# Integration of Migrants in Chile. Multicultural Assimilation and Rhetoric

## La integración de los migrantes en Chile. Asimilación y retórica multiculturalista

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ABSTRACT

In this article we explore the difficulties and misuse of the concept of integration of immigrant into the chilean society, analyzed in the realm of politics and public policy; whereas in the public rhetoric integration is defined using its multiculturalists version, politics defines as assimilation. Social sciences is aware of the difficulty of using this concept in the public policy arena, domestic politics and the new bills regarding immigration. The concept of integration also involves other social and cultural minorities, therefore, makes the use and misuse of the concept more complicated in the political arena.

*Keywords*: 1. integration, 2. immigration, 3. political elite, 4. Chile.


RESUMEN

En este artículo exploraremos las dificultades y contradicciones en el uso y análisis del concepto de integración de los migrantes internacionales en Chile. A nivel político se utiliza la variante de la asimilación, mientras que desde la retórica se habla de multiculturalismo. Desde las Ciencias Sociales advierten de lo complejo del concepto mismo, por sus implicancias en el uso de conceptos como sinónimos (pluralismo cultural, multiculturalismo, integración) en las políticas públicas y en los proyectos de ley en la materia, que también involucra otras minorías en el país.

*Palabras clave*: 1. integración, 2. migrantes, 3. élite política, 4. Chile.

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## INTRODUCTION. THE CHILEAN MIGRATION SCENARIO AND ITS PROPOSALS IN PUBLIC POLICIES AND MIGRATION BILLS

Chile has a gap in terms of migration policy, as its legislation does not yet correspond to current times (Doña Reveco y Levinson, 2012; Doña Reveco y Mullan, 2014). It does not have a public institution for the management and treatment of migration, nor a general regulation that governs the public agencies that affect the matter, since there is no governmental or intersectoral body that is exclusively and integrally dedicated to the issue of migration (Gainza, 2013, p. 167). International platforms have concluded that legislative reform is urgent and the International Labour Organization (ILO) has produced reports in which they highlight that, despite its slowness, Chile is currently directing efforts towards necessary reforms.

The National Council on Migration Policy was established by the Ministry of the Interior and Public Security during the second term of Michelle Bachelet's presidency (2014-2018), which seeks to coordinate the different ministries in the area of migration by providing conclusions and public policies in this regard. Since it does not have a specific institutional framework on migration issues, the role of this council is to coordinate related programs and observe compliance with presidential provisions on rights.

It is also important to point out that all legislative reform –that is, the preparation and presentation of bills– comes from the executive branch, so that the parliament cannot present bills as such, but at present and due to the importance of the migration issue in the country, parliamentarians from various Chilean political parties present *motions* to the current decree law to improve and support the various measures that seek to protect migrants in their rights.

According to the 1975 Immigration Law Decree No. 1.094 (known as the Immigration and Migration Law) currently governing the country, it is important to understand that it has an origin marked by national security and the reinforcement of borders within a given historical moment of a *restrictive type* (Mármora, 2002, p. 284). The most significant elements of this legal framework are to count the entries and exits of foreigners and the types of visas, which responded to this specific historical moment, when the entry of foreigners was restricted almost in its entirety, so its objective was mainly border control, management of migratory flows and granting of visas according to the sense of national security. As for the number of foreigners in the country, data from the 2017 census (National Statistics Institute [INE], 2018a, 2018b) yielded an estimate of 465,000 foreigners, representing 2.7 percent of the country's total population (17.5 million). It is estimated that the figure will exceed 500,000 people in the 2017 abridged census.

The country's historical relationship with migration is characterized by its selective orientation, based on the need to populate certain sectors of the country and the beginnings

of a science that was based on studies of race as a scientific object and concept, facts that displaced native and indigenous groups that inhabited the territories destined to be occupied for productive tasks and settlement. The intentionality in the specific selection of certain groups in favour of demographic development and population shows a specific ethnic-racial reference to the detriment of border immigration and in favour of the European population (Gainza, 2013, p. 169) that prevailed in the middle of the 19th century. This regulation took a turn with the implementation of a national security policy with racist roots and selection in the military government that began in the 1970s with the Immigration Decree Law No. 1.094 of 1975, which did not contemplate the right to settle permanently or access to state benefits and basic rights such as health, education, work, housing and administrative regularization.

Larraín (2010) determines that *centralism* and *authoritarianism* are the main elements of Chilean identity that permeate current politics and, on its way to modernity, the country seeks to have a common project to maintain what was built during the period of territorial expansion with the occupation of Araucanía during the second half of the nineteenth century in an intensive manner, and to stabilize tensions and conflicts with neighboring countries, which arose in the same period.

Therefore, the idea of a national unity based on these principles is fundamental to understand the step towards Chilean society and politics.

As Usallán (2015, p. 9) states: "From a point of view of historical evolution Chile has assumed and reproduced an image of cultural homogeneity of the political community. This has been constructed fundamentally from the state power invisibilizing the existing diversity through the use of different degrees of consensus and violence".

In 2015, the National Council on Migration Policy was established, which brings together the ministries that will formulate public policies on the subject. The unit in charge of migration in Chile is the Department of Immigration and Migration (DEM), which belongs to the Ministry of the Interior and Public Security. Its functions include ensuring compliance with the foreign legislation in force in the country relating to entry and exit, permanent or temporary residence, expulsions and regulation of foreigners who remain in the national territory. Within the framework of the National Migration Policy of the Government of Chile, the unit is responsible for analyzing applications for temporary, permanent, refugee and nationalization residence, as well as for promoting reception actions that encourage the integration of immigrants, fostering institutional, legislative and migration management modernization in Chile and developing and implementing the Presidential Migration Policy Instruction. This department has been working on the elaboration process and the final document of a new bill in order to present it to the Chamber of Deputies, but the process was delayed and at this time it is still not concluded. The document was prepared through consultations with social organizations and other

bodies, giving rise to a report which rescued the most important aspects and measures that should be present in the new legislation and migration institutions.

At the level of public policies, the current law has materialized in presidential instructions (Presidential Instruction No. 9 of 2008 and the new Presidential Instruction No. 5 of 2015, both under the administration of President Bachelet) that correspond to international agreements on rights signed where, although some ministries have pilot offices focused on immigration and social services, it is not yet possible to speak of diagnoses of their performance. In relation to integration policies, the State provides a series of benefits to immigrants in a regular situation, which is within the policies for the population in a situation of vulnerability that does not distinguish between Chileans and foreigners, nor by their economic situation. The recognition within a state of vulnerability has been explained by Thayer Correa (2013) because the migrant population is encapsulated in a sort of false recognition as a vulnerable subject and claimant of rights restricted by their status as migrants and is recognized as a subject of full rights in a few instances.

Martínez, Soffia, Cubides and Bortolotto (2013, p. 182) explain that the treatment of the migration issue in the legislature has been scarce and there has not been any parliamentary committee specifically devoted to the issue. In addition, there is a lack of specialists to push for measures through specific initiatives.

From the Chilean parliament, the commissions that have directly approached on this issue have been the permanent commissions of the Chamber of Deputies, the Interior Government, Citizenship and Regionalization commission. Those that have had a tangential relationship have been the Foreign Affairs, Interparliamentary Affairs and Latin American Integration Commission and the Human Rights and Native Peoples Commission.

This last commission has presented official *reports* and *motions* related to migration and the need for new legislation in accordance with the international conventions signed by Chile.

In 2015, Resolution No. 388 "requesting the President to send a new Draft Framework Law on Migration" (Chamber of Deputies of Chile, 2015) was approved; in 2016, a motion was sent to the Chamber of Deputies that "Modifies Decree-Law No. 1.094 of 1975, Immigration law and establishes rules to promote the integration of migrants and safe migration" (Bulletin No. 10779-06).

The motion on the integration of migrants and safe migration states in article 1.° that:

"The aim of integration policies shall be to ensure the rights and demand the respective obligations that foreign visa holders have in the country and to facilitate their participation in

the national community, where the intention of the migrant to seek a life in accordance with their needs in another country –which is the right to migrate– must be harmonized with the rules that are specific to the political communities, which as holders of their territories, are free and sovereign to regulate entry and admission to their territory. The migratory norms are, precisely, the calls to determine how to reconcile the determinations of the choice of the migrant, to choose the place where to live, with those of the community to which they aspire to integrate. Since migration is a complex issue that will never be fully discussed and explored in the political debate, legislation must be reviewed periodically to channel its flows through incentives and disincentives, as well as to guide it to the best benefit of the country in question" (Bulletin No. 10779-06 of June 23, 2016, p. 2).

Therefore, the way in which the integration of migrants is understood would be subordinated to the law, institutionality, legal procedures, values, tradition and cultural, social and political forms already existing in the country, but observing and protecting the rights. Further on, it speaks of the fact that migrants must participate in the decisions that concern them and that the Ministry of Education must include minimum compulsory contents on the themes of migration and multiculturalism.

Usallán (2015) explains that assimilationism is the measure that has been used since political management in Chile because,

"The hegemony of a paradigm such as the assimilationist still survives in the Chilean political and normative context. Although it could not be said that there are openly excluding policies, the absence of proactive policies that open the way to cultural pluralism is notorious. It is a common practice for institutions to adopt progressive discursive rhetoric similar to the postulates of cultural pluralism, but in practice there is no modulation of migration management according to such postulates. In spite of the great progress that has been made in the academic sphere and in civil society itself, where the question of the democratic management of diversity is here to stay, the political will to achieve an inclusive political community project is insufficient" (Usallán, 2015, p. 14).

"In this sense, in the Chilean case we do not find elements of coherence between the current policies of diversity management and the paradigm of cultural pluralism. We could talk about the prevalence of an assimilationist paradigm in transition" (idem).

In evaluating this bill, which should have been presented in 2017, it is important to ask whether it seeks migration oriented towards development needs and establishes policies for the search for skilled workers for certain economic areas (called contingent flow of workers policies in some countries, within neoclassical theoretical argumentation), or whether it will encourage rights-based migration and family reunification. Both positions are not mutually exclusive, but if the former is the case, public policies will have to conform to a notion of temporary or permanent settlement. Germany and the United States

have already addressed the issue through their guest worker programs, where there were no major efforts at integration because they were intended to be short stays. However, when it became evident that migrants were permanently established, it was necessary to change the response towards migrant incorporation measures in terms of education, health, housing, social and political rights, unions and marriages between nationals and foreigners, the role of migrant organizations in decision making, labor entrepreneurship and support for self-employment, among others, a situation that Chile will have to face in the short term due to current demands. In any case, the present institutional framework and the legal framework are no longer sufficient, so it is necessary to legislate according to future scenarios, where permanent settlement will be the norm and the State must be prepared to face these facts.

For 2018 and with the center-right coalition in the presidency (second term of President Sebastián Piñera, ongoing), a new bill was sent which, in simple terms, is the same presented in his first government (2013-2017) with substitutive indications, and taking into account several aspects of the project of Michelle Bachelet's mandate, such as the creation of a National Migration Service, for example. The bill was approved in its first constitutional step in October 2018, so it has a good chance of becoming law in a short time.

Valenzuela (2014, p. 28) argues that the slowness of major legislative reforms and changes is due to the low number of foreigners in the country, the lack of constitutional change and, on the other hand, the unemployment rate that despite Chile's economic growth remained at medium-high levels (around 10%) during the periods 2000-2007 and 2009-2010. With this index, any policy of full openness to immigrants becomes unpopular among the public opinion and politicians resist changes of great amplitude that may have political-electoral consequences. Therefore, immigration and the labor force, self-regulates with current economic cycles and economic and labor contexts. At present, the legal structure remains stagnant and the administrative structure that manages migration is still subordinated to the logic of *national security*, but with a kind of *entry tolerance* and the possibility of changing the legal-administrative status to a permanent residence (Gainza, 2013, p. 180) within the so-called *access policies.*

Other authors, such as Macarena Machín (2011), relate the existing *model of socioeconomic inequality* in Chile with a discriminatory pattern towards the immigrant worker, which is the labor structure present in Chile (informal, few labor rights and guarantees) and where migrants are inserted in the most vulnerable strata (Portes and Rumbaut, 1990).

The media have given a sense of threat (Rosenbluth, Littin, Farfán and Rubio, 2012) to the contingents of foreign workers arriving in the country, which can lead to a greater instability of working conditions for locals because foreigners perform their work for

lower incomes and without benefits, as well as discriminatory sensationalism that stigmatizes certain groups of migrants who, in many cases, are those of working age (Navarrete, 2017); therefore, the negative stigma of immigration is an important factor to consider when studying the migratory phenomenon and the response of political elites.

It is said that, due to the low total number of international immigrants and the fact that the majority of this population comes from Latin America, integration policies are not so urgent because it is considered that cultural and idiomatic closeness to Chile would allow them to join quickly if they have, for the most part, an even higher socio-educational level than nationals, so a successful form of integration was to be expected. Nonetheless, it is clear that this will not be achieved in many ways and specific policies are needed around the cultural diversity implied by international immigration, especially in the areas of education, health, housing, among others. Cultural and idiomatic closeness are not constitutive elements of success in the incorporation to a new medium.

## THE DISCOURSE TOWARDS INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION FROM THE POLITICAL ELITE

The role of the political elite, the conglomerates of political parties in Chile on migration (Torres, 2017) and minority voices can be characterized by a cross-cutting agreement towards respect for human rights and non-discrimination as a structural basis of reference, certain differences can be observed in the type of migration policy, which includes both new legislation and institutional and public policies, where migration is selective in relation to the economic and labour reality of the country.

The proposal to open quotas of skilled workers is dismissed, while the other spectrum calls for rights-based migration and family reunification, with no specific background on the possible contribution that new foreigners can make to the country, which could be broad and positive. These two positions are not opposed but, from the political point of view, any type of adhesion to one or the other has consequences and when reviewing the international literature it is evident that the role of the political parties in the migratory issue has had varied results, depending on the economic conditions, the relationship of the congress with the presidency and the power groups, the *lobbying* of the migrant and human rights groups and the voting power of the minorities in the election of mayor, congressman, among other public positions (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD], 2010).

The reform of the immigration law in Chile has become considerably visible before the presidential elections of 2017 (Romero, 2016), but this urgency in legislative reforms has a greater date, both in the motions and interventions of different politicians in the sessions of Congress and in other instances, however, observing specifically the role of migration in the political debate can be said to be lower, compared to other issues on the political agenda.

There is also no data on the composition of political parties or support for political figures of foreign origin or another minority explicitly, when in other countries they are extensively studied within the specialized literature on migration. With diverse voices and political figures of foreign origin, there may be a greater interest of the party or conglomerate to aim for reforms in the matter, unlike coalitions and parties that do not have such diversity.

Parties are the most important political executors in modern democracies, so the political integration of migrant groups depends not only on the elimination of discriminatory policies and the implementation of reforms in public policies, but also on the attitudes of political parties (Aleinikoff y Klusmeyer, 2002, p. 58). Increasing the representation of ethnic minorities in parliament and the executive branch depends on political parties and their ability to support candidates with a migrant background, so party interference is key, for example, in their attitude towards discrimination and xenophobia. The authors have seen that, in some cases, center parties have taken the anti-immigration card to win votes that could have been from the more center-right spectrum parties (Aleinikoff y Klusmeyer, 2002, p. 60). When left/right divisions may seem irrelevant in the migration issue, it is necessary to explain why policies in recent decades have been more flexible than expected (OECD, 2010, p. 139), indicating that the beneficiary of immigration is concentrated in a few organized social actors, while the cost of migration is distributed among a larger number of individuals, with a divided group as opponent.

Some studies show public disagreement with public policy; in other studies, the role of the media helps shape images and tries to be consistent with collective images - which can be negative, because they are based on prejudices.

As Boswell (2008) argues in his analysis of British and German policy on labor migration during 2004 and 2006, the responses have been either technocratic, responding to a problem, or democratic, based on a broader reflection exploring the consequences and value of multiculturalism itself.

The role of expert groups and scientific information has shaped these two types of justification and, therefore, there are serious doubts and skepticism about the impartiality of the information and it is questioned whether there is any kind of political or business maneuver to bet on technocratic measures that favor the arrival of foreign labor.

Cristina Boswell (2008, p. 9) explains that this divergence has three possible causes: parliamentary dynamics, the ideological cleavage of the parties and the established patterns in the debate around migration. With regard to ideological cleavage, in the case analyzed the countries governed by center-left parties have arrived at a third way response in these reforms (Boswell, 2008, p. 9), emphasizing the impact of globalization and the importance of attracting skilled workers for a knowledge-based economy. This has provoked some

ambivalent responses from protectionist parties, such as the Christian Democrats in Germany.

On the other hand, English conservatives have opposed ethnic or cultural recourse, while considering themselves as pro-business and a relatively neoliberal party, open to new talent that can revive the economy. Their position is quite complex because it is not focused on a pro-modernizing agenda, but on a value-driven one that is far removed from the knowledge base of technocratic experts.

Thus, within the parties, both the expert-based vision and the ideological, values and social content approach are confronted at the time of the elections with the aim of maintaining the traditional voting bases of their parties, but the arguments begin to move towards those of an economic order when they come to power.

Finally, Germany has a collective memory close to the *failure* of the guest worker policy, so that all kinds of reforms and possibly related public policies have a social rejection.

Unlike the previous case, England did not undergo this process. Emma Hill's (2016) study of the political discourses of the conservative/democratic coalition that has been in power since 2010 in the United Kingdom concludes that two important elements come together in the political discourse on immigration: *hospitality and national and state identity*. What is interesting is that the discourses combine these two elements in both complementary and antagonistic ways, which could lead to an anti-immigration discourse capitalized from the negative aspects (use of the migrants' welfare system, etc.) and which could quickly become hostile.

In the Irish case, Haynes and Devereux (2016, p. 213) point out that since the economic recession of 2008, politicians in all sectors have maintained the image of the immigrant as a threat, despite the fact that the left supports the rights of migrants, all political actors have contributed to maintaining the notion that they are a burden on the economy and even fraudulent people, comparable to local crime.

What is relevant in his analysis is the decline in immigration from European Union (EU) countries, so that generally, immigration has not increased so much as to justify the discourse on the immigration burden; however, politicians did not mention this fact to Irish citizens. In addition, the migration issue has little visibility in the debates, which means that low-income immigrants are the most affected.

In general, Haynes and Devereux point out that there is no pro-immigration agenda, but that certain politicians who try to defend the rights of immigrants only focus on refuting the anti-immigration discourse of certain groups and there is no long-term agenda or in-depth discussion of the issue.

Finally, the authors indicate that there is misinformation and confusion on the part of public opinion regarding immigration (Haynes and Devereux, 2016, p. 211) and, therefore, political leaders should base their speeches on objective data (quantitative data) and not on speeches that do not come from facts so that citizens can arrive at informed conclusions.

Lastly, Breunig and Luedtke (2008) confirm that the conclusion of immigration policy in parties with a preference for immigration is independent of the right/left division.

They suggest that the gap between public opinion, which is mostly anti-immigration, and the position currently adopted by political parties can be explained by the strength of institutional control over the perception of the majority of citizens of immigration, which functions as a factor determining the support given by anti-immigration politicians.

As a result, this type of opinion carries weight over the preferences of political parties to move towards migratory restriction and the hardening of measures for adopting citizenship, as can be seen in the cases analyzed in OECD countries.

Another important element is the arrival in the political discussion of groups of risk management professionals, since risk is one of the consequences of globalization where migration takes on relevance as one of the issues on the agenda. This, in many cases, tends to be criminalized because it puts sovereignty and security at risk (Bigo, 2006). These advisors can have a great influence in the circles of power of the parliamentary world and the presidency, so it is an important aspect to highlight in the study of legislative processes on migration.

The concept of multiculturalism managed by political parties and the political elite is only a recount of the country's cultural diversity, especially in reference to the indigenous ethnic base, (Barabas, 2014) and is not reflected in specific plans or programs that protect or help maintain this diversity.

Neither do they include it in their proposals nor do they propose representatives with diverse origins due to the fact that the party system is closed and traditional, which does not allow the entry of new voices and encourages this monocultural and centralist base (Pairican, 2014, p. 365), a key issue for understanding the country's identity as a homogeneous cultural society: diversity is a verifiable fact, but it does not enter the tops of power or political management to the appropriate extent.

This is also reflected in the low visibility of regionalist identities (Pairican, 2014, p. 365), and in the fact that some parties have tried to enter politics under the argument of including the dynamics and identities that are not reflected in this homogeneous base replicated in Congress.

However, during 2015 and 2016 the possibility arose that this might change due to different proposed bills that entail a change in this rigid structure, such as the case of gender quotas and the measure promoted by President Bachelet to have indigenous constitutional representation in the constitution and parliament. However, it is important to note that measures have not yet materialized in bills or amendments to existing laws.

## THE CONCEPT OF INTEGRATION OF MIGRANTS. THE ACADEMIC APPROACH TO THE CONCEPT AND POLITICAL TYPE WITH DIFFERENT RESULTS AND CONTRADICTORY ANSWERS

Despite the efforts to materialize an immigration policy based on a law with more than 30 years of antiquity and with very few reforms in relation to the migratory issue, the study of the Diego Portales University on representation of the parliamentary elites and citizenship (Castillo, 2011), points out a gap with respect to the migratory issue: immigration (in general) is the issue that generates more distance between elite and citizenship. Emigration is barely perceived.

Citizens, particularly the poorest, see foreigners as a threat to their sources of employment (Castillo, 2011, p. 29). Navarrete (2017, p. 202), on the contrary, sees a difference between a public opinion open to discussion, and models of the North American type of multicultural type, and the appreciations of the parliamentary class, in charge of generating policies on the role of immigration and its desirability.

n relation to the integration of migrants, Chile does not have an explicit policy in this respect, which indicates that they are a collective without full rights, as happens in many countries, even with explicit pro-integration policies (Foro Bicentenario, 2008, p. 118).

Chilean legislation reacts to migratory phenomena (Gainza, 2013; Doña Reveco y Mullan, 2014) and the *model of integration* in migratory management (Usallán, 2015), through management models with different degrees of elaboration, under the protection of a given nation-state, a definition of democracy and a republican type political system, present in Chile reflects a context where there are public policies for the integration of refugees, but none explicitly directed towards immigrants (Jiménez, 2011).

Chile has tried to join the trend of *multicultural formulas* as a State, but this has no support or institutionality because it does not exist with a general regulation. Charles Taylor (1994) demonstrates in his *Multiculturalism* book. *By examining policies of recognition* that it is possible to overcome the tension generated between a public-type promotion of cultural differences, on the basis of respect for human rights, which functions as a basis of equality applied in several democratic countries where multiculturalist discourse prevails. In practice, this base promotes certain types of measures based on the defence of human rights and non-discrimination.

The demands for recognition of groups underrepresented in the spheres of power and how this type of demand is articulated in democratic states are some of the main contributions of this approach. This gives way to the reaction of States, which is never neutral, as it tends to preserve one cultural substratum over another and the taking of a position on this matter is a fundamental element of analysis because it involves both politics and the notion of social and historical substratum which, in many cases, is based on guidelines coming from the elites.

The very concept of integration, as a process where immigrants become new members of the receiving society, has been described several times as *assimilation, integration or insertion* (Joppke y Morawska, 2003; Bauböck et al., 1996; Bauböck, 2005). None of these synonyms is merely descriptive or self-explanatory, as they have a load of meanings mediated by their context, as well as normative connotations that describe the different types of symbolic load in the adaptation process, both from the receiving society and from the immigrants.

Each version of the concept can be used in different ways (Joppke y Morawska, 2003; Bauböck et al., 1996, p. 9; Favel, 2014). Therefore, the way in which concepts are defined, their use, the normative, cultural or social burden they have in each context and their consequences in the elaboration of new legislative frameworks and public policies around international migration are fundamental elements.

By using them as synonyms (*assimilation, integration or insertion*) they do not encourage a real understanding of them, and their potential results differ from the results of public policies based on them.

Favel (2014) points out that the concept of multiculturalism in relation to immigration has taken on a new air due to concern about the latent distancing between positions on the issue. For the author, the assimilationist version of integration (Brubaker, 2001) predominates in studies as a crucial condition for the success of new immigrants in American society due to their adherence to the *functionalist vision* of it.

In the United States, the concept of assimilation continues to be characterized from a unilineal point of view, where the white middle class society is the benchmark, but in the European Union, integration is the popular concept in politics and rhetoric, especially in France.

Generally, in political debates, reference is made to a middle ground between conformism towards the norms and values of the host country, with a look of fear towards separatism, which leads to an over-representation of European values. It alludes to a mutual and bidirectional accommodation between the host society and the immigrant, but it is Pseudo-positive and post-factual because it does not offer clear criteria that allow the latter to be operationalized and measured.

When considering this dichotomy, the concept of integration as a necessity becomes acceptable, since the possibility of a disaster ending in dissolution has no place. Therefore, the concept itself reaffirms the positive aspect of union, by force if desired, towards a

necessary and indisputable cohesion, where the re-imagination of social unity, cohesion and State-centric unity are generated outside the scenario of the arrival of diversity and conflicts (Favel, 2014, p. 168-169).

In other words, the concept of integration is diffuse (Honohan, 2016, p. 252), and although it was initially related to the economic, social and political, now the interest in equal economic opportunities and duties of migrants has focused on the problems of the diversity of their origins, the concept of multiculturalism has been oriented towards political rhetoric (Honohan, 2016; Hampshire, 2013), but these policies have not been revised, nor have their results been questioned.

What currently prevails are the requirements from origin, prior to the migration process itself, and the tests of cultural and linguistic compatibility, as well as the civic-political integration; that is to say, the objective possibilities of an individual and family group of being able to incorporate themselves quickly into the environment are tested according to their potential cultural, social, labor and value closeness.

For Honohan (2016), civic integration, seen as the last stage of successful integration, is not the acceptable face of assimilation because it is mediated by standard cultural requirements that are not necessarily demanded of a country's community in the same way, as they are assumed to share and approve these requirements, which in many cases does not happen in this way (subcultures, countercultural groups, etc.).

Following this statement, Hampshire points out that democratic states are not neutral and promote a liberal cultural profile that ends up imposing itself on different programs, both towards migrants and other minorities.

In the European case (especially in the countries of the European Union), the gap between discourse and practice is reflected in integration programs, where universalist principles actually exclude all types of principles that are not aligned with this unifying basis; if the discourse appeals to the basis of equality and non-discrimination, for example, in integration programs and accommodation processes carried out by States, migrants are expected to adjust their beliefs and behavior to specific models of assimilation that do not necessarily coincide with the discourse, especially in the religious area (Hampshire, 2013, p. 154).

*Chile defines itself as a pluricultural and multi-ethnic country* in terms of its linguistic and ethnic diversity (Gómez, 2003, p. 126), especially with regard to the ethnic and indigenous substratum of its foundation, where political parties –in general– appeal for the defence of human rights, non-discrimination, equity and inclusion, but the approach to the migratory issue is still insignificant in the proposals and declarations of principles of the parties (Torres, 2017).

This multicultural rhetoric predominates in the political proposals of the parties, but in practice it defends certain types of values (republican, secular, western, monolingual), which do not explicitly include different cultural manifestations in high-level politics, for example, the representativeness of cultural differences in parliament and government, as

well as other possible forms of political organization and creation, outside the logic of parties and parliamentary representation.

Parties that tend to see themselves as defenders of a certain traditional substratum may have difficulty in actually reading the problems and needs of groups with a different cultural base. This does not mean that it is a negative aspect, since parties are a structure whose mission is to represent certain values and positions clearly and thus attract new sympathizers, but what might seem a difficulty in reality is rhetoric that may not agree with their principles, and defense of a certain nucleus may alienate them from citizenship.

The cultural difference, therefore, becomes invisible under the precepts of a republican society in order, as a State, to follow the necessary steps towards economic and political class modernity and to emerge from colonialism, a path taken by many Latin American countries (Larraín, 2001; Donoso Rojas, 2006). Castles (2000) characterizes assimilation as "the policy of incorporating migrants into a society through a unilateral process of adaptation" (2000, p. 137).

In other words, immigrants are expected to leave behind their distinctive linguistic, cultural and social aspects in order to become indistinguishable subjects of the majority population, integrating as citizens. The republican model, therefore, facilitates access to citizenship for second and third generations originating from foreign contingents, which would ultimately mean the enjoyment of full rights. It is a purely individual model, based on equality, but which also assumes that aspects of social, political, cultural and secular behavior are added to the virtues of republican civility and this contradiction leaves no room for cultural diversity or the formation of ethnic communities, which is why there are two factors that deny the republican model: marginalization and racism. These two elements, both in their frequency and in their presence, show that this model does not work and has led to the politicization of the situation of minorities in ongoing debates on immigration and nationality legislation.

The response to the assimilationist Republican model has been pluralism; Castles (2000, p. 138-139) explains that this implies that immigrants are guaranteed equal rights in all spheres of society, without expecting them to set aside their diversity, although there is usually an expectation of conformity with certain key values. In this case, membership in civil society, a process initiated through a permit to immigrate, leads to full participation in the nation state. This model is found in classic immigration countries such as Australia, the United States and Canada, which call for long-stay, permanently resident immigrants to have access to full citizenship and nationality, along with family reunification and access to civic-political rights. This process reinforces the idea of pluralist political pressure; when migrants vote, ethnic groups gain political power. Notwithstanding the above, these models are not new because they are a response to pressure exerted because the assimilationist models of the 1960s, where racial selection criteria were applied, failed. Nowadays, selection continues to be based on economic and humanitarian vulnerability criteria (in the case of asylum-seekers and refugees).

Cultural pluralism, therefore, presents two variants: the *laissez-faire* approach, the typical response in the United States, where difference is tolerated, but it is not an aspect that the State should protect or preserve. The second variant is explicit multicultural policies, where the majority population accepts the cultural difference and there is a work of adaptation of national identity and institutional structures. That is to say, elements such as specific dependencies in the matter with specialized professionals, translation into other languages and bilingual management within the bureaucratic work, policies oriented towards the cultural preservation of minorities, public competitions to finance these programs, direct support to organizations of migrants and minorities, quotas in parliament and in political parties, among others.

This is observable, for example, in the case of education policies in countries such as Sweden, Canada and Australia. The crucial factor is the welfare state, in which cultural pluralism needs to combine public policies that ensure access to basic rights for all, which increases the chances of having a peaceful society.

Under this perspective, Chile has made several efforts to incorporate the different ethnic and cultural substrates that are present in certain regions of the country into the institutional framework, but, at the level of state policies, the reinforcement of the monocultural and traditional base that was highlighted above is still maintained.

Joppke and Morawska (2003, p. 2) point out that the concept of integration is one that may not exist beyond academic analysis and that this is inferred by two important facts: the adaptation and use of the resources of host societies and the strengthening of migrants' transnational ties. Castles (2004) takes into account these two tendencies, the resilience of citizenship and the decrease of multicultural policies, together with assimilatory measures and transnationalism are the current key to argue that the current democracies.

Both immigration and the notion of democracy present several important dilemmas: the formal inclusion to citizenship of immigrants, substantial citizenship  (which refers to the rights and (obligations of being a member of a political community) the recognition of cultural rights (where individuality is not as important as the community structure that immigrants build when the State is never a neutral entity) and the appropriation of political institutions with difficulties in managing collective differences because women, indigenous groups and immigrants are part of a structure that protects equality in political identity and has deepened the marginalization of under-represented and excluded political groups from centers of power.

Castles speaks of a *distinctive citizenship* (2000, p. 142) where democracy should not only promote full and official citizenship, but also other types of participation mechanisms for groups usually excluded from decision-making processes. The problem of **policies of universalization** of rights, where equal dignity is emphasized through rights and *policies of difference*, based on the recognition of the unique identity of individuals and groups, is part of the contradictions of the multiculturalist approach today. This means that at the local level there are programs aimed at cultural exchange and respect for differences, but

the conflict lies in the transfer to the centers of political power, which does not incorporate them.

## CONCLUSIONS

The role of international migration and the urgent need for legislative reforms in this area are priority factors among the political elites, with different results. In general, there is direct support for the creation of a reform around rights and non-discrimination, but there are some differences in the type of migration policy.

If one discusses a policy oriented towards Chilean economic needs, where there is an openness towards attracting certain professional contingents or if the main focus is towards the rights of migrants and family reunification, it can be stated that they are not conflicting perspectives, but adhering to one over the other explicitly has consequences for public opinion, as has been observed in other countries that have faced this decision.

Another factor that has consequences is the way in which a country deals with the (temporary or permanent) settlement of migrants. If integration is defined as assimilation, it implies certain types of actions and discourses aimed at maintaining a previous order, reaffirming that migration is not a threat and that institutions protect everyone, without distinction.

In Chile, the debate on integration and its different variants coincides with an opinion oriented towards the incorporation of the migrant in a weak institutionality with a recent political discussion, a public opinion that has moved between reactionary attitudes to a comprehensive vision of the phenomenon and an academic discussion in formation and with skepticism towards the multiculturalist rhetoric of the political and institutional elite.

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