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Papeles
de Población, vol. 14, núm. 55, enero-marzo, 2008, pp. 95-116,
Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México
México

Available in: <http://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=11205505>



Papeles de Población,
ISSN (Printed Version): 1405-7425
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Causes, consequences and impact of migrations in Latin America

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Resumen

Este trabajo aborda las migraciones latinoamericanas producidas en el marco de la globalización. El autor identifica las que ocurren en Latinoamérica hacia países desarrollados como parte de una tendencia mundial de carácter restrictivo en los países de destino, determinada por gobiernos que buscan evitar flujos migratorios no deseados hacia sus territorios. Esta situación restrictiva tiende a seleccionar migrantes de acuerdo con las necesidades inmediatas que tiene un país para cubrir puestos de trabajo, atraiendo así a su sociedad a los científicos, tecnólogos y especialistas que le hacen falta para cubrir sus propias necesidades, fenómeno migratorio llamado *brain drain* o 'drenaje de cerebros'. Sin embargo, el autor también advierte de un nuevo proyecto de recolonización que traerá nuevos flujos migratorios hacia Latinoamérica, debido a su disponibilidad de agua potable y alimentos.

Palabras clave: flujos migratorios, fuga de cerebros, globalización migración calificada, América Latina.

Abstract

Causes, consequences, effects and impact of the migrations in Latin America

This work approaches Latin American migrations produced in the framework of globalization. The author identifies those which take place in Latin America toward developed countries as part of the worldwide tendency with restrictive character in the destination countries, determined by governments which try to avoid undesired migratory flows into their territories. This restrictive situation tends to select migrants according to the immediate necessities of a country to cover job positions, hence attracting to their societies scientists, technologists and specialists, who they lack, to meet their own demands; a migratory phenomenon called brain drain. However, the author also warns on a new re-colonization project which will bring new migratory flows to Latin America because of its water and food supplies.

Key words: migratory flows, brain drain, globalization, qualified migration, Latin America.

Introduction

Since the end of the XIX Century up to now one can identify four significant moments in the migratory phenomenon in Latin America and the Caribbean: The first one is linked to transoceanic migrations, the second to internal

migrations which are a product of the economic crisis in the 30's and 40's, a third movement is seen with the transborder migrations and the fourth is related to the migrations produced by globalization. These are the object of this work.

The first migration, from the end of the XIX century to the middle of the XX, mobilized approximately 55 million Europeans and was a relief valve that allowed the organization or reorganization of the European states. The second, a consequence of the economic crisis of the 30's, damaged the rural sphere, and generated a migration from the country to the cities. The third migration, a product of political, economic and social conflicts, generated a migration between bordering countries since the 60's. The fourth occurs as from the last two decades of the XX century until now and, according to some estimations, it has mobilized more than 150 million people worldwide who do not reside in their country of origin at the moment. According to Cepal (2004), in 2000, 20 million Latin Americans lived out of their native country.

The current paradox lies in the fact that globalization must, hypothetically, homogenize the planetary market, in which a deep structural inequality exists. But the real place where globalization is constituted is the social imaginary, constituted from the power of the cultural industry. That is, any inhabitant of the planet should have access to a TV screen, because it makes people equal, it informs them beyond their cultural, social or economic level and even if they are illiterate. That fact transforms people into potential consumers and it also compels them to look for a way of consume compulsively. In the immense peripheral territories of globalization, inequalities are increasingly deeper and exclusion augment at all levels.

From this perspective, the French academic and economist, Destanne de Bernis developed some years ago a disturbing argument in an interview. He held that inequality and regional penuries that characterize the current late capitalism are not just an adjust period as Neoliberal economist affirm. For him, it is the contrary, they indicate that the model is definitely blocked in its expansion; it is in a state of slow but irreversible decomposition.

He also stated that there is a symptomatic factor of this situation that can accelerate the collapse, the migratory flow. Migration is, for the 5,000 million excluded, increasingly more informed about their exclusion, the only possibility of incorporation to the consumption world, universally socialized through mass media. Violence, a product of the struggle between the massive invaders and the 700 million consumers, seems to increase progressively their molecular explosions to a planetary level.

In this context, we are interested in tackling the causes, consequences, the effect and impact of the migratory Latin American movements in this new century.

Current trends

Within the important series of analysis that exists in regard to the migratory phenomenon, I would like to highlight two worldwide opposing tendencies. Both have an impact on societies which emit and receive people, and produce positive and negative effects. The first one is linked to the situations of migratory restriction, which can be assumed as political *strictu sensu*, and are derived from projects of different states or as part of the own dynamic of action of a government to avoid non desired migratory flows to and from their borders. This kind of actions is related to the migratory controls, discrimination, exclusion and the persecution, among others. This restrictive situation tends to state the selection of migrants, allowing them to access a country according to the immediate needs that it has in terms of job vacancies. Example: Norway, Spain, Canada, United States, among others. The conditions are favorable to the center that achieves to impose a system of selective migration. Thus, this society attracts scientists, technologists and specialists that it requires to satisfy its needs. This migratory phenomenon has been called “brain drain”. The control of the migratory process is in the hands of the countries of the North, who grant visas, but in a limited way, and only to those they choose. (Oteiza, 1986)

The second tendency in the international migration is that linked to more flexible situations, which propose free traffic or mobility, people settlement, respect to human rights and equality of rights over nationality. This tendency is related to the conception linked to the socialization of the human relationships and the respect to the alterity.

Cracking of the originary ideas.

Several causes have been attributed to the decision of emigrate. In order to explain them several theories have been postulated. Also, there are analyses performed from different disciplines, such as Demography, Economy, History, Psychology, Law, Sociology, Geography, Ecology, Political Science, etcetera.

The explanations that give account of the reasons of this phenomenon are linked to the lack of work, political-ideological prosecution, insecurity as a product of violence, wars, ethnical religious prosecution, socioeconomic problems, improvement of quality of life, the search of the individual or familial development, employment opportunities and education, access to goods and services, among other.

The inquiry and analysis that have been made on this phenomenon allow to state that the decision of emigrate, the ultimate responsibility, is the consequence of a complex process. In it itself, the social imaginary, historically constituted, cracks in its future project in the presence of a reality and of a hegemonic discourse that breaks the expectations of personal fulfillment and security, not only economic, but also political and social. In order to avoid the personal collapse some choose to escape from this desperate situation, a sort of dead end. Emigration will be the possibility of being apparently entire, with the idea that the new country will allow to find such things that the country of origin lacks. But the conflict will not disappear, they will take it with them for the rest of their life. In this way, their fears will be denied, they will become aware of their situation, something which will prevent them from reverting the process and they will be condemned to a false conformist integration that will not allow them to find alternatives to improve their life, so that migration becomes unnecessary.

The migratory decision, then, would be founded on a complex combination of internal and external factors, among the most significant external ones we highlight:

1. Lack of alternatives to achieve their occupational goals.
2. Social uncertainty about the economic future.
3. General social insecurity in regard to the increase of violence.
4. Unsatisfied basic needs.

Among the internal factors we highlight:

1. Frustration in regard to life expectations.
2. Frustration in regard to personal fulfillment.
3. Generational command linked to the community of the familial migratory chain.
4. Access to information about the options in the exterior.

5. Conviction in regard to the impossibility of the ethnic-valorative realization in the society of origin.

As Maslow states, human being is objectively oriented towards the search of goals and objectives to satisfy its needs, both biological and cognitive, and in the ejector country, the conditions to achieve those objectives are eliminated by the constant crisis situation and perpetual violence. Also, taking into consideration McClelland's argumentations, we will be again in a situation where migration may appear as a possible alternative, given the fact that, according to this author, all needs are apprehended, to the extent that they create a favorable environment to modify qualitative and quantitatively the need of achievement in the level of aspirations.

From this general approach the following assumptions arise:

1. The working uncertainty determines the causes of frustration in the economic fulfillment, which lead to create expectations of finding a better situation in the life in the exterior of the own community of origin.
2. The insecurity produced by the increase of social violence creates ethnic-valorative conflicts, bringing about tendencies to leave the community of the country of origin, depending on the case.
3. The lack of access to opportunities to achieve personal fulfillment leads to social frustration, which produces a discontent with the situation of the community or country of residence.
4. Migration of qualified human resources is induced and is a fundamental part of the project of concentration of intelligence in the central countries.

General consequences.

Migratory flows produce, as we mentioned before, a series of consequences related to the ejector and recipient countries. In the country of origin, social and political conflict could be diminished when a considerable percentage of the working population decides to emigrate. The unemployment and discontent levels would decrease, since apparent possibilities would be created, and they would be a product of this movement of people towards other regions. The labor force that remains in the region can have a greater possibility of joining the labor market, for competence has decreased. This last perspective, called relief valve,

has been accepted by some interpretative frames that consider migration of human resources, and specially qualified ones, as a process of traffic of human capital, which allows a more efficient allocation of resources worldwide.

There is another vision on the issue which states that the loss of population creates a decline in the number of possibilities of consumption in economies whose potential development is based, in part, on the activation of their internal market.

A third posture states that emigration can increase the capacity of consumption of those that remain in the region and have a degree of kinship with those who left, provided that the migrants have been integrated to the recipient society, so that they are in a position to send part of the surplus money they earn in the recipient country to their families.

In order for this to happen subjects are conditioned so that they make a decision that, generally speaking, they never process totally. As a matter of fact, such decision is the result of an introjective message, a source of the ordinary consensus. It makes a set of people to emigrate, as an exit to the limitations imposed in the country of origin.

The sociocultural imaginary thus constituted determines them, building the fantasies supported on certain values that subsumes the population in false interpretations of the reality. They are expressed through the frustration of the personal fulfillment or development and through the impossibility of an ascending social mobility, a good quality of life, or even real expectations to achieve it. Not only will their decision be determined by a basic dissatisfaction in regard to that which their country has to offer them, but also by the imaginary opportunities that arise from the structure of the labor market, the cultural framework and the general social status of the country to which they go to.

It is based on these reasons that their decision will be directed towards a more definitive emigration rather than a circumstantial one. A phenomenon that is strengthen when the transfer occurs towards countries where the emigrant people suppose they can be assimilated with their families in more advantageous social and labor conditions than those of their country of origin.

The current situation of globalized capitalism left a while ago the innocent or cynic idea of McLuhan in regard to the “global village without borders”. We could argue that the alternative opening of borders is a wicked way of extending the domination of the central or hegemonic countries over the peripheral or hegemonized through the exploitation of their labor force at a low cost and their natural resources.

Illegal migrants are a topic in the agenda, but there is no doubt that they can be functional, given the fact that when a group of interest or pressure needs surplus labor work, the migratory limitations disappear.

In the case of the qualified human resources (QHR) the selection to cover the needs allows central countries to find a subject on which they have not invested anything whatsoever; they will only benefit from its potential.

Visualizing the great opportunities.

The recipient country, in the imaginary, is a space full of great opportunities and income. The search for the best conditions of life motorize the migratory movements, whose political, economic and social consequences, cause, in many cases, conflict situations in the recipient country. Labor competence might increase, new shanty towns may appear, an increase of discrimination and xenophobia, etcetera. It might happen that the less qualified workers are harmed by the loss of jobs, which will end up in the hands of immigrants, or in the decrease of their salary.

Some of the positive effects of emigration are related to the commercial achievements that can be developed and to the remittances. I will stop here to discuss this effect that is so trendy nowadays.

The remittances are indicators of the effect of migration. A consequence of the social conflict which expels great contingents of people that send money for their families to try to escape from the economic crisis, which, supposedly, would decrease the private socioeconomic conflict of that family which receives the money. It is intended for remittance-receiving societies to believe that this money will contribute to the general development of the economy of the country, but as a matter of fact, if we observe carefully the amounts that are received, how they do this and whom they are directed, we will notice that they do contribute, but only as a complement to the basic family income of those in most need. I am prompted to say that if this amount of money came in a single pack, it could be used to set in motion social policies of a different kind, but since remittances come fragmented in as many pieces as migrants send money, they can only be used for the family consumption.

If we use the same equation that the macroeconomic analysts use to get to know the income per capita of a country, and we divide the received remittance amount by the amount of population, we will find that the sums would only be enough to complete, in a minimal way, the basic family income. And despite the

fact that this is a considerable amount, especially for the families in poverty and extreme poverty situations, it will not solve the problem of the great poor majorities of our underdeveloped societies.

The amount of money received from exterior remittances is still unknown in Argentina, given the fact that, above all, no system has been developed to control this kind of income. The same situation occurs in most Latin American countries, except in those cases in which remittance revenue has become a substantial part of the national economy. Such is the case of Mexico, Brazil, El Salvador, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Colombia and Ecuador, among others. The money that is given by hand does not appear in the official records, such as the case of relatives or travel friends who visit the recipient country, or when the money is delivered by mail, in a parcel or a book. For instance, in 2003, Mexico received an approximate amount of 14,500 million USD through remittances and by 2005 it received almost 22,000 million. 2,700 million USD arrived to Dominican Republic in said year. In 2003, Colombia received 2,400 million USD through the same concept and in 2005, 3,800 million. El Salvador informed that in 2003 it received 2,000 million USD and in 2005 it received 2,800 million. In the case of Guatemala in 2003 the revenues were of 2,000 million. In the case of Cuba, during the same year, remittance revenue totaled circa 1,000 million USD, before the restrictions imposed by the government of the United States for the delivery of remittances in general terms. Ecuador received around 1,000 million USD in 2003 and in 2005, 2,260 million USD. All these numbers are mentioned by the World Bank in different reports. If we take into account the amount of total population of each country and gross domestic product (GDP), we would observe that the received figures amount in most cases to 10 percent of the country's total revenues by production and export.

According to the World Bank, in 2005, remittances of Latin Americans and people from the Caribbean reached 48,300 million USD.

Among the negative effects of emigration we find the loss of young working population, therefore the ageing of the community, the reduction of qualified human resources, familiar fragmentation and the psychosocial problems that migration produces, such as those derived from the loss of a member of the family, and those personal and emotional problems that married couples must confront due to the physical separation.

In regard to the cost that this kind of emigration represents for the developing countries, several estimations have tried to amount it. Thus, a project that was performed in Canada stated that Third World countries contributed with 10,000

million USD in the last 25 years. In Hong Kong, the calculation of emigrants from 1987 to 1989 would represent 74,400 man-years of university education. The cost of human capital appears then as a transference that countries in development perform. In it, one can quantify the value that the reproduction and capitalization of such resources represent.

Undoubtedly, and given the historical moment in which we live, the migration of qualified human resources is an essential part of the concentration of the intelligence project lead by the central countries. Besides, for countries which are already poor in terms of physical capital the loss of their most valuable human capital might, one day, constitute one of the most serious obstacles in their development processes.

Among the positive effects of immigration we find the incorporation of the labor force, the rise in consumption, collection through the payment of taxes.

Among the negative effects we can mention the problems of integration and adaptation, labor competition, new shanty cities, increment of discrimination and xenophobia, fall of the salaries of the domestic workers because of the competence with emigrants, selection of the labor force (for instance: Spain's immigration laws). If we add to this the fact that governments lack of coherent social and demographic policies to face the migration problems, and that the irregular migratory population puts pressure on the labor market, we will observe how the effects of the migratory movements have an impact on labor market, on health systems, on the public services (water, electricity) and on all of the structures of the ejecting and recipient countries.

Although the migrating process implies considerable efforts and sacrifices for the emigrant workers, their suffering does not end when they arrive to their destination. On the contrary, they will have to dodge greater obstacles, since they will confront numerous ways of discrimination in the job they perform, the salaries they receive, in their labor career and in the risks of unemployment (Stalker, 1994).

Hard work conditions to achieve their own support, to recover what was paid to the mediators and to help their relatives. The salaries that emigrants receive are low because their employers take advantage of their illegal condition and their lack of legal protection. They work more hours, they are not paid what is agreed and their documents are kept so that they do not complain or leave. In addition to this, their labor rights are denied, this including union freedom. They also lack an authority to file complaints to out of fear to deportation if they do. Employers, on their side, commit tax evasion, since the illegal worker is not included in the

income tax return and in the social security programs. Obstacles for their cultural integration also appear to them. They have difficulty to become qualified. These are some conditions that emigrants face in the recipient countries.

Irregular, illegal or clandestine.

When migratory workers are hired, transported and employed in defiance to law, their fundamental rights and liberties are under higher risks. The massive poverty, unemployment and subemployment that exist in many developing countries offer unscrupulous employers and private agents an easy ground for contracting. In some cases, the secret transfer of workers acquires a criminal operation nature.

Deprived of legal or social character, the migratory workers are, by nature, subject of exploitation. They are at mercy of their employers and can be obliged to accept all kinds of jobs, under any labor condition. In the worst case scenario, the situation of the migratory workers is similar to slavery or forced labor. Rarely do the illegal migratory workers look for justice, fearing to be detected and expelled, and in many countries they have no right to lodge an appeal against administrative decisions that affect them.

Another way migratory movements impact them occurs in the displacement of the national labor from the rural areas, specially the bordering ones, to those where illegal immigrants tend to be employed by their efficiency levels and low salaries they earn. Also in regard to the Health System, in particular in hospitals and rural health centers, whose capacity is overwhelmed by the population in general. Another aspect of this is the return of certain illnesses that were considered to have been wiped out, since population that enters under illegal conditions does not undergo, nor will undergo, sanitary hygienic controls given their illegal situation. Also, the demand in the educative service and school enrolment produce the invasion of municipal and private land in an illegal way. A series of activities linked to the informal economy proliferate, games of chance and prostitution, as well as the increase in the trafficking and consumption of drugs.

From food to the most abstract and intangible uses, such as praying and particular religious rituals of the region of origin are part of the culture with which emigrants travel, keeping their social symbols and recreating spaces to keep it.

Is integration possible?

When we talk about integration we think in the kind of integration and who the ones who integrate or want to integrate are.

In regard to migrant subjects, integration depends on a set of factors that not only have their origin in the migrant and the recipient community, But they have that origin within this society, the dominant sectors and the culture constructed on the base of a series of sociopolitical interests joined throughout their history. An irrefutable proof of this situation can be observed through the different processes that our history has experienced. The subordinate sectors of the civil society assimilated a series of messages, that conditioned their conduct, and they were disciplined progressively to the extent that the transmission of those original mandates was secured due to the fact that the new generations would be educated under those precepts.

However, how to integrate a set of people in a society that has not been educated for integration, and that, in opposition to this, has received an education based on the prejudice towards any non-peer citizen or, at least, similar.

In Argentina, for example, important contingents of foreigners have arrived from different places of the world, their reception was and is very troublesome. The social and political relations were established with those who had to integrate in a society that was eager to incorporate north Europeans. It was later found that the ones who arrived were from the south, and not only from the south of Europe. Also, many of the recently arrived were politicized, and did not agree much with the dominant idiosyncrasy of the oligarchic time (end of the XIX century and beginning of the XX). Politicians on duty by then could have asked “we called them, shall we expel them?”. The labor force was needed, and not all of them were troublemakers. They had to be subordinate to the dominant ideas of the time.

This way, a complex ideological mechanism, from which the native and migrant population was frightened, was set in motion. The most dangerous were persecuted, and some others were expelled. They discriminated anyone who could offend the established order by casting doubt on the “progress” which had been very hard to obtain.

But this social behavior was not a result of the circumstances. The history of those who conquered and colonized different regions of the world was not very different from those forms in which they treated the “other”, since the culture

they transmitted was full of discrimination stories, prejudice, persecutions and death. The only objective was to impose a specific political, social and economic project.

The emigrant will be in Latin America the classical addressee of a political discourse in which two opposing concepts are linked: exclusion and inclusion.

Numerous studies on racism and ethnocentrism revolve around the rejection of the acceptance, always related to the 'diverse'.

From our perspective, the attitude of a society towards diversity responds to a series of deep and complex motivations, that not only operate in the recipient society, but also in the extrasocietal scope to which it is related and to the socio-historical moment that it had to live.

The history of the migratory constitution, the rank, the cultural and socioeconomic levels and the dominant fantasies of the collective imaginary about the other play an important role in the conformation of that attitude. We believe that all those dimensions are important. The two first dimensions define the level of attraction of the recipient society, the structural causes that have configured it as a reference towards the bordering and non-bordering spaces. The third is a more complicated order and requires a more detailed analysis.

Those who arrive are excluded, bearers of an original inequality, moreover, they are expelled who enter into a society, which is not only dominated, but constituted by the inequality.

In Latin America, the application of the Neoliberal political-economic project is producing a progressive social decomposition that leads broad sectors of the society to limit situations with which they live together, without having a chance to improve the quality of their life. This situation has deepened the perception that it is «outside», abroad, where one can manage to be in better circumstances. This image appears mostly in young people, and among them, young people or not, who have accomplished a university degree. The society and the system that supports it can not provide an answer to their needs, either are these labor, economic or political.

The problems that are manifested in the labor field are diverse. The number spaces are increasingly reduced, and the workers that remain or appear create a competence. The employer plays with the possibility of choosing among several candidates, some of them with very high accreditations, willing to work more hours for the same salary, and that are able to absorb all the messages that the system imposes, by structuring and conditioning their consciousness.

“But labor is scarce and under these conditions one must accept the rules of the game”. The rate of unemployment and suboccupation continues increasing, above all if we take into account that there are regions, cities and towns in which surveys that give an account of this problem are not performed, where the poverty situation is very important due to the closing of industries and sources of employment in general, or by climatic disasters.

The 58 Latin Americans that leave every hour their countries in the search of a better future expose the failure of the social and economic policies of the region, and constitute the weft of a new cultural racial mix. These Latin Americans, 1,388 per day, 500,000 every year, leave their countries “with no intention of coming back”, as the *Migrations and childhood* (Migración y niñez) report concludes: *undoing the future*, performed by the Consultancy for the Human Rights and Displacement (Codhes) of Colombia.

By way of example one could highlight the migrations of the following countries:

In the case of Ecuador, the emigration with predominant rural origin is of about 530,000 people, which would have left and not returned to their country from January 1992 to April 2001, from them, 350,000 would have left in the three previous years. Until 1997, they were middle class and independent workers, as well as farmers in a lower number. The reasons are related to the effects in the salary and the levels of unemployment in the transformation process of the State and the adjustment in the private companies. After 1998, the emigration was mainly feed by rural indigenous sectors. The main destination of this migration is Spain and the United States.

In Venezuela, a country that until the decade of the 70's had a high immigration level, firstly European and then Latin American, the emigration is mainly of middle class, with a high education level, professional. The reasons are related to the critical socioeconomic situation, a product of the political conflicts which were triggered by the clash between the government and the traditional dominant economic sectors. Social insecurity, increasing violence, high level of unemployment and suboccupation, especially since the three-month general strike in the corporate sector started. The fundamental destinies of the emigrants are the U.S., Italy, Spain and Portugal (double citizenship).

In Colombia, violence and the economic crisis have been the reasons of the ejection. Between 1996 and 2001, 1,36 million people left and did not return. The main recipient countries were the U.S., Spain, Canada and Venezuela. In this last country, 186 thousand Colombians have already regularized their situation,

whereas 400,000 expect to obtain the citizenship, and around 640,000 have an illegal status.¹

Also in the recent three years two million Brazilians emigrated to Europe, Japan and U.S., mainly.

In Argentina, the emigration soared with the economic collapse of the recent years. Since 1950, the annual figure of emigrants was kept in 12,000, but between 2000 and 2002 around 200,000 people left Argentina.

For Dominican Republic, emigration is calculated in around 900,000 people, which contrasts with 450,000 who entered in this country from Haiti.

These numbers convert Latin America in the region of the world with most growth in terms of migration. In the recent decade, the equivalent to the population of Peru, about 25 million people, immigrated to the U.S. and Europe, and in a lower proportion to neighboring countries.

Present and future of the migrations to Latin America.

As a result of a work of observation, research and analysis of the migratory phenomenon that I have performed throughout Latin America and Europe, a new process arises. It has started to evolve and tends to be significant in the medium term: the immigration of middle, middle-high and high-class Europeans to Latin America. The region own an immense territory, a great amount of natural resources and few population. Therefore, it appears to be an excellent destination for those who, in the face of ageing of their region of origin and the lack of natural resources, see it as an option to improve their quality of life. In contrast to the migrations of the beginning of the XX century, these movements are, for the time being, not very significant, but they set an increasing tendency and are not produced as a result of the economic crisis, lack of work or to 'make America'. On the contrary, the new emigrants have a high purchasing power and look for a space where to maintain a good and quiet quality of life. With the value of a property of any western European city, one can buy a considerable extension of land, build a house, or buy it and live very well.

Let us assume that Latin America is, by and large, highly attractive for investment on scarce goods, such as land, energy and above all water. These are goods that in turn, generate scarcity in the first or old world. For instance, a time of great and long drought in the south of France, Spain, Portugal and Italy, among

¹ National Plan for Foreigner's Regulation Foreigner's control of the Identification and Immigration Office of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

other countries, produced huge losses and an important increase in the prices of foodstuffs. Thus, such scarcity is announced to the population so that it becomes aware to consume less, since they have to be prepared for future droughts, controlling their use and consumption. In view of this reality, we can predict a very complicated future for the economies of those regions. This shows us how problems derived from the shortage of water and its implications cause the region of Latin America and the Caribbean to look as the reservoir, or the new abode for those inhabitants of a world that is cracking. Already in 1991, Wright R. and Mac Manis, in their book *Futuro imperfecto* (Imperfect future) stated the urban explosion and conflicts that this phenomenon produces and will produce. If in addition to this we observe the constant increase of the migrations from the periphery towards central countries, and the result of it in terms of coexistence and consumption. One can consider that the spaces of our continent appear as suitable for a new mobility of subjects that have significant economic power, in comparative terms, which allow them to settle down without having problems, and with higher convenience and security to that which they have and will have in their countries of origin. We shall not forget projects such as that presented by the Japanese government to the Argentinean government to move their pensioners into an Argentinean region.

In this respect, buying land with European, North American and Japanese capital in the continent is to occur. Repsol, anticipating the oil exhaustion, started to buy land in the Provincia de Neuquén, Argentina, for farming exploitation, specifically for the production of wine. I dare say that the intention, beyond the vinicultural production, is to generate spaces where urban environments are to be built for these future immigrants, of middle and high class, that can not live in their countries of origin as a product of scarcity. The purchase of land and property in Central America and the Caribbean, where economic activities are taking place, especially in the coastal zones, and the buying of land in the Amazon by Japan, for them to "protect us" from narco-traffic and terrorism in Colombia and also the purchasing of land recently in Paraguay, are a clear indication of the planning of what our subcontinent should be in the near future.

The list of examples on how our region is being incorporated to the new recolonization project would be long. But there is no doubt that this phenomenon, in one way or another will bring new migratory flows to our territories.

In this situation, it's worth asking ourselves, are we prepared to incorporate these contingents of migrants? After all the problems we have to get into their countries, how do we currently receive and will receive all those who decide to

migrate to our continent? The world of the next years will bring new conflicts and our Latin America must be prepared and on guard to mitigate the impact that these movements will produce.

Final observations

The guiding messages to influence opinion which contribute to shape the mentality from the dominant or hegemonic ideology of the majority sectors of the society concerning the social functioning affect almost all social sectors, even those doing research on social topics.

The media are in charge of introducing those ideas in the sociocultural imaginary and they end up being accepted and agreed by consensus in general as real, although in many times they are nothing more than illusions or lies.

The third hypothesis stated by Susana Neuhaus in the work *Reflections on authoritarianism* (Reflexiones sobre autoritarismo), is appropriate to summarize what has been set out:

This state of things is supported on general consumption, which accepts the fiction of democracy (the democratic formality that hides inequality and the authoritarian character of the real power) a consensus led through an ideological penetration that makes the citizen keep a common illusion (Neuhaus, 1986).

The hegemonic discourse indeed denies the reality, fantasizes with the development, misleads with the openness (since it is not for everyone), and shows a very different image of a country to the world, different to that real.

States show scant interest in the study of the importance of these human resources trained in the country, but this does not become part of the discourse, which functions through the fantasies understood as 'social representations' that work as ideological mediators.

The presence of the media in the construction of these social representations is essential, above all if we bear in mind that they cover a topic up to the extent that it can generate appealing news by its 'dramatic and original' content. But at no moment do these news go into the deeper causes of the phenomenon, and when the 'exclusive' is exhaust, they stop being concerned about the situation.

"There where the migratory models have long data, migration has such a deep influence that it can become a national institution and part of the collective psyche" (King, undated).

These practices, common in the media, should not be surprising, but the manipulation of the information, and in some cases its hiding, should make us reflect how the opinion of a society can become acquainted with them and other conflictive situations, that despite the fact that they may seem to have been overcome, or at least to be shown in that way, they are latent since the real causes that cause them have not been solved.

The Neoliberal response is simplistic and deceptive: it promises more market when, in fact, it is in the market itself where the roots of exclusion and inequality lie. It is in the market where exclusion and inequality reproduce and expand. Neoliberalism does not say anything on how to act against the structural causes of poverty; on the contrary, it intensifies them (Gentili, 1996: 54-61).

What has allowed this system to continue functioning on a day-to-day basis is the construction of a series of representations that introduce a sociocultural imaginary that conditions the subjects. This influence is produced to such an extent that makes them to operate with the common sense as bulwark of a vague and fragmented knowledge, without soundness, non-critical and superficial. These representations, manipulated by the media messages, lead their consciences through paths that generate an unthinking consensus, outlined by the technocracy that serves the purposes of the dominant elite.

The social imaginary establishes meanings to unite the social subjects, directing the subjectivities to construct realities and create by this depending and submissive personalities, followers of an imposed project, who play a role that belongs to the script written by others, being carried away by the events.

In this situation, the individualist activity goes beyond any possibility of collective construction, expressed through the rupture with the other, the narcissism and the dehumanizing connection with the environment, among other things.

In the words of Blas de Santos,

The uncertainty about the future rejects the connection with any project that exceeds the certainty in the solution by one's own initiative and the mistrust in the collective projects. These last ones have been assimilated traumatically with the failure of the populist economies and the ruthless reprisal that the change to the direct action set off, when the great masses believed that the moment had come to take the into their own problem, without expecting solutions from those who did not suffer them (Blas de Santos, 1995: 38).

At the present time, solutions hardly depend on some political actions. Not solved conflicts which tend to expel the population from Latin America to the First World countries respond mainly to the model. The main purpose is that the excluded do not bother. Thus, the fantasies associated to migration end up being functional to the objectives of the project of the model that controls us; this is hegemony.

The only way to reverse this process is to open new sources of employment and to encourage creativity and development of critical thought, while we work on the transformation of the ruling system that controls us and subordinates us to an unequal and exclusive culture, which, according to Finkielkraut (1994) has been taken over by the savagery.

In the shade of this great word, intolerance increases, at the same time that childishness does. When it is not the case that cultural identity contains the individual in its cultural sphere, and under high treason penalty, access to doubt, to irony, to reason rejects it, access to anything that could take it away from the collective womb, it's the leisure industry, this creation of the technical age that reduces to trash the works of the spirit (as it is said in the U.S. on *entertainment*). And life led by the thought gives in slowly its place to the terrible and ridiculous face to face of the fanatic and the zombie (Finkielkraut, 1994: 139).

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