

**Exclusion Processes Through Subordinate Inclusion: Immigrants of Guatemala on the Southern Border of Mexico****Procesos de exclusión a través de la inclusión subordinada: inmigrantes guatemaltecos en la frontera sur de México**

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**ABSTRACT**

This document shows how, through precarious work on the Southern Border of Mexico, migrant men and women from Guatemala are inserted and contribute to the development of the border space in conditions of inequality (subordinate inclusion) with which social exclusion processes are generated and justified. Quantitative and qualitative research methods and techniques were used (a survey, participant observation and in-depth interviews). The results obtained allow us to conclude that on the Southern Border of Mexico the employment of impoverished laborers lacking protection and options is legitimized, before which neither States nor markets assume responsibilities.

Keywords: 1. precarious work, 2. gender, 3. political economy of migrations, 4. Chiapas, 5. Guatemala.

**RESUMEN**

Este artículo analiza el trabajo precario en la frontera sur de México mostrando cómo hombres y mujeres inmigrantes de Guatemala se insertan y contribuyen al crecimiento económico del espacio fronterizo en condiciones de desigualdad (inclusión subordinada) con lo cual se generan y justifican procesos de exclusión social. Se utilizaron métodos y técnicas de investigación cuantitativas y cualitativas (una encuesta, observación participante y entrevistas en profundidad). Los resultados obtenidos permiten concluir que en la frontera sur de México se legitima el uso de mano de obra desprotegida, empobrecida y sin opciones, ante la cual ni los Estados ni mercados asumen responsabilidades.

*Palabras clave:* 1. trabajo precario, 2. género, 3. economía política de las migraciones, 4. Chiapas, 5. Guatemala.

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## INTRODUCTION

The broad migratory tradition<sup>4</sup> on the southern border of Mexico<sup>5</sup> is not only the result of individual, strategic and rational decisions reproduced by themselves in a cultural way, devoid of historical and structural causalities, but is the result of the inequalities existing in the region. This social phenomenon is the object of a migration policy that functions as a containment and security mechanism.

Through this policy it is sought to contain the mobility of Central Americans to the United States; but the use of impoverished labor is also legitimized, with precarious jobs and little or no responsibility for their welfare assumed by states and markets (García Zamora, 2007; Márquez Covarrubias, 2010; Torre-Cantalapiedra & Yee-Quintero, 2018).

This document keeps record of the hiring of migrant labor in the agricultural sector of the southern Mexican border, particularly in the state of Chiapas. According to the Secretariat for Home Affairs (2017), 47,272 Visiting Frontier Worker Cards (TVTF, *Tarjetas de Visitantes Trabajadores Fronterizos*) were extended in 2014, 2015 and 2016 to people from Guatemala through the National Institute of Migration (INM, *Instituto Nacional de Migración*). More than 99% of these cards were issued in the state of Chiapas; 94.4% were granted to agricultural workers, 1.1% to workers in the service sector, 0.3% to artisans, 0.2% to merchants or vendors, 0.2% to professionals or technicians, and 3.7% were recorded as unspecified.

Although these data do not reflect the migration phenomenon as a whole,<sup>6</sup> they allow us to observe the agricultural processes for which migrant labor is essential. While coffee production has been considered and represented as the main source of work for migrants on the southern border of Mexico (Rojas Wiesner, 2017), their labor participation is also essential in other crops, for example, papaya and banana.<sup>7</sup>

The purpose of this work is to show how through precarious work on the southern border of Mexico immigrant men and women from Guatemala are inserted and contribute

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<sup>4</sup>According to Zapata Martelo, Ayala Carrillo, Suárez San Román, Nazar Beutelspacher, and Lázaro Castellano (2014), the migration of workers from Guatemala to Mexico originates in the first decade of the 20th century, when peasants from western Guatemala, due to poor living conditions in their places of origin, crossed the newly drawn border seeking for jobs in the coffee farms of Soconusco, in the state of Chiapas.

<sup>5</sup>The southern border of Mexico is the region composed of neighboring states (Campeche, Chiapas, Quintana Roo and Tabasco) to Guatemala and Belize. According to Hernández (2004), this region has a remarkable biological and cultural wealth, but also considerable challenges derived from its high levels of poverty and marginalization.

<sup>6</sup>Migrant labor without documents is not counted, which, according to Rojas Wiesner (2017), can be equal or greater than the number of documented workers.

<sup>7</sup>From 2014 to 2016 in the state of Chiapas, 18,453 Visiting Frontier Worker Cards (TVTF) were issued for coffee production, 15,707 for papaya production, and 6,851 for banana production (Secretariat for Home Affairs, 2017).

to the economic growth of the border space, under conditions of inequality (subordinate inclusion) and how through this procedure, processes of social exclusion arise, and are justified and legitimized. The study was carried out in banana-producing areas (LPP, *localidad productora de plátano*) in the municipality of Suchiate, Chiapas.

This document is structured as follows. The first section shows the theoretical proposal: the political economy of migration and the characterization of the processes of social exclusion/subordinate inclusion. The second section addresses the research that analyzes and characterizes labor markets in Chiapas, and the place of study is described. The methodological proposal is reflected in the third section. Quantitative and qualitative research methods and techniques were used to collect and process the analyzed information.

In the fourth section the results obtained are systematized by means of six variables that, in accordance with the theoretical approach of social exclusion, are fundamental to measure or review these processes. The conclusion is drawn that social exclusion and subordinate inclusion are lived on a daily basis in the location of this study; moreover, there are conditions that increase these processes. These conditions are related to the nationality and gender of individuals.

## MIGRATION AND MIGRATION GOVERNANCE

Márquez Covarrubias (2010) points out that the migratory phenomenon has already been analyzed from various theoretical perspectives; however, these correspond to a dominant vision aligned with interests of central countries<sup>8</sup>: national security, migration governance and the observation of remittances as a source of development.

The dominant view of migration consists of five elements:

- 1) Migrations are observed as a microsocial phenomenon that is part of a cultural phenomenon or a set of deeply-rooted traditions;
- 2) The elements that precipitate the expulsion and those that magnetize the migratory flows are perceived as socioeconomic imbalances;
- 3) The decision to migrate is seen as a strategic and rational decision. The migrant is seen as an entrepreneur who invests in himself and his family;
- 4) Through transnationalism, social relations between equals are constructed, on a horizontal plane that links origin and destination countries.
- 5) Through remittances, the idea of migration is encouraged as a trigger for development, especially in the countries of origin (Márquez Covarrubias, 2010).

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<sup>8</sup>According to Márquez Covarrubias (2010), central countries are those that are characterized by attracting abundant skilled and unskilled, cheap and disorganized workforce, without dispense resources for their training, maintenance and reproduction.

Based on these elements, the mechanisms of migration management and control by the states are structured. According to Mármora (2010) there are three models or ideal types of migration governance; that is, action schemes under which they try to control human migration flows effectively and efficiently, in order to contribute to market forces in an orderly, desired and even predictable manner. The migration governance models proposed by Mármora (2010) are securitization, shared benefits and human development models. The characteristics are described in Table 1.

Table 1. Migration Governance Models

<i>Model or ideal type</i>	<i>Migration issue perspective</i>	<i>Image of the migrant</i>	<i>Meaning of the migration</i>	<i>Policies</i>
Securitization	National, social, cultural and labor security problem for the host country	Threat	Underdevelopment Transfer	Containment
Shared benefits	Acknowledges the benefits that migrants generate both in the places of origin and in those of destination	Safe only if the stay is regularized before the corresponding authorities	It has benefits (economic, as remittances, and demographic) for developed countries and sending countries	Agreements that benefit places of origin and destination
Human rights/ Human development	Ethical position based on people's human rights	Perceived as rights-holders	It represents a cost for the society of origin in the face of existing inequality	Interconnected policies (commercial, labor, technological, environmental and financial)

Source: Own elaboration with data from Mármora (2010).

The dominant vision of migration does not question or act on the ultimate causes from which it arises. In addition, development problems that limit it are intentionally decontextualized. This vision has been questioned from various theoretical and empirical perspectives.

The political economy of migration constitutes a theoretical framework that allows us to look upon migration as a variable that depends on the dynamics of unequal development of the capitalist system. From this perspective, migration is characterized as:

- 1) A response forced by adverse economic, political, social, cultural and environmental conditions forcing people to leave their places of origin in search of greater well-being; therefore, it does not constitute a strategy or decision adopted freely and rationally,

- 2) Based on social relations of exploitation, domination and oppression,
- 3) Migrants as cheap, replaceable and disposable labor force, and
- 4) A labor force that maintains and reproduces the accumulation model and the capitalist power system (Márquez Covarrubias, 2010).

### *Social Exclusion/Subordinate Inclusion*

Social exclusion is the systematic and institutional denial of resources (symbolic and material) and recognition to particular groups of people, which prevents or limits their membership, access or participation in society (Kabeer, 2000). Amartya Sen (2000) points out that being excluded from the common benefits that others have is a significant disadvantage that impoverishes the lives of individuals. On the other hand, Herzog (2011) points out that the excluded are in a position of structural irrelevance as people, which has a decisive impact throughout their lives. In addition, such exclusion violates the value of social justice and the value of solidarity networks (Barry, 1998).

Social exclusion draws attention to the generation of disadvantages through the active dynamics of social interaction, rather than through anonymous processes of impoverishment and marginalization; therefore, it is a group problem and not an individual phenomenon (Kabeer, 2000).

Castel (2014) points out the importance of carefully addressing the concept of social exclusion; at first, the idea could indicate a situation of total isolation, which for the author is very unlikely, since he asserts that currently nobody is totally isolated from society.

In the case of migration, pointing out that no one lives in total social isolation takes on decisive importance, because although borders are constituted as spaces of exclusion, they also formalize and legitimize various forms of inclusion under disadvantaging and unfavorable conditions. De Genova (2013) refers to this process as illegal inclusion; Aparicio Wilhelmi and Pisarello (2008) define it as subordinate inclusion,<sup>9</sup> while Sen (2000) as an unfavorable inclusion.

One of the forms of subordinate inclusion is “labor subordination,” wherein migrants are useful being “others” who are willing to work or are forced to work under precarious conditions and wages, due to their “illegal” status, poverty and racialization. These characteristics emphasize differences and contribute to their distinction as a suspicious,

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<sup>9</sup>In this study the use of the term “subordinate inclusion” proposed by Aparicio Wilhelmi & Pisarello (2008) was considered appropriate, mainly as it refers to work. However, its use covers not only the employment relationship (employee-employer), as we speak of an inclusion with characteristics that are unfavorable in different areas of people’s lives and at different scales (individual, group), we even consider that such characteristics can originate from and be legitimized by States, its institutions and labor markets.

exploitable population, for which States and the market do not accept any responsibility (Calavita, 2007).

Chauvin and Garcés-Mascreñas (2014) show how through the illegal migration of Latinos to the United States and their incorporation into illegality, the immigration policy infrastructure of that country takes form. In this sense, under the stigma of the illegal, it is considered that irregular migrants are not worthy of citizen benefits; therefore, they are required more flexibility in the face of unfavorable conditions of work, greater effort, better behavior and greater fidelity towards their employers, this to ensure their permanence or future patronage.

Rosenhek (2000) points out how through the immigration regime of Israel, institutions determine who may or may not be considered a member of society. Therefore, the recruitment of documented migrant workers is based on the quotas determined by the government, the rotation and the strict impediment of family reunification. Desirable migrants under these requirements are mainly inserted in the informal labor market, as domestic workers in private households and as unskilled workers in small businesses and workshops; that is, as an unprotected workforce.

In the case of China, Correa and Nuñez (2013) analyze how the government promotes internal migration by favoring the existence of segmented labor markets through a public policy known as the Hukou (Family Registration System that controls population movement in an economic planning context); while excluding those who migrate from public social security systems. This policy is shown as a strategy to ensure economic growth at the expense of the welfare of migrant Chinese citizens.

In this context, the following research question is posed: How are processes of social exclusion of the migrant population of Guatemala on the southern border of Mexico justified and legitimized through processes of subordinated inclusion in precarious jobs and under conditions of inequality?

### *Labor Migration in Chiapas*

Labor migration on the southern border of Mexico has been analyzed through various quantitative and qualitative studies that describe the characteristics of labor markets and the social relationships that develop from them. Among the analysis criteria of these studies, those who perform certain jobs according to their age, sex and nationality are considered, as well as temporality, physical characteristics, spatial location (rural-urban), relationship with employers, type of hiring and payment methods; in the case of agricultural work, type of crop, among others (Rivera Farfán, 2014a).

Reyes (2009) analyzes the working conditions of women in a banana packing facility in Soconusco, Chiapas. The author stresses how, although these conditions are only advantageous for employers, these jobs are accepted by women due to their gender status,

related to the search for improvement of their families' living conditions, as well as to staying close to them.

Nájera Aguirre (2014) characterizes Guatemalan cross-border workers and migrants who work in rural and urban areas of Chiapas. She stresses their heterogeneity regarding sex, occupation, location, wage labor or self-employed work and the length of their stay. She also analyzes the daily experiences of those who work in these spaces, noticing that migration, in addition to being an economic strategy, is considered as an opportunity to acquire greater family tranquility, job security and less violence.

On the other hand, Rivera Farfán (2014b) contextualizes the migration of children and teenagers, as well as their labor insertion. She highlights their irregular situation as a risk factor that leads them to perform jobs without security, under extreme schedules, unsanitary conditions and low wages. She stresses the absence of information and a public policy that contemplates the rights of children and migrant children both in Mexico and in Guatemala.

Blanco Abellán (2014) comments on the migration of Guatemalan women to border cities and the vulnerabilities they endure due to their undocumented situation and being indigenous women. When focusing her analysis on domestic workers, she observes that while selling their undocumented workforce in Mexico is more profitable than in Guatemala, it represents high social costs for their life and rights. While being considered "good migrants" makes crossing the border simpler for them, it also creates conditions of discrimination and ill-treatment by their employers.

Based on the analysis of young workers, migrants and indigenous cane cutters, Wilson González (2014) shows the precariousness of paid agricultural work as a condition required by the system for its reproduction, but also identifies the capacity of action of these young people through their experiences and daily life.

These works document precariousness as a necessary condition for the existence and functioning of labor markets, barely visible or even ignored by the governments of both Mexico and Guatemala, and therefore normalized as the only way to access jobs on the southern border of Mexico.

### *The Studied Location*

This research was carried out in a town in the municipality of Suchiate, Chiapas. The National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI, 2010) ranks this municipality as having the second highest population born in another country (Tapachula, 9,865 people; Suchiate, 3,350 people; La Trinitaria, 2,492 people; and Frontera Comalapa, 1,509 people). These data reveal its importance in the migratory context.

According to the National Council for the Evaluation of Social Development Policy (CONEVAL, 2018), the municipality of Suchiate in 2015, had the following

characteristics: a population of 53,113 inhabitants, 68.6% lived in poverty, and only 2.1% could be considered as not poor or vulnerable.

The studied location is one of the physical borders with Guatemala, marked off by the Suchiate River, which is located 500 meters from the settlement (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Geographical Location of the Studied Area.



Source: Laboratory of Geographic and Statistical Information Analysis (LAIGE, 2019). Elaborated by Emanuel Valencia, from El Colegio de la Frontera Sur.

The border boundary between Guatemala and the studied location in Mexico is very permeable; there is no migration control set by either country, facilitating free movement and thus contributing to the insertion of men and women from Guatemala, who perform precarious work in an undocumented manner.

One of the main agricultural productions in the area is the banana, which, unlike other products such as coffee, requires labor throughout the year, and not only during the harvest season, which encourages the permanence of this workforce in the border towns where they work.

## METHODOLOGY

The results presented in this article are part of a mixed study conducted in a banana-producing town in 2017; the main techniques used to generate the information were a survey on “Stereotypes, Inequality and Migration 2017” (Ramírez Ramos, Nazar Beutelspacher, Salvatierra Izaba, Zapata Martelo, Sánchez Ramírez, & Espinoza Guzmán, n.d.), designed for the purpose and applied in homes, as well as in-depth interviews and participant observation.<sup>10</sup>

The “Stereotypes, Inequality and Migration 2017” survey consists of two questionnaires (with open and closed questions), applied to a non-probabilistic sample of type-cases. The purpose of this sampling is to achieve quality, richness and depth in the information collected, so that quantity and standardization become secondary (Hernández-Sampieri, Fernández-Collado, & Baptista-Lucio, 2006).

The questionnaires were applied at two times: first socio-economic information of the families was collected. From these data, type-cases were selected, corresponding to men and women born abroad and men and women born in Mexico. Having the perspective of migrants and non-migrants, men and women, was intended to contrast their experiences according to their place of origin and gender.

The questionnaire was structured as follows: 1) migration strategy (only for foreign migrant men and women), 2) discrimination, 3) flexibility/rigidity of gender norms, and 4) health and quality of life.

Ten in-depth interviews were conducted with migrant women over 18 years of age living in the location of this study. The communitarian commissary and the doctor in charge of the local Mexican Social Security Institute (IMSS, *Instituto Mexicano del Seguro Social*) clinic were also interviewed. In these interviews, perceptions about the characteristics of the locality, migration and existing social problems were explored. The interviews were intended to collect people’s experience, as they process and interpret it, including their beliefs, attitudes and values (Sautu, 2004).

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<sup>10</sup>The results presented in this article are part of a study carried out in a banana producing location from April to August of 2017 (Ramírez Ramos, 2018); the main techniques used to generate information were the survey “*Estereotipos, Desigualdad y Migración 2017*” which was designed and applied in houses, as well as in-depth interviews and participant observation.

The participant observation was carried out systematically during the field work, focused on the development of productive processes and social relationships expressed through people's daily experiences.

The variables used to approach the processes of social exclusion/subordinate inclusion were constructed from what Subirats et al. (2004) recognize as areas of social exclusion (Table 2).

Table 2. Variables

<i>Areas of social exclusion</i>	<i>Variable observed</i>
Labor	Productive work/Reproductive work Labor segmentation
Economic	Income (well-being lines) Food problems
Social/health access	Access to government programs Access to health systems and resources
Formative	Educational access of children
Residential	Location and ownership of homes Overcrowding
Relational/Local integration	Discrimination/Violence

Source: Own elaboration with data from Subirats et al. (2004).

## RESULTS

55 questionnaires were applied; 33 (60%) correspond to men and women of foreign origin, and 22 (40%) to men and women born in Mexico.<sup>11</sup> The results presented here correspond to 14 men from Guatemala and 8 of Mexican origin. In the case of women, 15 are from Guatemala and 14 are Mexican.

The ages of the women surveyed range between 17 and 70 years, while in the case of men they range from 14 to 77 years. The bulk of the population (49.1%) is between the ages of 20 and 34, productive and reproductive ages of utmost importance for both men and women. According to the Secretariat for Home Affairs (2017), this characteristic is distinctive of the migrant population inserted in agricultural production, since out of the 47,179 TVTF issued from 2014 to 2016, 72.7% corresponded to men and women whose ages ranged from 16 to 35 years.

<sup>11</sup>In this document, people from El Salvador were excluded because their migratory characteristics and motivations are different from those of the Guatemalan population.

## MIGRATORY PATTERN

The people of foreign origin surveyed come from municipalities where more than 40% of its population lives in poverty. To a greater extent, men are from the department of San Marcos, where 54.1% of the population is impoverished. According to their origin, women have greater heterogeneity; however, the departments of Retalhuleu and San Marcos are the main places of origin (Table 3).

Table 3. Characteristics of the Population from Guatemala

	Men	Women	Poverty	Criminality	Homicides	Complaints for family violence
<i>National</i>	<i>(n= 14)</i>	<i>(n=15)</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Rates per 100,000 people (2012)</i>		
	7 831 098	8 092 461	51.1	222.2	34.2	231
<i>Birthplace</i>						
Escuintla	0	1	42.7	498	78.1	159.9
Quetzaltenango	4	2	53.2	172.4	21.7	421.3
Retalhuleu	2	4	47.8	17.1	22.9	208
San Marcos	5	4	54.1	123.4	17	497.2
Suchitepéquez	0	2	51.9	74.6	12.9	252.2
No answer (NA)	3	2				
<i>Scholarship</i>						
With schooling	13	7				
No schooling	1	8				
<i>Years of schooling</i>						
Less than six years	3	4				
At least six years	2	3				
More than six years	8	0				

Source: Own elaboration with data from the National Statistics Institute of Guatemala (INE, 2014, 2013 & Ramírez Ramos et al., n.d.)

The communities of Escuintla, Quetzaltenango and San Marcos are recognized by the International Organization for Migration (IOM, 2017) as the migrant's places of origin that send the most remittances to Guatemala.<sup>12</sup> In this study 55.17% of respondents come from these communities.

The IOM (2017) notes that 91.1% of Guatemalan migrants are economic migrants; that is, they are people who left their places of origin due to poverty and lack of work. This data coincides with what was found in the present study, in which 13 of the 14 men and 11 of the 15 women surveyed migrated to this border town in search of work. The rest (5 people) did it for family-related issues (they migrated during childhood and in the case of adult women, due to their husbands' work).

[...] here I am "in heaven"<sup>13</sup> [referring the LPP]. [In Guatemala] we were very poor. My brother died from parasites, at that time I did not have beans; I ate chili with lemon; and tried to get tortillas for my little brothers [...]  
(Guatemalan woman, 32 years old; personal communication, April 28, 2017).

[...] At the age of 10, we started working to help our parents, to help my other brothers get something to eat [...] I have nine brothers, I am the oldest. I had to deal with the little ones; when I was 15, I went to live with an aunt [...] I worked [on a banana packing facility] to help my mother, to eat, because I couldn't do anything else [...] we had no studies, because my parents [...] could not afford it (Guatemalan woman, 40 years old; personal communication, June 13, 2017).

When asked about the intention of returning to their places of origin, the migrant women surveyed (n = 15) have no intention of returning; there are two main reasons: 1) work (six women), and 2) family formation (nine women).

In the case of migrant men (n = 14), 12 do not want to return. The reasons were: a) work (seven men), b) family issues (four men), or c) they are members of a church (one man). Only two men expressed the intention of returning to their place of origin; one so he can continue his studies and another because he does not feel safe in LPP: "I want to go back to Guatemala for what is happening here; they are killing people, the laws do nothing, even knowing the things they do" (Guatemalan man, 32 years old; personal communication, June 19, 2017).

Among the migrant men and women surveyed, nine have no studies (eight women and one man). In addition, those who have more than six years of study are men, while no woman reaches this condition (Table 3). These numbers speak of a disadvantage for women in the educational field in their places of origin.

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<sup>12</sup>They correspond to international migrants whose destiny is mainly the United States (97.1%), Canada (0.8%), and Mexico (0.7%).

<sup>13</sup>The expression "in heaven" appears in the testimonies on a recurring basis, referring to the best living conditions in the destination.

According to the INE (2013), at the same time that migrants live in conditions of poverty and educational inequalities, the communities of origin have high crime rates, homicides and complaints of domestic violence; that is, migrants from Guatemala come from violent structural contexts (Table 3).

According to Márquez Covarrubias (2010), under these conditions migration emerges as the only option to access a better quality of life. However, this becomes illusory for migrants once they enter the destination countries, as there they are exposed to equal or worse material and subjective conditions, risks and dangers. The latter are generated and increased from different conditions, including their undocumented immigration status.

*Subordinate Inclusion Areas and Social Exclusion Processes*

In this context, we will see that although access to the locality, employment or services for labor migrants is not explicitly denied, it is carried out in a subordinate and disadvantageous manner; that is, through an inclusion that generates different forms of exclusion.

Table 4. Economic and Socio-Health Indicators

	Men		Women	
	Migrants (n=14)	Non- migrants (n=8)	Migrants (n=15)	Non- migrants (n=14)
<i>Work</i>				
Productive work	14	8	8	2
Reproductive work	0	0	7	12
<i>Productive work</i>				
Banana production	14	7	4	0
Self-employment	0	1	4	2
<i>Well-being</i>				
Below the well-being line	7	5	6	5
Minimum well-being line	2	2	8	5
Wellbeing line	5	1	1	4
<i>Access to food</i>				
Problems accessing	1	0	9	1
No problems accessing	13	8	6	13
<i>Affiliation to Popular Insurance</i>				

With Popular Insurance	0	6	4	11
No Popular Insurance	14	2	11	3
<i>Home ownership</i>				
Own	3	7	4	9
Borrowed	2	1	2	2
Rented	9	0	9	3
<i>Overcrowded conditions</i>				
No overcrowding < to 2.5	6	6	2	4
Medium overcrowding 2.4 to 4	4	1	7	5
Critical overcrowding > than 5	4	1	6	5

Source: Own elaboration with data from Ramírez Ramos, et al. (n.d.).

*a) Labor division by sex and labor segmentation*

Work is the main reason why Guatemalan migrants enter and settle in the studied location.<sup>14</sup>

There are very honest people who come to work [...] they say, here things are much better than over there (Guatemala), here we are “in heaven” [...] here, if they work they can earn 300, 400 pesos, even 500 (Mexican pesos) [...] Many people say they manage to make a good living; and since they realize that everything is different here, they stay; here, if you starve is because you don’t want to do anything, because there’s everything here [...] and why? Because of work, because of the bananas [...] (Communitarian commissary, personal communication, April 13, 2017).

The 14 men (100%) and 8 of the migrant women surveyed (53.3%) do productive work. Productive work is understood as the set of work activities carried out in public or private space that have an economic remuneration.<sup>15</sup> Production work is related to banana production and, to a lesser extent, to self-employment. All migrant men surveyed work in the banana production; Mexicans surveyed also do it, and only one of them is a mechanic.

Among women, eight migrants have productive jobs. Four work in banana-related activities and four work on their own (sewing, domestic service, food preparation and sale,

<sup>14</sup>Only three men and three women expressed their intention to travel to the United States.

<sup>15</sup>It refers to the direct participation in the production and sale of services in which the main tool is the human being. It includes the production of material and food goods, as well as jobs in factories, workshops or agricultural fields (Martínez Corona, Martínez, Barrientos, & Paredes, 2003).

sale of other products; for example, gasoline). Among non-migrants, only two have paid work they do in their own homes, one as a hairstylist and another as a food vendor.

On the other hand, reproductive work includes care and management activities of the domestic group, performed without receiving and economic remuneration and carried out predominantly in the private space. In this study, reproductive work was reported more frequently by non-migrant women;<sup>16</sup> however, this does not mean that migrant women with productive jobs do not perform reproductive work.

Through the interviews, the existence of a vertical labor segmentation was observed. This is understood, according to Lara Flores (2001), as the process by which unequal amounts and types of work are designated among different segments of workers. These inequalities are built on prejudiced and stigmatizing characteristics about certain populations.

This legitimizes an employment structure that condemns groups of people (women, children, indigenous people, migrants) to the worst and heaviest jobs; especially those related to cutting and harvesting tasks, carried out under the sun, with limited access to water, paid “by bulk” or “by piece,” at undefined time intervals, with indeterminate schedules and without formal contracts or social benefits (Lara Flores, 2001).

[Migrants] do not monopolize the source of work; labor is needed here, ranches need more labor force from Central America because their work is cheaper [...] they are paid according to their kindness, their heart [of the ranch foremen] and there are times that as Mexicans we go to banana plantations and we don't want that salary. Yes, there are Mexicans working there, but they are managers; that is, they already are at another level [...] they earn more [...] (Communitarian commissary, personal communication, April 13, 2017).

Among the migrant population studied, the vertical labor segmentation observed is determined by the undocumented migratory condition. It is marked not only by the exclusion from any labor right, but also by the impossibility of demanding them (*“I live hidden because I don't have a permit,” “we have to be careful, we have no right to anything,” “we are illegal,” “we have no right to anything; we are foreigners,” “we can't be free; our voice has no value,” “we are not legalized in Mexico,” “we don't have papers to back us”*).

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<sup>16</sup>Reproductive work has been socially and culturally assigned to women; it is usually poorly acknowledged and valued. However, it is essential for the comprehensive development of societies (Carrasquer, Torns, Tejero, & Romero, 1998; Delso Atalaya, 2003; Martínez et al., 2003; Moreno Ruíz, 2007).

b) *Well-Being Lines and Access to Food*

Income is generally precarious for all respondents (only 11 people out of 51 respondents considered reach the well-being line); when the population was directly asked if they had had any difficulty buying food for themselves or their family in the last 15 days, 11 people reported this condition. Nine are women from Guatemala, one from Mexico and another a man from Guatemala.

According to the testimonies collected, being a migrant woman is decisive for the generation or increase of conditions of vulnerability, exploitation and violence. In work spaces this relationship is manifested as follows:

[...] you have to be obedient for your boss to see you and they can pay you more [...] they tell you to hurry up, that you are very slow, that you are an idler; that is, they offend you [...] that is [...], you're not worth it [...]. I don't have an exact time to finish my work; to go home, you must finish the process, but if we do not hurry, we only end by night [...] (Guatemalan woman, 34 years old, personal communication, May 15, 2017).

[...] to work in banana production, you go and ask for job; they ask you: what can you do? And you say: I know how to select and pack [...]. When I learned it was very difficult; at 13 years old, I learned to work, they used to hire minors. What happened was that a 13-year-old girl [...] said she was raped, so they fired all the minors at the ranch; you don't have a job, all for that girl [...]. That was the reason why they stopped hiring 13-year-old girls [...]. In the factory they say, "These women know how to select and those others are no good, they go to *segunda*,"<sup>17</sup> they choose the ones who are going to *Chiquita*;<sup>18</sup> and they send the ones that are no good to *segunda*, because they don't know how to select, because they waste a lot of the good bananas. I am one of the good ones, because I like to pack for *Chiquita*, they pay better [...] (Guatemalan woman, 21 years old, personal communication, July 04, 2017).

c) *Social/Health Access*

Another disadvantage that shows the subordinate inclusion of migrants within this locality is the restricted access to health services. Only two men, workers in the banana production, mentioned having some kind of medical service provided by their employers; the rest, 4 women and 19 men, do not have this service (they are not beneficiaries), even though as agricultural workers, they face occupational risks related to poisoning, falls, cuts and even chronic diseases caused by inadequate food and hydration.

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<sup>17</sup>“*Segunda*” (second rate) is how banana production that is not exported is called; it does not require high quality standards.

<sup>18</sup>“*Chiquita*” is one of the main banana exporting companies in the region.

Because of this lack, the population surveyed, both migrants and non-migrants, men and women, visit the Rural Clinic of the IMSS and to a lesser extent, private doctors when they have a health problem.

The services offered by the Rural Clinic of the IMSS are part of the public health system of Mexico. By international and migratory agreements, the migrant population should not be excluded from such services. However, their access, availability and quality standards provide guidelines under which conditions of inequality between migrants and non-migrants are generated.

[...] Here we serve everyone, it is open to all populations, whether they are migrants or Mexicans, have Popular Insurance or not, [...] It is free; the medicines are provided by the IMSS [...] they give us first level basic medicines, that's how it works here; however, there are occasions when we are out of medicines; given that we receive uninsured population since open population arrives, people who are not in the census come and request the medicine and we run out [...] We don't have a surplus for migrants, we use the medicines for everyone [...] It is a large population, approximately 5,200 people are served [non-migrants], in addition to all the people who come to work and who are passing by. For us to provide better care according to WHO standards, there should be more staff, but there is no budget for that [...] (Doctor of the IMSS Rural Clinic, personal communication, May 23, 2017).

In quantitative terms, to partake or not in the health system census is essential, as thanks to it the size of the clinic, the necessary medical staff and the amount of medication to be systematically provided can be determined; however, this does not ensure quality care for those who make up this census. Migrants, as they are not part of the register of rightful claimants, are not taken into account for the allocation of resources for health care.

According to Cerda García, Ledón Pereyra and Paz Carrasco (2016), in the last two decades there has been no significant increase in doctors and beds for every 1,000 inhabitants in the state of Chiapas, therefore, the attention given by health institutions in the state is insufficient.

This fact belies the discourse wherein the benefits generated from affiliating to programs such as Popular Insurance are exalted.<sup>19</sup> Such discourse does not take into account that increasing the expectation or demand for attention, without making significant changes to the facilities and increasing the staff, is not enough to have a real impact on people's health (Cerda García, Ledón Pereyra, & Paz Carrasco, 2016). These authors point out those programs such as Popular Insurance also contravene the principle of health equity, which is

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<sup>19</sup>According to Cerda García, Ledón Pereyra and Paz Carrasco (2016), in Mexico, the implementation of this trend in the field of health corresponded to an economic policy focused on the free market and a growing indifference of the State towards its social responsibilities.

synthesized in the notion that, given a similar condition, regardless of socioeconomic status and working status, everyone has the right to the same quality of care.

For migrants, not being considered as part of the people or as agents that live and contribute to its economic development, are factors that can cause discrimination and competition for resources, this by considering and questioning a basic right such as health, through subjective positions that condition the access to medical care under the concept of “deserving it” (Cerdeña García, Ledón Pereyra, & Paz Carrasco, 2016).

[...] the main problem faced by day laborers is health; they do not have insurance and our people just have our basic clinic. Medical service is insufficient; at the clinic they need medicines, workers, doctors, nurses [...] we have a clinic that is no longer enough for our people; we need a 24-hour doctor because we have a humid warm climate. The malaria epidemic, the cholera epidemic, dengue fever is expanding; our IMSS clinic is no longer enough because this town is a center where all those who work in the properties of our neighbors (banana ranches) live, we are overpopulated [...] (Communitarian commissary, personal communication, April 13, 2017).

#### d) Government Programs

To be perceived or not as part of a society is an essential factor in the development of people; in this sense, receiving benefits from government programs is, symbolically, an attribute. It was observed that nine of the Mexicans surveyed received the Program for Social Inclusion (PROSPERA), unlike only one woman from Guatemala.<sup>20</sup>

The minimum requirements to be part of this type of programs are to have the card issued by the National Electoral Institute (INE, *Instituto Nacional Electoral*), birth certificate, Population Registration Number (CURP, *Clave Única de Registro de Población*) and proof of address, all of which limits the possibilities of migrants to access any of its variants.

Women who cannot access this type of benefits experience feelings of helplessness, sadness or disappointment because they do not belong or feel part of the receiving society.

[...] when any project comes, they do a census and they ask you ‘are you Mexican?’ And you say ‘no, I’m Guatemalan’, they tell you: we are making a census of people from Chiapas, and I go Oh! And feel quite bad [...], you always feel bad because they reject your origin, [...] as with PAL Sin Hambre, they made a census and I could not participate because I am not Mexican, I am Guatemalan, and they were only receiving Mexican men or women who had children. That’s why I’m no longer interested when they come with a project or something like, it doesn’t matter to me, although my

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<sup>20</sup> Access to these types of programs for migrant women is through children.

son is Mexican and has his papers (Guatemalan woman, 21 years old, personal communication, June 23, 2017).

#### e) Access to Children's Education

Educational access is another restricted right. While none of the Mexican people surveyed have problems sending their children to school, 24 migrant men and women do, mainly due to the lack of money or papers (documents that prove your identity and stay in Mexico). The lack of documents, both for parents and children (even if the latter are Mexican) is recurring among the migrant population. This impacts their subjectivity; but it also prevents them from exercising rights (health and education).

[...] in your child's papers you appear as an illegal foreign mother, you are not a Mexican mother [...] and sometimes, being a foreign mother causes children problems in their own papers; because if he wants to travel and they ask him 'Is your family foreign?' and he says 'No, they are Mexican'; 'But no, here it says that your mother is a foreigner, so you are a foreigner too', my son will have problems; but thank God I didn't register him, his grandmother did [...] in addition, we cannot give support to our children because we are illegal, because if we have an emergency, we cannot go to the hospital, their papers are not good [...] (Guatemalan woman, 21 years old, personal communication, June 23, 2017).

#### f) Location, Property and Overcrowding of Homes

In the studied location, unlike non-migrants (who to a greater extent have their own homes) 22 migrants (n = 29) rent or borrow a living space. These spaces are called *cuarterías* (roughly translates as room houses). These are located on the outskirts of the community.

*Cuarterías* are characterized by concentrating migrant men and women from the same place of origin; they even distinguish between those where only Guatemalan people live and those inhabited by people from Honduras or El Salvador (considered as more dangerous).

Rooms in *Cuarterías* are spaces of approximately three by three meters, in very poor conditions, with a wood stove; their physical characteristics facilitate the proliferation of infections from vector-borne diseases. Housing in these places is temporary, it is unknown if by choice of the tenants or by their own decision; migrants constantly change their homes. Overcrowding is a common feature throughout the town; it was observed that both migrants and non-migrants live crowded.

#### g) Local Integration

Even though 9 of the 14 migrant men and 14 of the 15 migrant women have been living in the town for more than a year, they still don't feel part of it.

When we come, we regret leaving Guatemala, maybe in my dreams I have cried wanting to be there, but I realize and say ‘no, it is not possible, I am here, I would not like to return, life is already different’. We are here, we have already been living here for 32 or 33 years[...] no, we do not feel part of Mexico; we are neither from here nor from there, you cannot forget the place where you were born [...] (Guatemalan woman, 48 years old, personal communication, June 22, 2017).

According to Sánchez-Domínguez (2011), a family where one of the spouses is a foreigner (exogamic couples) constitutes a barometer of the integration of migrants into society. It is a strong indicator of the absence of ethnic and/or racial prejudices. Among the migrants surveyed, only 13 of the 51 were part of exogamic couples. No Mexican man surveyed had such links (Table 5).

Table 5. Relational or Social Integration Indicators

	Men		Women	
	Migrants (n=14)	Non-migrants (n=8)	Migrants (n=15)	Non-migrants (n=14)
<i>Type of family</i>				
Exogamic	4	0	7	2
Endogamic	6	6	8	11
NA (no answer)	4	2	0	1
<i>Violence</i>				
	6	3	9	8
<i>Discrimination</i>				
	9	0	9	7
<i>Type of discrimination</i>				
Because of their nationality	9	0	9	0
Because of their economic standing	0	0	0	5
Because of their physical fitness or appearance	0	0	0	2

Source: Own elaboration with data from Ramírez Ramos et al. (n.d.).

In the case of migrant women, the union with Mexicans could hypothetically be considered as part of a migration strategy; although the labor market is the main gateway for the inclusion of men in this region, for women, an exogamic marriage could also mean a strategy.

Yes, there are benefits of marrying a Mexican because there is always work here, you struggle less, over there the only work available is at coffee

plantations, even for men there's no work (Guatemalan woman, 45 years old, personal communication, August 20, 2017).

Both populations (migrants and non-migrants) reported having experienced some type of violence (18 people) and 25 some type of discrimination; 18 of them due to their immigration status (in the case of migrants) and 7 because of their economic standing or physical appearance (in the case of Mexicans).

[...] although we don't mess with anyone, some people mistreat us because we are *cachucos*,<sup>21</sup> as they say, they discriminate against us because we are from another country; they say that to our faces [...] and that hurts, it's as if I told you that you're not welcome here, that's how they treat us, but we leave it in God's hands; why make enemies? It is better to ignore them and not add more fuel to the fire, but yes, it feels horrible [...] (Guatemalan woman, 25 years old, personal communication, May 14, 2017).

### CONCLUDING REMARKS

The migrant population studied reports that their motivation to migrate is mainly economic, arguing precarious conditions and lack of work in their places of origin. According to Márquez Covarrubias (2010) and Rojas Wiesner (2017) this type of migration can be characterized as forced migration. In responding to regional dynamics of unequal development, they do not constitute strategies or decisions taken freely and rationally; and once initiated they seem to be irreversible.

Under these conditions and lacking options, we can look upon migration in the following terms as Márquez Covarrubias (2010) points out:

1) It generates relations of exploitation, domination and oppression that arise from the volume and irregular status of the migrants, as well as the need for people to find a job (regardless of quality) in order to access better living conditions.

2) By migrating and working under these conditions, migrants become a cheap, replaceable and disposable workforce, and

3) Migrant labor is considered cheap, replaceable and disposable, conditions which are essential for the reproduction of the accumulation model and of the current capitalist development system.

From this perspective, migration is considered a forced phenomenon under which migrants live a continuous process of social exclusion, since they are systematically denied opportunities and conditions that would allow them to access a better quality of life. However, social exclusion is not de facto; it is generated through different processes of what we call subordinate inclusion. That is, a type of disadvantageous social insertion

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<sup>21</sup>Colloquial term used to refer to people from Guatemala, which means “nosy” or “gossipy.”

where the migrant population is not tacitly denied access to territory, resources and services; in turn, such access is restricted by formal and informal regulations.

Subordinate inclusion affects all areas of the lives of migrants at different scales (individual and/or group). Subordinate inclusion is characterized by generating or increasing social disadvantages and inequalities, but these are also legitimized by the States, their institutions and the markets.

According to the data presented hereby, subordinate inclusion is determined by the immigration status and gender, enabling:

- 1) A vertical labor segmentation where migrants are mostly affected. They perform the hardest jobs under precarious conditions. They face situations of abuse and exploitation, and in the case of women, they face the realization of unrecognized reproductive working hours.
- 2) The denial of responsibility by the States and markets towards the migrant population, as they do not guarantee conditions of security and quality of life.
- 3) The existence of significant inequalities between migrant women and the rest of the population (non-migrant women, and migrant and non-migrant men). Above all, in a universal right: the right to food.
- 4) Restricted access to public programs and services (health and education). This problem relates to the competition for resources and the discretionary consideration of who deserves access to them.
- 5) The generation of conditions of discrimination and violence through the perception of the “other” and “others” as unequal, as not belonging, as inferior.

Subordinate inclusion is patterned as a process in which many exclusions are generated, in turn legitimized and made invisible by a migration policy that acts in accordance with the interests of the market, and forgets to acknowledge migrants as human beings and as agents that contribute with their work to the development of the locality and the economy of the region.

Translator: Fernando Llanas

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