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The topics of migration and economic globalization play a crucial role in the analysis and contextualization of the nexus between migration and development; they also extend to policymaking and its implications, and the many questions that arise when addressing all these issues: What impact does increasingly globalized market integration have on international migration? To what extent are labor markets themselves becoming internationalized? Under what conditions could trade and migration become complementary forces or even substitute one another? To what extent can neoclassical economic equilibrium models predict the consequences of factor mobility and trade for wage differentials? Why do societies that have opened up to world markets exhibit different degrees of growth or reduction of international migration? Can diasporas' home country investments counter the effects of current export-led development strategies, which foster emigration because of their reliance on low-wage labor, and lead to economic activities that would retain native workers or even attract the return of emigrants? Might this process be different for skilled versus unskilled laborers?

The way in which these and other crucial questions could be addressed and analyzed depends on the choice of theoretical perspective. The following text provides a brief introduction to Alan Winters' and Bruno Losch's papers and, using the framework of political economy, outlines some of the key factors present in the relationship between migration and economic globalization.

Migration and economic globalization:
Is the labor market becoming globalized?

Alan Winters' paper, "Migration and Economic Globalization: Is the Labor Market Globalizing?" focuses on the relations of international trade and migration with labor markets in developing/migrant-sending and developed/migrant-receiving countries. At the center of his analysis is the reduction of international commerce barriers and opening of markets that began during the early 1990s. Winters begins his argument by expressing concern with the effects of the boom of manufactured goods produced in developing countries and the recent, associated trends of out-sourcing and off-shoring in OECD countries, which threaten to displace domestic unskilled workers even while increasing the real incomes of consumers. His goal is to disentangle the vital link between the globalization of trade and labor markets and to summarize the ongoing debate among economists—more precisely, neoclassical economists— about the impact of international migration on both trade and wages.

Regarding the threat posed by imports from less developed countries and their interference with real wages and unskilled employment in developed countries, Winters argues that, although both trade and migration affect wages materially, they tend to move in the direction of a win-win proposition by improving economic efficiency. He is of the opinion that the relationship between migration and trade cannot theoretically be reduced to either equivalence or substitutability, and argues that migration can stimulate trade and investment under several circumstances.

The architects of NAFTA and the European Union (particularly those in the Mediterranean and central regions of Europe) envisioned that free trade would become a means of reducing migration pressures. However, as Winters points out, these hopes were, at the very least, unrealistic: one of the main reasons for the current and unwelcome continuation of international migration flows lies in the huge economic asymmetries between countries of origin and destination (e.g., differences in the per capita income in Mexico and the United States). Following James R. Markusen's and Maurice Schiff's findings, Winters concludes that trade and migration can function as either substitutes or complements, depending on different factors and situations. Because the easing of several theoretical assumptions could easily upset the expected outcomes, Winters concludes that the search for a general law on the relationship between trade and migration is fruitless.

When speaking about the impact migration has on trade and wages, Winters argues that migration implies downward pressure on wages, particularly those of unskilled laborers (immigrant and native), where remuneration moves from unskilled to skilled workers and thus contributes to an increase in wage inequalities. This trend is related to selectivity in migration processes and the concomitant mobility of skilled labor. Following Adrian Woods' argument, Winters also comments that, through trade of unskilled-labor-intensive goods from the South, Northern countries were virtually importing labor. Therefore, in the globalization era, labor from the South is provided to the North via both migration and trade on a complementary basis.

Winters concludes his paper by asserting that migration and trade are positively related and that migration plays a significant role in international trade. And yet, he doesn't see a significant qualitative change in terms of labor markets, although empirical evidence (e.g. the Mexico-U.S. case) has shown a strong correlation between economic globalization and the emergence of trends like transnationalization, differentiation, and increasing precariousness in the labor market (Delgado Wise and Márquez, 2007).

Migration and the challenge of demographic and economic transitions in the era of globalization.

Bruno Losch's paper approaches migration and globalization from a historical perspective because, according to the author, discussions of the economic aspects of globalization are often limited to trade liberalization and underestimate the importance of broad structural processes. He posits that current world trends are fueling asymmetries between countries, income inequalities, and disparities in processes of economic transformation. These have different implications depending on the level of economic diversification in a given Third World country and are especially disadvantageous for "agriculture-based" nations, particularly in Africa. More specifically, Losch analyzes the profound restructuring process taking place in the global agro-food markets. In his view, this has led to a progressive differentiation and exclusion, segmentation and marginalization of low efficiency agricultural producers—that is, the inclusion of a few and the increasing exclusion of the majority, to the extent that regional or international migration appears to be the only remaining option in those countries.

Focusing on Sub-Saharan Africa, the author emphasizes the momentous challenge posed by delayed economic and demographic transition in a globalized world, which accordingly has resulted in strong migration pressures that will soon challenge the continental political order.

An approach from the perspective of political economy.

The contributions made by neoclassical economy and geographical-demographic approaches to the analysis of the relationship between globalization and migration—here exemplified by Winters' and Losch's papers—have greatly influenced our current understanding of these issues. However, these approaches fall short of addressing many of the subtleties and complexities of the migration-globalization dialectic. Political economy provides an alternative and comprehensive analytical framework for this subject, one that allows us to simultaneously consider, among other things:

1) The ample range of interactions inscribed within the North-South (or development-underdevelopment) dynamic without losing sight of the levels of differentiation present in each pole of the relationship;

2) The interactions between several spatial levels (local, national, regional, and global) and social dimensions (economic, sociological, political, cultural, environmental);
3) A transdisciplinary perspective that, contrary to the "economicist" and "structuralist" stereotypes frequently applied to this area, enables the theoretical articulation of several fields of study;
4) A concept of development that surpasses limited, normative, and decontextualised concepts by acknowledging the need for a type of social transformation that is based on the structural, strategic, and institutional changes required to advance the living standards of the underlying population. This process must comprise a variety of actors, movements, agents, and social institutions operating on several planes and levels.

According to this approach, in order to disentangle migration's cause-and-effect relationship with globalization and examine specific moments in the dialectic interaction between development and migration, two critical interrelated aspects must be addressed:

- *Strategic practices.* This involves the confrontation between different projects that espouse diverging interests, which in turn underlie the structures of contemporary capitalism and its inherent development problems. There are currently two major projects. The hegemonic one is promoted by the large transnational corporations, the governments of developed countries led by the United States, and allied elites in underdeveloped nations, all under the umbrella of international organizations such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. The project's loss of legitimacy under the aegis of neoliberal globalization means that, nowadays, rather than speak of hegemony we can use the term "domination": the implementation of this plan is not the result of joint agreements but, rather, military action and the financial imposition of the Washington and Post-Washington Consensuses. The second project, the alternative one, consists of the socio-political actions of a range of social classes and movements, as well as collective subjects and agents, who endorse a political venture designed to transform the current structural dynamics and political and institutional environments that otherwise bar the implementation of alternative development strategies on the global, regional, national, and local levels.

- *Structural dynamics.* This refers to the asymmetric articulation of contemporary capitalism on several planes and levels. It includes the financial, commercial, productive, and labor market spheres, as well as technological innovation (a strategic form of control) and the use and

> allotment of natural resources and environmental impacts. These factors condition the ways in which *i)* developed, *ii)* developed and underdeveloped, and *iii)* underdeveloped countries relate to each other. They also determine the fields in which interactions between sectors, groups, movements, and social classes take place. All of this is expressed differently on the global, regional, national, and local levels.

Since the 1970s, analysis of contemporary capitalism has been subject to the belief that the best way to promote human well-being is through free market practices. As David Harvey (2007: 22) clearly points out:

> Neoliberalism has become a hegemonic discourse with pervasive effects on ways of thought and political-economic practices, to the point where it is now part of the commonsense way we interpret, live in, and understand the world.

This discourse has led to the implementation of structural adjustment policies based on three basic principles—liberalization, privatization, and deregulation— and the promise of reducing North-South economic and social asymmetries.

The term "globalization" has been used in economics, politics, and international trade discourse to designate the complex and profound restructuring process of the economic, political, and social world order led by neoliberal political-economic practices. And yet, "globalization" remains an elusive concept often used vaguely and arbitrarily. More than an objective characterization of a process, it is frequently used as a normative or ideological term (Petras and Veltmeyer, 2000; Bello, 2006). Therefore, instead of seeking a single definition of globalization, I believe it is more important to unravel its content, particularly with regard to the contradictory relationship between migration and development that characterizes our current world order.

The discourse of globalization has been largely disseminated by northern governments and the international financial agencies they dominate (Castles and Delgado Wise, 2008). Southern governments have adopted—with some differences and varying degrees of commitment—the dominant doctrine that requires social and economic aperture to international markets. However, rather than diminish, worldwide social inequalities have increased substantially. Three decades of globalization have done little to reduce the crushing poverty of much of the world's population. In fact, in 1970, the 31 countries classified as developed or advanced by the IMF received 68 percent of the world's income, while the "rest of the world" got the remaining 32 percent. By 2000, the first group of countries received 81 percent of the world income, which left the second group with only 19 percent. In the same period, the population share of the advanced countries fell from 20 percent to 16 percent (Freeman, 2004). Undeniably, poverty has become more extreme in some regions, especially sub-Saharan Africa (as Losch's paper underlines) and parts of Southern Asia. And yet,

> …such general trends also hide some important variations. Certain areas do not fit this dichotomy: both the "transitional economies" of former Soviet bloc countries and the "new industrial economies" of some regions of Asia and Latin America have an intermediate position. Second, growing inequality is also to be found within the main regions, with new elites in the South gaining from their role in the transnational circuits of capital accumulation, while workers in some former northern industrial centers experience fundamental losses in income, social status and security. (Castles and Delgado Wise, 2008: 5)

Globalization has therefore not only led to a growing gulf between North and South, but also to increased disparities within each region. In short, the neoclassical and monetarist-based dominant discourse on globalization has failed as a scientific paradigm: it has neither explained nor been able to predict current global changes. As J.E. Stiglitz points out, it is clearly more of an ideology about how the world should be reshaped, and its premises are summed up by the Washington Consensus' emphasis on the importance of market liberalization, privatization, and deregulation (2002: 67). Two of globalization's basic premises are "the leadership of civilization by economics" (Saul, 2006 xi) and, perhaps more specifically, the belief that, unlike state-led development, free trade will automatically open the path to wealth and prosperity for countries and societies across the globe. This has been linked to the idea that this process is inevitable and that resistance is futile and even reactionary. Some critics use the term "globalism" rather than globalization to emphasize this ideological character (Petras and Veltmayer, 2000; Saul, 2006).

It is important to distinguish between globalization as a political project and as an economic restructuring process. Politically speaking, the ideological dominance of globalization as a way of understanding the contemporary world seems to be over. Growing inequalities, conflicts, and the failure to achieve fairer trade rules for poorer countries state the obvious: globalization has broken its promise. States and regional associations in Europe, Latin America, and Asia are less willing to accept neoliberal orthodoxies now than in the 1980s and 1990s. The world seems to be entering a new period where the importance of nation-states as political actors and social regulators is being reasserted. However, on an economic level, the dominance of the increasingly integrated capital world market that became possible with the end of the Cold War shows no sign of receding, even if optimistic notions of a new, inclusive global economic order are increasingly being replaced by an understanding of the continued dominance of core industrial economies. Privatization, deregulation, and liberalization continue unabated. Local and national economies are pulled into the international production and trade circuits and suffer profound changes, often leading to regressive trends in their development processes. The remittance-based development model is a clear example of such trends.

These issues raise many questions regarding the meaning and scope of the integration processes underlying the discourse of globalization and go beyond the queries posed at the beginning of these introductory remarks. To what extent is globalization an inclusive process for all nations and societies? Is it a process that will promote long-term development in the South and thus reduce North-South asymmetries? How is labor mobility incorporated into the internationalization of trade, finance, and production, which is itself the main economic motor of globalization?

Labor migration has been diversely incorporated as part of this process. On the one hand, global capital drives migration and reshapes its patterns, directions, and forms. Migration, in turn, brings about fundamental social transformations in both sending and receiving areas: it plays an integral role in globalization and social transformation processes at the same time that it constitutes a major force within communities and societies.

From a critical development studies perspective, the dialectic relationship between development and migration is a consequence of the implementation of structural adjustment programs in the South, which in turn have operated as a crucial detonator of the current upsurge of South-North labor migration, and can be analyzed through three major interrelated movements: the dismantling and re-articulation of the productive apparatus in southern countries; the creation of vast amounts of surplus population, well beyond the conventional formulation of the *reserve army of the unemployed*, and the acceleration of migration flows. If we take into consideration the experience of some of the major migrant-sending countries (Castles and Delgado Wise, 2008), an examination of the above issues leads to four important conclusions regarding the migration-development dialectic in the context of neoliberal globalization.

In the first place, *capitalist restructuring has resulted in forced South-North migration*. Our current world order is characterized by the increase of international trade and financial flows, but also—and very importantly—by the internationalization of production and the transnationalization, differentiation, and increasing precariousness of labor markets—a fundamental factor that is not properly considered in Winters' paper. This has deepened North-South asymmetries and generated unsustainable social conditions (e.g., increased inequalities and precariousness of labor markets) that lead to forced migration; that is, a population flow caused by the lack of adequate living and working conditions, or political and/or social conflicts that threaten the population's life. The exacerbation of forced migration can result in relative or sometimes absolute depopulation in places of origin (e.g., 50 percent of all Mexican municipalities currently show negative population growth rates). The loss of qualified and unqualified labor also leads to the abandonment of productive activities and the loss of potential wealth in migrant-sending countries.

Secondly, immigrants *contribute to capital accumulation in labor-receiving countries*. Developed countries require large amounts of cheap, qualified and unqualified labor. This demand responds to *i)* an increased accumulation capacity brought about by the transfer of resources and surpluses from underdeveloped countries, and *ii)* processes of demographic transition and an ageing population. Immigrants contribute to the general depreciation of the labor force: they participate in sectors that are work-intensive, generate income-goods, or are in the process of being rescued; they also supplant workers who receive higher rates and receive better benefits, including low-skilled and highly-skilled labor. This provides receiving nations with comparative advantages derived from the reduction of production costs and immigrants' participation in the acceleration of innovation processes.

Thirdly, *migrants help sustain fragile socioeconomic stability in their country of origin*. A fraction of migrants' wages is allocated to remittances that ensure the subsistence of family members in places of origin. On a macroeconomic level, remittances benefit neoliberal governments that use them as a source of foreign currency in order to sustain the fragile "macroeconomic stability" rather than promote genuine development alternatives. In the absence of real development projects, migrants are now lauded as the "heroes of development"—which means they are held accountable for promoting progress in a situation where the state, claiming minimal interference, declines to take responsibility. Ultimately, underdeveloped countries continue to function as labor reserves. Bona fide development possibilities are deliberately obstructed in order to benefit increasingly small national elites, which in turn are associated with more powerful elites in developed countries.

Finally, *if used as a tool of social transformation, development can curtail forced migration*. Even though neoliberal and pro-globalization discourses maintain their economic system's inevitability, we must theoretically and practically assert the viability of alternative processes of development and do this on a variety of levels. We must begin by redefining the terms under which developed countries subject underdeveloped ones to an asymmetric set of relationships based on a series of principles that have been turned into fetishes—e.g., democracy, freedom, and free trade. This requires examining dominant or hegemonic practices that increase inequality, marginalization, poverty, social exclusion, and unregulated migration. Neoliberal governments assume that migration is an inevitable process and are content to make use of remittances until they finally reach a breaking point. A project of real social transformation must include the participation of migrants and non-migrants alike, and go beyond the curtailing of forced migration: it must also revert the processes of social degradation that characterize North-South asymmetries and are increasing social inequalities around the world.

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