Ana Elizabeth Jardón Hernández

International Migration and Crisis Transition Toward a New Migratory Phase





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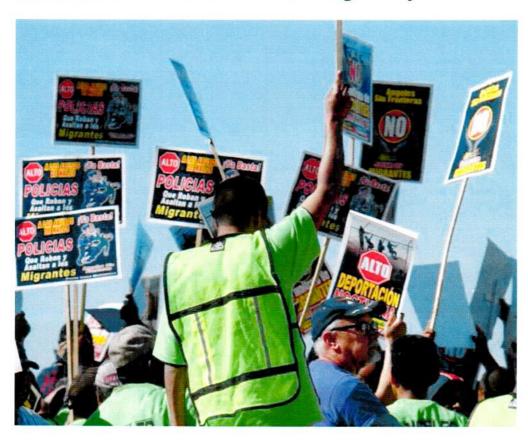
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International Migration and Crisis

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Chapter 1 Introduction

Just this past year fifteen young men from town went, but only two of them got across, all the others came back; yeah, it's really tough (...) it used to be we'd all cross together, wandering around like I told you, but we got across, and there was work back then... Sweet Mother of Mary, now you can't even get across. A compadre who came in those days told me there were all kinds of work, but now they say there isn't that much, not even on the big farms, so now with all these difficulties people think twice 'cause there's no work, not like before; when I was in Chicago there was work all over, in Woodstock, nearby, there were farms where there was work, and lots of factories, but now if you go wetback they won't give you a job (Arcadio, 78 years old).

Over the past three decades migratory processes between Mexico and the U.S. have undergone significant changes in their dynamics and modalities, as well as in the sociodemographic characteristics of migrants (Tuirán 1997). Mexico's economic crisis, economic restructuring in the U.S., the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA), and the maturation of transnational networks of migrants all contributed to the enormous expansion of international migration from Mexico; i.e., the accelerated increase of migrant flows—documented and undocumented—the weakening of circular migration, the growing presence of Mexicans in the U.S. and the explosive increase of monetary remittances (Lozano et al. 2010; Zúñiga et al. 2004; Leite et al. 2003; Leite/Acevedo 2006; Cornelius 1992).

In terms of public policy, the massive scale of migratory processes and their historicity led the Mexican government to choose a model of development based on migration, monetary remittances and the export of cheap labor force to the U.S. (Delgado et al. 2006). The promotion of this strategy meant that many communities in Mexico found in international migration an escape valve as they strove to resolve problems such as unemployment, labor precariousness and the poverty that plagued many households, especially in rural areas.

As a work strategy, international migration from rural regions has been reinforced by the deep and diverse demographic, economic and institutional transformations that the Mexican countryside has experienced and which have introduced, as corollaries, the redefinition, adaption and diversification of life and survival strategies among rural families. This conceptualization that Arias (2009: 10) argues has meant nothing but a resignification of the rural household itself, the author

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About this Book

This book provides an analysis of the various transformation processes that have occurred in the international migratory dynamic of Mexicans as a consequence of the 2008 international economic crisis and the implementation of an increasingly hardened American migration policy. From a methodology that combines qualitative and quantitative tools, the main findings of this book show that the international migration of Mexicans is moving to a new migratory phase, here called the period of "contraction and disengagement" that is characterized by the configuration of multiple changes with repercussions on the functioning of international migration as a socio-economic strategy at the levels of the family and migrant communities.

This book

- · assesses the recent changes in the international migration dynamic of Mexicans
- offers empirical evidence on the transition to a new migration phase
- focuses on the voices and perspectives of those people that were studied in Mexico.

Contents

- 1. Introduction
- 2. Continuity and Change: From the Boom to the Slowing Down of International Migration from Mexico to the U.S.
- 3. Changes and Continuities in the International Migratory Dynamics of Las Vueltas: Transition Toward a New Migratory Phase?
- 4. Transformation Processes in International Migration as a Strategy of Family Life and Community Organization
- 5. Conclusions

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