

TWO PROCESSES, ONE SAME STORY

Migration and the Church

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INTRODUCTION

Based on Monsignor Demetrio Valentini's statement: "There is a sort of connaturality between the Church and human mobility" rendered at the Second Continental Meeting on Migration and Refuge in the CELAM (Latin American Episcopal Council) headquarters in Bogotá, Colombia during May, 2006, I would like to make a historical summary of migration to certify this statement, which to me seems consistent with the history of humanity, since both have been born and evolved along the same paths.

Current reality presents migration as one of the most sensitive phenomena in a world marked by economic, social and cultural globalization. This movement of millions of human beings who are mostly fleeing from poverty with no heed for the perils this movement could entail, cross the different borders to recreate the globalized world that does not take into account their free circulation, without overlooking the benefits that this mobility could bring, both to the countries of origin and destination. These migratory realities demand that all government sectors and civil society provide structural and global solutions to this mass of humanity on the move.

The reality of human mobilization reveals just how serious and harmful the structures of sin are in a globalized world, dominated by individual and collective selfishness, by a materialism that favors and glorifies market economies, fostering consumerism and hedonism, creating a system that preys upon nature, society and human beings. Nevertheless, this very same world highlights those poor who mobilize in search of dignity and an opportunity in life, who carry hopes and proposals of innovation and transcendence.

To achieve this objective, I shall follow a biblical-theological path (the Holy Scriptures) and the documents issued by the Catholic Church in order to confront them with the history of migrations, to my understanding

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.- CHURCH AND MIGRANTS

From its very beginning the Church considered migrants as prophets of transformation; there is clear evidence in the Holy Scriptures and Church documents. In both sources we can read the recommendations given to migrants as well as to society, whether of origin, transit or destination.

The Church's vision has always been to keep a watchful eye over the migration process as a sign, because when this process is intensified, it is because changes of every order are underway, demanding structural changes that must be introduced from within the family itself, the ecclesiastical organizations and from the government and civil society. The Church bears the

historical memory of the path of God's people, as we have read in passages of the Bible. From the perspective we are interested in, it could be said that the Bible was born and evolved within the context of a thousand-year-old migration, from being permanently on the move, of settling and uprooting, of deportation and exile, of expulsions and refuges. These circumstances have enabled the people of Israel to express an experience more than a simple theory. Accordingly, no other people are better authorized to talk about migration and diaspora than the Biblical people, of which Jesus and His Church are also part.

From the Biblical perspective, we come upon in the Old Testament with the paradigm of migration from Abraham's personal history, "*Yahveh said to Abraham: Leave your country, your people, your father's household and go to the land I will show you*" (Gn 12,1). Through time, Abraham's experience has become a community paradigm. *My Father was a wandering Aramaic who went down to Egypt and took refuge with a small household, but there he became a great, strong and numerous nation. The Egyptians mistreated and oppressed us, imposing hard labor upon us..*" (Dt 26, 6). These two paradigms are well suited to the migratory process throughout history. The Old Testament shows us plenty of other migration examples, but lack of time prevents me from explaining them in detail.

In the New Testament, the paradigm of migration receives a whole new meaning in the figure of Jesus. He and His family experienced the condition of exiles when fleeing from the fury of Herod. In the flight to Egypt (Mt. 2,13) He follows the same path taken by the people of God. In His acts and teachings He expresses that the dimension of migration is inherent to God's plan (Mt.28,19). Jesus teaches us to accept the frontiers or borders that life brings to man. He knew how to be a citizen in His own land; He was an authentic Israelite and knew how to assume his condition as a man from Nazareth. His patience was boundless to endure the lack of acceptance and prejudice from the Pharisees and from his own fellow countrymen in Nazareth. He assimilated the culture of His people, creating out of it wise parables, full of transcendental meaning. He invites us not to lose the dimension of pilgrims in search of the promises God made to Abraham. He accepted the limitations of His homeland, He knew all about the relativism of frontiers, after all, He crossed many of them, as documented by the Gospels. He prophesized the fall of the walls that prevented the realization of God's plan to "*Gather the dispersed children*". Thus, Biblical theology indicates that God's presence is deeply rooted in frontiers, this is why it becomes a theological site par excellence, a privileged place to sow the seeds of the Kingdom of God and create what is new, the new place. In the contents of the Final Judgment, he places as one of the conditions to enter the Kingdom of God: "*Come, my Father's blessed ones, receive your inheritance of the Kingdom...for I was a stranger and you invited me in...*" (Mt. 25,35) . The Church, motivated by this promise-recommendation, in consideration to the migrants, and identifying itself as a pilgrim Church, and in view of the migration processes, began to assume the reality of migration as a fundamental option. On the other hand, we cannot deny that it was by human migration (patriarchs, prophets, Jesus, apostles, the people of God) that the Church expanded, which in today's terms we could refer to as a "Christian globalization".

THE TEACHINGS OF THE CHURCH

Human mobility has always been a constant in the life and history of people, but as from 1870, the migration phenomenon became massive, and the Church as an institution began to worry. Pope Leo XIII, in the Letter "*Quam Aerumnosa*" dated December 10 1888, addressed to the Bishops in America, commended to them the needy European immigrants. The Pope acknowledged that immigration is an affliction, that many of the immigrants who wanted to

solve their political and economic problems have succumbed to situations worse than those experienced in their country of origin, and that added to material poverty there was spiritual misery; they were exploited and were the victims of constant deceit by sects and criminal organizations. In the face of these situations, Pope Leo XIII, founded by Apostolic Letter, the Apostolic School for candidates to priesthood, with headquarters in Piacenza, under the care of its Bishop, Monseignor John Baptist Scalabrini, today considered the Patron Saint of the Migrants.

Hereunder is a synthesis of the documents issued by the Church, presented with the purpose to of create a conscience and to raise awareness among its ministers, governments and the people of God.

Apostolic Constitution “*Exul Familia*”

The Apostolic Constitution “*Exul Familia*” was published by Pious XII on August, 1st 1952, and it was the first important document issued by the Church on the subject of migrations. It has two parts:

1. *Maternal concern of the Church for immigrants*: this chapter presents a historical synthesis of the works accomplished by the Church in this field.
2. *Norms regarding the spiritual care of immigrants*: It creates a pontifical structure for the pastoral care of immigrants, under the jurisdiction of the Sacred Consistorial Congregation.

Motu Propio “*Pastoralis Migratorum Cura*”

On August 15, 1969 a *Motu Propio* apostolic letter was published: “*Pastoralis Migratorum Cura*” by Paul VI, whereby the revision of the norms set forth in the Apostolic Constitution “*Exul Familia*” was authorized. The document enunciates seven specific actions to the Episcopal Conferences:

1. Follow closely the main problems of migrations.
2. Select the priests, prepare them for that particular ministry and introduce them to the immigrants, so that they receive them as their chaplains.
3. Institute, if considered appropriate, a priest school for the migrants.
4. Request the participation of the men and women of religious orders and of laypersons to participate in this initiative.
5. Organize regular meetings, at international and continental level, to define and coordinate pastoral assistance.
6. Promote contacts with national and international organizations and other institutions so that the rights of the migrants are protected.
7. Send an annual report to the Sacred Congregation of Bishops, with the data, suggestions and wishes, so as to report on the difficulties faced by the pastoral action (Nº 23).

Motu Propio “*Apostolicae Caritatis*”

Published by Paul VI, on March 19, 1970, the main purpose of this document was to provide stability to the pastoral care of the migrants, establishing the Pontifical Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migration and Tourism, today known as the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of the Migrants and Itinerant People. Its purpose is to interweave, in a firm, fruitful and efficient manner all the organizations established for the Pastoral Care of Human Mobility: The Pastoral Care of the Migrants, the Apostolate of the Air, the Apostolate of the Sea, the Apostolate of the Nomads and the Pastoral of Tourism.

The New Code of Canon Law

Published in 1983, in canons 518 and 568, explicit reference is made to the pastoral care of migrants.

Pontifical Document: “Refugees: a challenge to Solidarity”

This document was published by the Pontifical Council *Cor Unum* and the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Emigrants and Itinerants in 1992. It makes a historical tour of refugees in the past and the present, emphasizing the challenges that this reality represents to the international community and proposing initiatives that lead to a path of solidarity with the refugees. The whole Church is called for this action.

“Stella Maris” Apostolic Letter

From John Paul II, published on January 31, 1997. This letter contemplates the situation of the people at sea, guides the acts of the Chaplain and establishes managerial norms for the Work of the Apostolate at Sea.

Guidelines for the Pastoral Care of Tourism

Published on June 29, 2001, it proposes to offer a reflection and criteria of pastoral care of tourism, as a social and economic fact with many dimensions, in response to the new circumstances of the global village.

First General Conference of the Latin American Episcopate: Medellín, July 25 to August 4 1955

In relation to the pastoral care of migrants, see numerals 91 and 93.

Second General Conference of the Latin American Episcopate: Río de Janeiro, August 26 to September 7, 1968

Points out all the issues at the source of the entire migration problem: justice, peace and social promotion. Special attention was given to three main areas: the promotion of human beings, the need of an adapted evangelization and maturing process of faith, the problems regarding members of the church.

Third General Conference of the Latin American Episcopate: Puebla, January 27 to February 13, 1979.

The document affirms that migrations are a mass phenomenon which importance is intensified (n 71) and establishes concrete guidelines for social order actions. (n.1290 and 1292).

Fourth General Conference of the Latin American Episcopate: Santo Domingo, October 20 to 28, 1992.

The final document deals with the issue of human mobility in its number 186. The firm commitment made in Santo Domingo, which proposes as the main theme for the document an inculturated evangelization, is of utmost importance for the pastoral care of the migrants.

Exhortation: “The Church in America”

Portrays the pastoral concerns of the Bishops in America. In its Number 65, where it deals with the problems of immigrants, it exhorts “*..the Church in America to be the vigilant advocate that protects, against all unfair restrictions, the natural right of each person to move freely in his or her own nation and from one nation to another. A warm and welcoming attitude is needed, one that will encourage them to integrate into ecclesiastical life, always safeguarding their freedom and their own particular cultural identity*”. This makes the human movement of migration an

important challenge for the pastoral of the Church, for not only is there great concern for those who suffer in the cities or in other countries, but also for those who are excluded in rural areas in their own homeland.

Instruction “*Erga Migrantes Caritas Christi*”

Published on May 3, 2004, the Instruction “*Erga Migrantes Caritas Christi*” makes an attempt to update the pastoral care of migrations, taking into account the new migratory flows and their characteristics, thirty five years after the publication of the Motu Proprio “*Pastoralis Migratorum Cura*” and the Instruction of *De Pastoralis migratorum cura*. It intends to be an ecclesiastical answer to the new pastoral needs of the migrants, underlining the feeling of apprehension that migration usually produces on individuals, particularly on women and children, without forgetting families.

XI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops October 2- 23, 2005

Among the proposals approved for the realization of the Fifth General Conference of the Latin American Episcopate, to take place in Brazil this year, proposal number 45: “*Eucharist and Immigrants*” points out the following: “*The Synod, thanking all those who work in this field, invites all the Bishops to practice pastoral care towards the immigrants. These faithful must be received as members of the Body of Christ, disregarding their race, status or condition, especially in the celebration of the Holy Eucharistic. The charity of Christ urges other local Churches and religious institutions to provide generous help to the dioceses that harbor a great number of immigrants...*”

The Participation Document to the 5th Conference of the Episcopate of Latin America and the Caribbean 2006 allows us to have a clearer vision of the migration issue as a priority in the Church which will be discussed in Aparecida, Brazil in 2007. Proposal number 123 of said Document points out the following: “*Human mobility, both domestic and international, is on the increase in this era of globalization. However, it is difficult for people to migrate with the same ease as capital and goods. This is due to the incoherence of economic policies that allow for the free movement of capital, but against the movement of labor forces. Some countries see immigration as a threat or as a loss of their security and adopt extremely restrictive policies and laws for migratory control*”.

As we have seen, the Church has not remained with its arms crossed in the face of these events taking place in our continent; quite the opposite, the Church has always searched for an answer to the great challenges. Thus, in its actions has become stronger and has grown, as the charisma of pastoral care demands: “*To be a migrant with the migrant*”, in other words a Pastoral on the Way, as a true pilgrim Church. In the course of this *migratory march*, the Church has also been growing in its theological reflection regarding human mobility, the lessons of the Teachings of the Church, the actions fulfilled by the different ecclesiastical organizations. In Latin America the horizon is clearer with regard to this field of pastoral care. There is a greater awareness of the need to take more actions in favor of the internal migrants, of those in the borders and in other continents, and to assume the work of accompaniment claimed by migrants in countries with different languages and cultures. Migrations, due to their magnitude in Latin America and because of the consequences that they entail on each individual, constitute a problem whose importance cannot be concealed and which the Church must attend to solicitously because there are millions of human lives in this situation. This fact confronts us and demands an answer from our faith. We must take action to provide our world with the favorable conditions so that each man and woman receive in their hearts the Kingdom of God.

2.- MIGRATION PROCESSES

Migration, understood as a process, also transforms the definitions in relation with the categories of migrants. This is due to the fact that while migration becomes more accentuated, Social Sciences show their concern by conscientiously analyzing this phenomenon, in order to offer the best definitions on the issue, leading us to a better understanding and appropriate answer to this very current reality.

Here are some definitions, which shall be analyzed subsequently:

Migration: Understood as the mobilization of a person from one place to another or from one country to another. It may occur as a result of several factors, which experts qualify as “theories” (demographic, economic and social).

Irregular Migration: It can be defined as all international movement which takes place outside of the regulatory framework of the country of origin, of the country of reception, of both, or of the country of transit. By definition, irregular migration is the result of laws enacted to control the flow of migration; it is a misdemeanor or a crime, according to the criminal justice system of national legislation against State sovereignty. It can be legal or illegal, as it can be voluntary (with the consent of the person migrating) or by force (without his or her consent). Forced mobilization of persons and human trafficking are examples of forced migration.

“Voluntary” Migrants: Those who by personal or family decision migrate, generally with the intention of returning to their place of origin. These persons could have migrated from the provinces to the capital, in which case they are referred to as “*internal migrants*”; or migrated from some part of the country to overseas, in which case they become “external migrants” or “*emigrants*”.

Temporary Migrants: Those who migrate for a short period of time, as seasonal workers in agriculture at sowing and harvest time; they can be regular or irregular.

Workers hired through agreements: A migrant hired through an agreement or facilities to cover an additional demand; usually this type of work is temporary.

Forced Migrants: Those that are forced to abandon their place of residence involuntarily, because of violence, terrorism, armed internal conflict or an international war. This trait sets them apart from traditional migrants.

Refugees: According to the United Nations Convention in relation to the Refugee Status of 1951, a refugee is a person who resides out of his or her homeland, and is unable or does not wish to return due to a “*..well founded fear based on their persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality and membership of a particular social group or political opinion*”. The Cartagena Declaration of 1984 widened the definition by incorporating those “*..who have fled from their countries because their life, safety or freedom has been threatened by general violence, foreign aggression, internal conflicts, massive violation of human rights or other circumstances that have seriously disturbed public order*”.

The number of refugees is growing, from 2.4 million in 1975 to 10.5 million in 1985 and 14 million in 1990. By the year 2000, the global population of refugees was of 12.1 million. More than 22 million people are under the protection of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Asylum Seekers: These are the people who seek protection outside of their countries. Approximately five million asylum seekers entered Western countries between 1985 and 1995; for the year 2000, the number of people seeking asylum amounted to approximately 543 thousand. Some governments are skeptical of these numbers as many economic migrants have infiltrated in the number of true victims of persecution. Today, there are about 1,2 million people seeking asylum.

Displaced: They are defined as persons or sometimes entire families that had to abandon their homes as a consequence of persecution, armed conflict or violence, while remaining within the boundaries of their own country. Globally, the number of displaced persons increased from 1.2 million in 1982 to 14 million in 1986, and to over 20 million in 1997. This increase is due to the new types of war which deliberately attack civilian populations. The quantity in numbers of displaced persons are greater than those of refugees, with the difference that the displaced do not count with international protection, given that it is an internal problem in each country.

Displaced by Development: These are persons forced to move because of large-scale development projects such as the construction of great dams, airports, highways and urban housing. The World Bank estimates that such projects displace an average of 10 million people a year. The displaced by development constitute a larger group than the officially recognized refugee population, and for whom there is no system of protection. Many of them end up wandering in marginal urban zones.¹

Displaced by environmental conditions: They are the persons displaced due to changes in the environment (desertification, deforestation, degradation of the soil, water pollution or flooding), by natural disasters (overflowing rivers, volcano eruptions, earthquakes) and by man-caused disasters (industrial accidents, radioactivity).²

Stateless: These are persons who have lost their country of origin due to the disintegration of countries, creation of new states or change of borderlands.

The Traffic of and Trafficking in Persons (or modern day slavery): A final form of migration involves the traffic and trafficking in human beings through international borders. The trafficking in women and children in the international sex trade takes place all over the world. It is impossible to quantify the number of persons affected by trafficking and smuggling. Today this phenomenon has reached gigantic proportions world-wide, and so has the concern it causes. It is a known fact that this phenomenon moves vast economies, in which specialized organizations interpose the migration networks. The Traffic of and the Trafficking in Persons are not synonymous, both have been characterized in two protocols of the United Nations Convention against transnational organized crime.

The Trafficking in Persons, especially in women and children has a well differentiated dynamic of its own, **the activity** involves picking up, transporting, transferring, taking in and receiving of persons; **the means** that produce the action involve threats, the use of force or other forms of

¹ UNHCR "International Rights of the Refugees".

² Stephen Castles, "A Review of International Forced Migration Policies" .

coercion such as abduction, fraud, deceit and the abuse of power or a situation of vulnerability; this all leads up to **exploitation purposes**, which basically involve the exploitation of other persons through prostitution or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery, servitude or the extraction of organs.³

The Traffic of Persons, on the other hand, is defined as the facilitation of illegal entry of a person into a State where such person is not a national or a permanent resident for the purpose of obtaining, directly or indirectly, a financial or similar material benefit in exchange.⁴

Most of the victims of trafficking in persons and traffic of persons are young girls who instead of playing dolls are made to sweep, cook or wash. Most of these girls are sent to Lima in the hope that they will find a job in a house, where in exchange for 15 hours of labor, they will have a roof over their heads, meals and sometimes schooling; however for the most part they are subjected to exploitation, mistreatment and sexual abuse.

Transnational Migration Theories

Now that the different types of migration have been outlined, it is important to emphasize the theories or causes that generate human mobility. According to the international migration process observed in class, it is possible to understand the systems that drive persons to migrate, cross borders, to move from one place to another, from one country to another, in pursuit of better living conditions. In the case of Peru, why do Peruvians migrate? It is my belief that the sociological theory is relevant in this case - without lessening the importance of other theories as each and every one of them are linked to or complement each other, I believe both the economic and demographic theories are the result of political interests.

Watching the history of Peru and its migration process, and taking into account its geographical position- which happens to be very strategic- and its multiple natural resources, one would think that Peruvians have no reason to migrate considering that the country has sufficient raw materials to efficiently meet the demands of its people. But in fact, over two million Peruvians live outside their country and another 65% have settled in a place other than their place of birth (internal migration). The sociological role is preponderant to explain the theory of international migration. The world's systems, characterized by inequality, which expands global capitalism through political power and prevents the development and modernization of the poorest regions, makes Peru another country that depends on those countries which are more developed.

In Peru, the lack of a serious state policy, such as investment in rural areas (agrarian reform, health, roads, education etc.), the bad distribution of richness and government systems (terrorism, violence) results in a loss of credibility, a necessary factor to attract foreign investments. Consequently, the number of unemployed work force with no perspectives in life is increasing creating a greater rift between the rich and the poor.

Hence, the impoverished communities are increasingly tempted to migrate, as they feel utterly unprotected by a State that fails to provide them with security and welfare. In this sense the "internationalists" who affirm the thesis that human capital projects itself towards regions –or jobs- where their production will be better remunerated, tend to abandon those regions –or jobs- where they fail to produce enough for their survival. All this makes Peruvians migrate further for

³ Protocol to Prevent, Repress and Punish the Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, Article 3.a

⁴ Ídem.

sociological factors leading to the economic factor, and in the face of non-existent public policies projected at urban and rural development, brings forth the theory of economic migration as an alternative to overcome the deficiencies created by lack of employment, opportunities, education, health, housing, and of a decent life with equal opportunities for all. Added to these factors is the demographic transition, both in the countries of origin and destination. Furthermore, the aging of the population, the low birth and mortality rates in the countries of destination promotes the quest for demographic bonds of the countries that issue them, to fill gaps and lend balance with a population of reproductive age, something that Peru has in large quantities.

If the Peruvian State acknowledges its reality and what the sociological factors represent for the emigration of its people and faces with responsibility the matter of international migration, it may find in this theory and in others, answers that could channel a better perspective to its people. The situation can be reversed based on the capability, transparency and honesty of the political class, through coherent public policies that respond to the needs of the people, since there are enough raw materials that can be commercialized in addition to the country's desirable geographical position; factors that could generate great investments in trade from the Pacific to the Atlantic. Thus, the investment made on education and college education of its people will be well justified; otherwise, the State will continue benefiting those countries that receive our qualified professionals without having spent a cent in their college education, and Peru will continue to be plunged in the increasingly notorious extreme poverty.

Positive and negative aspects of Transnational Migration, as seen by Teófilo Altamirano

Altamirano ⁵ addresses the question of the migratory contribution in relation to the costs and benefits that international migration, and particularly the migration of Peruvians abroad, is producing both to the country of origin, the countries of destination, and for the migrant himself.

Regarding costs in Peru, where families are typically very close-knit, the cost is relatively high, especially to the parents of the migrant, to whom this separation represents loneliness, more so if the emigrant does not have relatives or fellow countrymen in the new country. The political cost refers to the association of emigration with political and economical instability, an important factor in the creation of Peru's image abroad and among those who wish to invest or visit the country as tourists.

Transnational migration also creates benefits, in relation to the globalization of Peruvian culture; migrants contribute to disseminate the music, dances, culinary art and popular religion around the world. The return of qualified migrants could also represent a benefit, when it is well programmed and when the experience acquired abroad will represent a bonus to the country- in relation to currency and sources of work. On the other hand, those fellow citizens who obtained their retirement pension abroad and wish to return to their homeland to enjoy the fruits of their labor could represent another important alternative for Peru and to migrants themselves.

The reception countries also resent the costs, which are evidenced in the use (made by the migrants) of education, housing, health, employment and other services, as the costs of these services are assumed by the State in the case of health and education.

⁵ Teófilo, Altamirano. *"Transnationalism and Remittances: The case of Peru"*. In the Regional Seminar of Migrant Remittances.- an alternative for Latin America and the Caribbean? Caracas, Venezuela, July 2005.

In addition to the remittances or transfers of money previously indicated, the cheap and relatively plentiful labor means that employers reduce their production costs by paying migrants low salaries, and in some cases submit them to forms of labor exploitation, specialized jobs; migrants are sought for certain jobs in construction and agriculture, and multiculturalism produces an exchange of values, customs and forms of expression between the migrants and the society that receives them.

For the migrants themselves, the costs are very high, mainly from labor exploitation- especially for irregular migrants who have no legal protection to safeguard them. Due to the fact that they are far from home, homesickness and an identity crisis ensue and they wish to return home. In many cases families are destroyed because the migrants, moved by loneliness look for new relationships and in other cases for new families. In addition, migrants acquire benefits from the job environment, he or she becomes skilled in a specialized job and the salary is increased, the migrant comes into contact with culturally and technically globalized societies; moreover, he is well considered by his fellow countrymen for having been in another country.

Importance of Social Capital in Transnational Migrations

I considered it important to address the issue of Social Capital as an essential element for human movement, which by means of social networks make the most of the spaces and opportunities to achieve its objectives.

Social Capital means the capacity that each individual has, to a greater or lesser degree, to relate, associate and work- through groups, associations, syndicates, clubs, etc., to achieve common goals. The level of association will depend on the degree of trust deposited by the community on its members, where shared standards and values are involved.

This concept developed as a result of the failures of economy-oriented theories of social development. It is from here that the idea is born to consider and reevaluate in this process the predominant values in social culture, such as mutual trust, a sense of community and good citizenship, with the hopes of formulating new public policies that achieve strategic objectives for a development that is self-sufficient, participatory, inclusive and fair.

In this sense, the family, just as the Church, which lives the sense of community, promotes the connection through social networks, which have a bearing on reintroducing the predominating values of a social culture and consider macro theory frameworks to incorporate them in the theory of migration.

This theory favors the strengthening of these major figures and their social networks, facilitating the transparency and efficiency in public administration in all areas of the State, likewise, it will change the view held with regard to the poor, ceasing to see them as a problem and letting them become the driving force in the quest for a better quality of life, and allies in the fight against poverty and social exclusion. Under this perspective, Social Capital may become a good channel for social development and a means to strengthen democracy, so weakened and misunderstood in Latin America, as it contributes to the consolidation of institutions, fostering development but conscious of equality and social inclusion, bringing about the integration of poor countries in a world marked by globalization.

According to Winters-Janvry-Sadoulet (2001), the theory of international migration networks provides a framework to understand the relative importance of economic and non-economic factors. On the other hand, the traditional model maintained that people specialize and develop their money-making activities in the hopes of obtaining economic gains in exchange, while the social capital model considers that this is not only due to economic aspirations, but to an internal search of social and emotional wellbeing. Migration is very costly due to the risks it represents, especially to migrants with no connections or networks. Instead, Social Capital, made up of networks of migrants and potential migrants, whether through friends or relatives, directs the migratory movement more efficiently because it reduces the costs and risks that migration implies. In this sense, migration specialists hold that this strategy not only reduces risks, but increases economic income and reduces the effects of being uprooted.

To summarize this matter, I quote Massey's explanation (1999): "*When the migrant networks are well developed, they place a job in destination within the reach of most community members and make migration a source of steady and reliable income*" In other words, Social Capital, through the networks of a given community, can help to prevent migrants from falling victims to the false promises and deceit of the criminal networks, and thus help them to adapt quickly and safely to their new reality.

Borders as the main challenge of migrants

To conclude this outline on migrations, I shall briefly address the border issue, in the hope of understanding the processes occurring in the life of a migrant. The word "border" is a vague and plural term, but within said ambiguity, the migrants who cross the different borders, have many things to tell; their tales could become an invitation to create, along with them, a new world, a global and unified global village, fraternal and inclusive. And to understand the migrant's transformation process, let us observe the different virtual borders that the migrant must simultaneously cross. Nowadays we speak of three borders in the migrant's mind:

Geographical border: These are the landmarks that divide the land into countries, places of conflict or solidarity, of circulation; for the migrants crossing it, this is where the change is felt, and it is no longer homeland

Political border: Represented by public and political powers, the authorities responsible for migration control. They can open and close frontiers according to the political situation of each country, through laws that are not always favorable to the circulation of persons. For the migrant this means new laws, rights and obligations.

Cultural, ethnic, religious, family and moral borders: The widest and most ambiguous, but by no means least important, as it involves the migrant's customs, religion, family, vision of the world, etc.. Theoretically this data is imprecise but unequivocal, and can determine or condition the migrant's projects.

These are the spaces around which migrants circulate, which question the foundations of world order that is based in the concentration of economies and social exclusion. Human mobility points to a need for changes in view of the building up of new economic, social, political, cultural and family relations.

CONCLUSION

The reality of human mobility, in the context of a globalized world presents itself as a blend of lights and shadows that not everyone sees in the same way: for some the phenomenon is a threat, for others it is simply an economical opportunity. The Word of God and the Social Doctrine of the Church can help us understand, in a hopeful way, those lights and shadows that are part of the ethical, social, political, economical and cultural dimensions in the migration of our people. They also help to understand the reasons behind human mobility and value its consequences.

The phenomenon of migration observed from its human dimension points towards the deep meaning they have; the solutions to the problems generated by migration must take into consideration the human justifications that give rise to this phenomenon. In this sense, it will be essential to take into account the ethical referents, as these will provide the guidelines to unravel the issues created by migration in the scope of human relations, cultural symbiosis and the political, economical and religious relations that the phenomenon presents. This leads the human community to feel great concern regarding the magnitude of the migration phenomenon, especially in some parts of the world where the inequality caused by an excluding globalization is very notorious, hence the need for dialogue between all of us humans who make up this world.

It is important that the political system in charge of building up the coexistence of citizens and in communion with them clearly establish the rights and obligations to rule the dynamics of these relations. It is an undeniable fact that migrations represent a political challenge and its solution cannot disregard ethics. As a consequence, a political society cannot close itself but remain open, nor exclude the interaction with other societies by refusing the integration of the new members, who are entitled by the contribution they are prepared to make. John Paul II dealt with the “cultural integration” issue in his message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees, in 2005.

It would also be of great interest to establish a link, however small, between the right to “free circulation” of financial capitals with the right of “free circulation” of migrant workers; but as we have observed, in many countries clear, efficient and coherent migration policies are still incipient on the part of the State; indeed, there are some countries that still do not have a policy regarding migrations.

The border concept we have seen in the last part should lead us towards a linked or joint action since, just as the migrant has learnt to combine the different borders in his life: the governments, international organizations, civil society and pastoral agents should also learn to articulate better with the other areas by providing services to migrants. The Church understands that the signs today of human mobility represent a challenge, an invitation and a stimulus for integrated interventions, both of the Church pastoral and its members, as well as the political action of those responsible for public administration at all levels of civil society, because migrants demand precautions, they disturb structures and need headways, as they are true levers that make human history progress.

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