations living in smaller communities, including small towns. He sees the future through the lenses of what he labels as “diplomacity”, a merger of diplomacy done among cities and believes that the future may be moving towards *pax urbanica*. He has also been involved in using innovations to combat high temperatures in mega-cities, such as the “Cooling Singapore” project, launched in Singapore.

According to the author, the bonds established may be conducive to building tolerance and attitudes of openness. This said, the expert is aware of the conflict potential resulting from the growing insurmountable threats and deficits that the inhabitants of the global village are currently facing. Khanna expresses his deep understanding for the migration decisions of people who decide to look for a better place to live. He points to both the negative and positive consequences of emigration decisions. It seems that he himself – a migrant, a citizen of the world, and an observer of global phenomena – has collected many testimonies about the risks and challenges of migration processes, which he has decided to share from both an academic and an emotional perspective. The book has become a true bestseller, and the author’s voice has been recognised as one of the most potent voices that testifies to the great activity and understanding of the need to share one’s views with the audience. It is doubtful that Khanna’s arguments will convince the supporters of building walls and fortresses, but one can still trust that because the book contains so many observations referring to current discussions and because it fits well into the ongoing discourse about the changes taking place and the threats that need addressing, it may be a real eye-opener – at least to some.