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Discourse and Resistance: The Culture of Deportation among Mexican Migrants Discurso y resistencia: la cultura de la deportación de los migrantes mexicanos

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ABSTRACT

It was sought to know the meaning of deportation for Mexicans who were returned from the United States in the last decade, based on their ideas, attitudes, and beliefs, from the educational approach and the analysis of content as a methodological strategy. Empirical material consisted of 25 digital narratives from the public archive "Humanizing Deportation," six in-depth interviews conducted between 2016 and 2017 in Tijuana, Baja California, and five historical testimonies located in bibliographic sources. Findings show that post-deportation irregular re-emigration underlines a political behavior of resistance that suggests the existence of a culture of deportation, which differs from the culture of migration and the culture of clandestine border crossing, even though the current penalty for illegal reentry has inhibited or postponed these practices.

Keywords: 1. deportation, 2. culture, 3. irregular migration, 4. Mexico, 5. United States of America.

RESUMEN

Se buscó conocer el sentido que tiene la deportación para los mexicanos que han sido retornados de Estados Unidos en la última década, a partir de sus ideas, actitudes y creencias, desde la perspectiva educativa y el análisis de contenido como estrategia metodológica. Se analizan 25 narrativas digitales del archivo público "Humanizando la Deportación", seis entrevistas en profundidad realizadas en Tijuana, B.C., entre 2016 y 2017, y cinco testimonios históricos localizados en fuentes bibliográficas. Los hallazgos muestran que en la reemigración irregular posterior a la deportación subyace una conducta política de resistencia que sugiere la existencia de una cultura de la deportación, la cual difiere de la cultura de la migración y la cultura de cruce clandestino de la frontera, aun cuando la actual penalización por el reingreso ilegal ha inhibido o postergado estas prácticas.

Palabras clave: 1. deportación, 2. cultura, 3. migración irregular, 4. México, 5. Estados Unidos.

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INTRODUCTION

Irregular re-emigration after deportation was a practice developed throughout decades and generations, due to the permissiveness of the immigration authorities of the United States. According to the prevailing explanations of this phenomenon, the application of immigration laws and policies has responded to the needs of immigrant labor from the neighboring country, added to various expulsion factors (Aboites, 2010; Durand, 2017; Durand & Massey, 2003).

In the 70s decade of the last century, the "repeated attempts model" was already known, which consisted in that people returned by the immigration authorities would come back almost immediately after one or more expulsions (Massey, Durand, & Malone, 2009). Some migrants accumulated up to 15 expulsions in their attempts to enter or re-enter the United States, and the most severe punishment was from three days to a month in jail, which would not suffice to completely nullify their intention to return (Espinosa, 1996; Medellín, 2002).

However, the hardening of immigration laws and policies in the last three decades has impacted on the migratory dynamics that had prevailed thus far between Mexico and the United States. For some authors, this represents a new migration paradigm (Cruz, 2016) or the end of an era (Alonso, 2015), since migration policy moved from border security to securitization. That is, a security doctrine was created to contain irregular migration as a matter of national security.

This new migration paradigm has its roots in the 90s decade of the last century, when the militarization of and the construction and expansion of walls at the border was undertaken; laws were enacted that imposed the effective penalization of irregular migration, and the number of crimes that lead to deportation was increased, both for people under irregular migratory situations and those who hold legal or permanent residence (Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act, IIRIRA; Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, AEDPA, and the Anti-Drug Abuse Act).

The immigration laws enforcement system was then organized into six pillars: strengthening border protection; the control of visa certifications and of travelers; the collection of biometric information of non-citizens in sophisticated databases; the articulation of immigration control agencies; the intersection crossing of the immigration and justice systems; and the detention and removal of non-citizens through various programs (Meissner, Kerwin, Muzaffar, & Bergeron, 2013).

Some of the most significant effects of this new migration paradigm have been the increase in mass deportations, the sealing of the border, and the legal prosecution of thousands of people for immigration crimes. On the one hand, while in other times expulsions occurred at certain junctures, today the cycle is permanent. According to data from Mexico's Department of the Interior (SEGOB, 2019), in the period from 1995 to 2018

there were 13.8 million repatriation events of Mexicans from the United States (they are considered single events because one person may have been returned several times). Furthermore, from years 1998 to 2000, historical figures of more than one million expulsions per year were reached. From 2014 to the first half of 2019, records have remained at an average of 200,000 events per year (SEGOB, 2019).

On the other hand, the sealing of the Mexico-United States border caused the deviation of the traditional border-crossing routes towards inhospitable areas of the desert, where hundreds of migrant deaths occur each year, both due to weather factors and the violence of organized crime and of drug traffickers that positioned themselves along these routes, which made this border the most dangerous and difficult one to cross (Alonso, 2015; Cruz, 2016).

Finally, the irregular re-emigration after deportation that characterized the immigration practices of previous generations, is now classified at the federal level as a serious crime, which implies prison sentences, being deported again and a temporary or definitive prohibition to return to the country. According to Meissner, Kerwin, Muzaffar, and Bergeron (2013), from the establishment of these migratory crimes, which also have a retroactive effect, the number of foreigners prosecuted for illegal entry increased more than ten times, from 3,900 to 43,700, between the fiscal years 2000 to 2010, while the number of people prosecuted for illegal re-entry after deportation tripled from 7,900 to 35,800, in the same period.

However, although the new containment mechanisms have inhibited these migratory practices, and have even managed to reduce the intention to re-cross the border irregularly, this does not mean that there has been a profound change at the mental and attitudinal levels. A survey by the Mexican National Population Council (CONAPO, for its acronym in Spanish) in 2014 showed that 35% of returnees intended to return to the United States; this figure increased to 49% in the case of those who had resided in that country for more than a decade, and up to 54% for those who had their spouse and children in the United States (Gandini, Lozano-Ascencio & Gaspar, 2015). Likewise, the *Survey on Migration in the Northern Border of Mexico* reported that out from the total number of border-crossing attempts from 1995 and 1999-2018, between 60% and 80% were repeated attempts, this reflecting in a general way the persistence of these displacements (EMIF, 2018).

The most consensual explanation for this is that people re-emigrate for economic reasons; for family reunification; due to the difficulty to reintegrate socially and professionally in Mexico; due to a problem of readjustment to the original family environment; or as a reaction to the stigma of failure due to being expelled from the United States (Albicker & Velasco, 2016; Cárdenas, 2014; Gandini, Lozano-Ascencio, & Gaspar, 2015; Rivera, 2013).

However, the phenomenon is so complex that it raises new concerns, especially if one takes into account that this practice is carried out both by those who have previous experiences of irregular migration (circular migrants and long-stay migrants in the United

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States) and by those who lack such experience: people who were brought to the United States as children and who in many cases had legal or permanent residence, but lost their status with deportation.

The fact that such a heterogeneous group coming from different sociocultural contexts responds in a similar way to expulsion, supported calling into question the meaning of deportation for returnees in the current context, particularly for people born in Mexico. That is why the ideas, attitudes and beliefs expressed by people in their testimonial narratives regarding deportation were taken as categories of analysis. As a methodological strategy, content analysis was made use of from the line of discourse analysis as a social practice (Gutiérrez, 2012).

The empirical material was comprised of 25 digital narratives from the "Humanizing Deportation" public archive at the University of California-Davis (2017); six in-depth interviews conducted between 2016 and 2017 in the city of Tijuana, B.C. (Mexico), with returnees from the United States who used to visit the Padre Chava Salesian Community Breakfast Room, located in that city, and five testimonies of migrants from other times, all of this in order to identify the contrasts in the evolution of this phenomenon. Said material was selected by a criterion of significance, based on the experiences of irregular reemigration after deportation as communicated by these people.

The ideas, attitudes and beliefs were organized into three units of analysis: the point in the migratory trajectory at which they emerged or were perceived to have emerged (before, during and after deportation, and their position towards the future); the ideas, attitudes and beliefs regarding deportation (perception, meaning, religious beliefs, political beliefs, and ideological reformulations); and the migratory profile of the people (circular migrants, long-stay migrants, people brought over as children, and legal or permanent residents).

The purpose is to understand an aspect of irregular migration that can provide knowledge about the ways of thinking, feeling and acting of returnees, and about their mobility practices after expulsion, as a contribution aimed at the field of cultural studies from the educational perspective, specifically from informal education.

We start from the assumption that deportation is not the end of the migration project for people, but that it is part of the journey itself as a political behavior of resistance, and that just as throughout history a culture of migration and a culture of clandestine border-crossing has been created, a culture of deportation has also developed which, although it may be inherent to both, also has its own specificities and it is experienced differently in the new migration paradigm.

THEORETICAL APPROACH

Migration and Informal Education

Informal education is a permanent and spontaneous process that produces different forms of learning and knowledge —beliefs, practices, ideas, attitudes, norms and values— from the very social or cultural cognitive environment in which the individual functions (Smitter, 2006). Informal education draws on formative instances such as the family, the community, religious entities, associations, the media, and the own historical journey of the individual. It is a process that develops through interaction, exploration, and everyday experience (Smitter, 2006).

In ancient times people learned from the community and from the myths that were transmitted by oral tradition; in later times, from interacting in public squares, in theaters and in churches. The various educational agents were the family, preachers, confessors, social leaders, artists, among others, whose messages helped to understand and interpret life (Sanz, 2006).

Informal education is set apart from formal and non-formal education in that these, being institutionalized, establish for themselves predetermined (although variable) extensions of time, whereas informal education, by not having a structure, can last a lifetime and involve all members of a society (Uribe, 2017). Informal educational processes, precisely because they are "chaotic, emerging, and self-organized," are of very high complexity and level of abstraction (Calvo & Elizalde, 2010, p. 8).

Migration itself is an informal educational process that involves new forms of learning and knowledge from the moment the family home is left for a different place and culture. In this process, another language is known of or learned, other places, different food, another lifestyle, other values. People learn to be a foreigner, to be different, to be a minority. Thus, migration is not only the geographical relocation from one place to another, but also the transit from one cultural space to another (Martín, 2006), wherein individuals carry with them their cultural and social heritage, as well as the imaginaries and utopias that they have forged throughout their existence.

According to Salazar-Pastrana, Castillo-Burguete, Paredes-Chi, and Dickinson (2016), migration as an informal educational process develops in four stages: instability, when the need or desire to emigrate arises in response to imbalances or problems of various kinds; preparation, when the necessary resources are obtained for the relocation to a different place; action, when the point of origin is left to arrive at another where the social, economic, cultural and political environment is different from one's own; and settlement, when sufficient resources are accumulated to live in the new sociocultural context. This last stage is a period of adjustment during which new capitals (cultural, social, human) are acquired

and existing ones are modified or transferred, although it is not always a successful process (Salazar-Pastrana, Castillo-Burguete, Paredes-Chi, & Dickinson, 2016).

Following along this line, in the case of forced return migration, as deportation is, the informal educational process abruptly generates new forms of learning and knowledge, even when no planning is involved. In other words, the educational process goes on according to its own chaotic, emerging, and self-organized nature throughout the life trajectory, in the interaction with others, in daily life and in the migration experience itself.

The ideas, attitudes and beliefs resulting from any educational process are socio-cultural elements that allow us to identify significant structures revealing the reasons for human behavior and action, at the same time articulating patterns of behavior (Martínez, 2004). They are inseparable elements, since ideas make up beliefs; beliefs emerge from values, and from them the attitudes that are expressed in behavior are defined.

In this way, attitudes are the way in which individuals respond to a fact, the ideological position they exhibit in that response, and the arguments they use regarding their determinations. Once these behaviors and practices are reinforced through their own experience or that of others or are shared by a larger community that recreates them over time, they constitute a culture that characterizes their ways of thinking, feeling, and acting.

Resistance Discourse and Practices

One of the concepts that guided the present work was the discourse of resistance first set forth by Scott (2000). For this author, this discourse exists in any space of power, since it emerges from the tensions produced by the power relations themselves. The discourse of resistance is expressed through verbal, non-verbal and bodily language or through concrete practices, in which spontaneity and the lack of formal organization become attitudes of protest; that is to say, they are anonymous actions of the masses framed in relations in domination (Scott, 2000).

However, this discourse is not manifested in an open and explicit way, unless one is addressing an insurrection, so it finds alternative ways to channel its dissident attitude; that is, the hidden transcript (Scott, 200). This hidden transcript is learned through socialization, as it is part of the class culture in which it originates. To achieve its effectiveness, it remains between the lines, hence it does not exist in the form of pure thought, but in residual phrases that must be identified and analyzed, since it is fundamentally ideological resistance.

As stated by Scott (2000): "The hidden transcript is not just behind-the-scenes griping and grumbling; it is enacted in a host of down-to-earth, low-profile stratagems designed to minimize appropriation" (p. 222). Thus, the discourses of resistance affirm the dignity of the dominated voice and constitute the foundation of political action.

Another concept that guided the interpretation of the empirical material was the autonomy of migration, proposed by Papadopoulos, Stephenson, and Tsianos (2008). These authors conceive of irregular migration as a contemporary form of escape that defies domination. This perspective highlights the creative force of individuals within structures as part of their agency capacity. Thus, migration is a social movement headed by active constructors of reality, for which the determination to emigrate implies the will to "make and remake one's life on the world stage" (Papadopoulos, Stephenson, & Tsianos, 2008, p. 211).

The autonomy of migration suggests interpreting the effects of irregular migration not as "a humanitarian controversy" (Papadopoulos, Stephenson, & Tsianos, 2008, p. 220), although the social suffering that cannot be ignored is obviously implicit, but as a repeated and sustained act of social resistance and rejection of the imperatives of border management and cultural control.

As stated by Mezzadra (2012), this approach prioritizes the subjective practices, the desires, expectations, and behaviors, of migrants who behave "as if they were citizens" (p. 160), regardless of their immigration status; that is, they exercise their right to freedom of mobility and permanence, despite the various structures that oppress them.

IDEAS, ATTITUDES, AND BELIEFS ON DEPORTATION

"I never thought it would happen to me"

In the testimonies of returnees from the United States, it is frequent to find the affirmation that they never thought that this would happen to them. This expression denotes an impact, as if deportation had been something unlikely, even though many did not have authorization documents to enter, stay or work in that country. However, the same people report that they lived in fear of deportation, so the fact that they were aware of their legal vulnerability and at the same time believed that it was not going to happen to them stands as a contradiction. The impact of expulsion is greater for those who grew up in the United States and obtained residency, because they believed that such status could not be lost, so the possibility of being deported was even more remote.

In the case of people under irregular migration status, the opening phrase is related to irregular migration and re-emigration practices developed over decades and generations, because experience taught them, first of all, that the way to enter the United States without documents was through repeated attempts, which implied the possibility of being expelled one or more times. For these people it was enough to implement certain strategies, from learning the times when the Border Patrol was not around for them to cross, hiding from the police or groups hostile to Mexican migration, using false documents or belonging to others both to cross and to reside in that country, and looking for jobs where employers would not be concerned about their migration status. In this way, deportation was a state that could be

overcome if they persisted in their eagerness to re-enter the United States. According to other sources consulted, migrants from other times had up to fifteen expulsions in their attempt to enter the United States (Espinosa, 1996; Medellín, 2002).

Moreover, irregular re-entry was not yet considered a serious crime and a systematic record was not kept in the expulsion process, which is why it was common for migrants to give false names and information that could hardly be verified. Likewise, deportation did not usually affect those who held legal or permanent residence, save for in exceptional cases, and so they enjoyed greater legal certainty in that country.

Their own experience or that of others taught them that deportation was a distant possibility when they had already settled in the United States, as they had been able to adapt regardless of their immigration status and develop a long-term life project. The expulsion, from their perspective, depended on chance or personal ability to avoid it: "the border patrol has always been tough, it's a matter of one's luck" (Martínez, 1996, p. 74).

However, when the criminalization of irregular migration and re-emigration became effective, both undocumented persons and legal residents were susceptible to deportation. Being prosecuted for migration crimes and, in some cases, receiving prison sentences, showed them the dimensions of a punishment that they had never really been able to imagine.

"I have to keep trying"

Despite having faced one or more expulsions and having gone through a process in immigrant detention centers, and even despite having received prison sentences for illegal re-entry after deportation, some people are still willing to try again anyway. Although they express different motivations for returning to the United States, the fact that they agree on the idea of trying again is remarkable.

The testimonies analyzed that refer to work issues as the greatest motivation to return to the United States, argue that re-emigration is possible as long as they know how to find the right time to do so because, according to their experience, immigration policies tend to change. Those who emigrated three decades ago say they managed to avoid the risk of deportation by staying away from the police or immigration authorities until they were deported again in recent years.

Their belief in being able to cross the border again is so ingrained that it provides them with the certainty that it will indeed happen, even when they recognize the current difficulties. Some people with this experience live under precarious conditions in the city of Tijuana, B.C. (Mexico), in wait for the opportunity to re-enter the United States. So, if emigration originally involved sacrifices such as leaving their place of origin and separating from their original family, why should they not face now the sacrifice of waiting?

In addition, having stayed in the United States for more than a decade, as in the case of long-stay migrants, renews their hopes of returning whenever they can find a way to do so: "I need to find a job where they pay per day because I'm looking for a chance to jump over again" (Luis Mario, personal communication, September 14, 2016); or as stated by Javier Galindo in his digital narrative: "My plan is returning to the United States, but I rather say no more because things never go as you say" (Galindo, digital narrative #68, 2018).

The case of the Antunez family is relevant, as it illustrates the attitude of rejection of expulsion and the conviction to re-emigrate (Antunez, digital narrative #135, 2019). Roberto and María Antúnez immigrated to the United States in the early 1990s, after several attempts to cross the border. In 1997 they received an immigration order to leave the country, but they decided to stay. In 2001, both were deported and then returned almost immediately after deportation. A year later, their son was arrested for driving under the influence (DUI), and all three were deported with a 10-year penalty. However, their son re-entered and was expelled again. Despite these five experiences of deportation in the family, Roberto and María hope to return:

Life is very hard here in Mexico, and even if there's discrimination in the United States it's still much better in the United States, because you get opportunities that you don't have in your country, Mexico. But we are here now under a ten-year penalty. They declined our petition, so we have to stay here for ten years. God willing, we will return when these ten years are passed (Antunez, digital narrative #135, 2019).

Other people believe that they earned the right to stay in the United States as they fulfilled their obligations as citizens: they worked, paid taxes, and assimilated American culture, so the frustration for being expelled reinforces the idea of re-emigration: "I studied, worked hard for a good company, I accumulated over 1,200 hours of community service" (L.A., digital narrative #45, 2018); "they expelled us unjustly" (Palma & Mandujano, digital narrative #88b, 2018).

On the other hand, people who lived the experience of family separation also agree on the idea of returning because, in their case, they consider it a duty and a pressing situation in which the well-being of their loved ones is at stake: "I wanted to try anything to return even if they caught me, it was for the sake of being with my children" (Hernández, digital narrative #63, 2018); "my only thought was running back through that border I had just come out from" (Varona, digital narrative #82, 2018); "I keep in mind finding a way to come back to my boy" (Reyes, digital narrative #76, 2018).

In this sense, it stands out that irregular re-emigration practices after deportation are more intense when it comes to family separations. For example, José Manuel Mendoza had four deportations and in each one the prison sentences he received increased, which did not diminish his desire to return (J. M. Mendoza, personal communication, November 13, 2017); Luis García was expelled thrice in fifteen days (García, digital narrative #32, 2017), and Daniel Jáuregui spent four years in prison for illegal re-entry and then tried to return at new

opportunities (Jáuregui, digital narrative #6, 2017). In all three cases, his family and his children had stayed in the United States.

A third group that shares this idea is that of people who were brought to the United States as children, who then grew up and were educated in this country. Many had legal residency and lost these rights with deportation. For them, having been expelled from the place they considered home, whatever the reason, represents a conflict, not only because of their sense of belonging to the United States, but also because of their lack of rooting in Mexico. In many instances, the only link they retain is being born in Mexico, but they lost contact with the language and culture, and so they feel alienated in a foreign and unknown context.

Many think of themselves as citizens of the United States, rather than as Mexican citizens. Concepts such as "undocumented migrant" or "immigration police" were not even in their cognitive structures until they had the experience of being deported. In their conception of reality, when they cross the border they are not violating immigration laws, but are rather returning to their country:

The reason for these returns was my family; they are over there, my children are there; I have no reason for being here in Tijuana or Mexico for that matter. [...] It was wrong that they deported me over and over again; it was also wrong that they let me back in over and over again. I kept coming back because they kept deporting me [...] I feel deeply affronted. I have nothing but love for the United States; I grew on that side, my love, my country and my heart are there (Jáuregui, digital narrative #6, 2017).

This way, their attitude towards deportation is similar to that of people who have previous experiences of irregular migration, although their motivations are different: while the latter struggle to return to their work or families, those who grew up in the United States struggle to return both to their families and to the place they consider their country.

Likewise, Mexicans who grew up in the United States and who served in the armed forces of this country, who have faced multiple deportations and, in some cases, received prison sentences for illegal re-entry, also share the idea of returning, not only because they were separated from their families and the country they consider theirs, but also because they risked their lives for this nation. Added to their motivations and sense of belonging is a right to permanence that throws them back towards the United States:

As veterans we feel that we should have been protected by the country we were ready to fight and die for [...] I believe that America is a country that repeats over and over —as if supporting the troops was our national motto—: "honor veterans and honor soldiers." So, if talk so much about supporting the troops, why do we deport the troops? How am I good enough to fight and die for the United States, but not good enough to live there? [...] America made good use of me, made thorough use of me and I was happy to comply, but now I want to be home, I'm tired of being away from home, I'm tired of being an exile (Murillo, digital narrative #30a, 2017).

"God willing, I will be back"

Various researchers have analyzed the demonstrations of religiosity of the migrants, as well as the rituals and sacred artifacts that give them the certainty that a superior being will take care of them on their journey (Arias, 2012; García, 2008). In this sense, it has already been noted that migrants rely on their religious beliefs to risk their lives in their transit to the United States, especially in the current context (Alonso, 2015). This section does not intend to validate such beliefs, but rather to identify those that are related to deportation, regardless of their religious affiliation, in order to understand another aspect of irregular re-emigration after expulsion.

Religious beliefs are part of the cultural schemes through which people ascribe meaning to their reality, since it provides them with a general order of existence and an idea of transcendence based on ethical duty. On the one hand, the phrase of gratitude that they put before their stories, reaffirms their beliefs within a religious framework as if the experience had not been possible without the intervention of a superior being. In this area, everything is the works of God and not of man, and so their reality is described according to that order: "With God's favor I managed to cross over to Arizona" (Viruete, digital narrative #97, 2018); "Thank God we managed to get here in the first attempt" (Martínez, digital narrative #107, 2018).

Likewise, if the United Sates were reached under God's will, so was having been deported when they recognized the fault that led to their expulsion. For some people, deportation awakens feelings of guilt in them and they understand it as a form of atonement: "For not behaving well, you could say" (Anonymous, digital narrative #43a, 2018); "I was the black sheep" (Torres, digital narrative #84, 2018). From this perspective, the possibility of returning will also depend on the help of a higher being, which allows them to process their breaking point with greater resignation.

A phrase pronounced by Luis Gonsaga in his digital narrative: "Someday God will open the door for you and we will go there again, if the border patrol doesn't stand in the way" (Gonsaga, digital narrative #36, 2017), reinforces the interpretation that has been pointed out so far about religious beliefs, yet also contains a utopian thought that it is convenient to analyze.

For Gonsaga, that "door," that is, the border, will be opened by divine will, and this will not only allow him to return to the United States, as is his wish, but also his peers, thus the phrase acquires a sense of community. His expression may also manifest a feeling of helplessness before the current rules, since the only force capable of opening that door is that of God and not that of men. However, he is convinced that the rules will change "someday" because that is his experience and his vision as a migrant. His words show the internalization of the cyclical changing of migration policies, since he assumes that "we will go there again." In other words, deportation remains for him a transitory state.

Meanwhile, the sentence "if the border patrol doesn't stand in the way," refers to the main obstacle faced by migrants who cross the border irregularly, which are Border Patrol agents, since employers or American society are not so. This reinforces the idea that, once inside the country, they would be able to achieve their goals and continue with their life projects. Therefore, there is no transformation of their mental structures regarding deportation as something definitive.

However, the border wall, as part of the architecture of the punishment that deportation represents, also activates other ideas in people that are related to the possibility of returning to the United States. On the one hand, it symbolizes the suffering they face in with expulsion: "I see a huge wall that separates me from my family" (Peralta, digital narrative #81, 2018). On the other hand, faced with their impotence in overcoming that barrier, some people imagine that they could cross if they only had supernatural powers: "Someday I could jump very high" (Galván, digital narrative #19, 2017); "I wish I could fly" (Méndez, digital narrative #23, 2017). For other people, on the other hand, the wall cannot stop a culture:

I think that the [border] wall, for the Mexican, for the illegal, for those who want to emigrate to the United States, there is going to be no wall that can stop them. Never, never [...] When you want to do it, you do it. You fight and look for a way, and one way or another [...] We always look for a way to reach the United States (Aguilar, digital narrative #64, 2018).

According to these testimonies, it is possible to infer that deportation does not represent the same for immigration authorities as it does for people who have had these experiences. If, for the U.S. State, deportation is the expulsion of a foreigner from its territory, for people it is a reversible punishment, a curve in the migratory spiral. Whether they achieve their goal through the intercession of a divine power, through greater skills, or with more resources to cross the border, people trust that they will return. Therefore, in the name of their beliefs, they wait.

"They stole the land from us"

When some people express their opinions regarding what they perceive as an injustice that was committed against them with the expulsion, or when they justify their undocumented re-entry to that country, they usually evoke the event of the loss of Mexican territory with the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848, derived from the North American invasion (or the Mexico-United States war), in such a way that this historical wound would be a part of his political position regarding irregular re-emigration after deportation: "They stole the land from us" (Gerardo, personal communication, November 13, 2017); "California and Texas were Mexican land" (G. Flores, personal communication, October 15, 2016).

These ideas match with testimonies of migrants from other times, such as the 1990s: "Someday the territory will belong to Mexico again" (Martínez, 1996, p. 93), or the 1920s:

"The United States took more than half of this country, Texas, California. But let me tell you: it will belong to Mexico again; not now, but in hundreds or thousands of years" (Taylor, 1991, p. 193). However, these ideas are not exclusive to Mexican returnees from the United States, but are rather shared by a broader community.

At certain junctures such as the mobilizations of Latinos in the United States in the first decade of the 2000s, motivated by the intensification of mass deportations, the protesters had as their slogan the phrase: "We did not cross the border; the border crossed us" (Mezzadra & Nielson, 2014, p. 22), which again evokes the loss of Mexican territory. Similarly, during the 2013 migration crisis, when hundreds of returnees found themselves homeless in the streets of Tijuana, a banner was displayed in a demonstration in front of the Mexico Bridge that read: "Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Theft of our territory. NO to nocturnal deportations" (Hernández, 2013, n.p.). More recently, when U.S. President Donald Trump was reviewing the prototypes for the construction of the new border wall, in a demonstration this phrase reappeared: "Trump, put your wall, but in your territory, not ours" (Agencia EFE, 2018, n.p.), followed by a map the Mexican territory before 1848.

The different social expressions show a malaise that is reactivated whenever the government of the United States imposes new immigration controls, to first point out who the territory belonged to, a position that is shared by millions of Mexicans as the frustration of the defeated, since at the losing the war with the United States our country remained in a subordinate position and this reality turned out to be irreversible; or, as Mr. Antonio stated when interviewed by Martínez (1996): "They will always be on top" (p. 93).

This would mean that a political component is added to the traditional practices of irregular migration and re-emigration regarding "the right" to do so. If "they will always be on top" because they "took more than half of this country" then the Mexican migrant has a right to transit: his citizenship is not a legal or territorial right, but a moral one. The immorality of "dispossession" would justify the morality of the mobility practices of the people, and, consequently, their response to deportation.

Additionally, the evocation of the original territory has its parallel in the myth of Aztlan, upheld by the Chicano movement in the 1960s and 1970s. According to Aztec mythology, the Mexica had emigrated from Aztlan before settling in Mexico-Tenochtitlan, and Aztlan would be located in the what is now the southeast of the United States, precisely in the territories that Mexico lost in 1848, although its geographic location has not been reliably verified (Navarrete, 1999).

In the 1960s, the participation of Mexicans and Mexican Americans in the Vietnam War aroused their social conscience, since by not sharing the causes that the Americans defended in the conflict and by not being recognized as an integral part of North American society, the Chicano movement emerged with force, whose ideological base was the myth of Aztlan as the true place of origin of the Mexican people, who fought for the recognition of their

cultural identity and civil rights (Rodríguez, 2001). For Chicanos, their struggle was parallel to that of African Americans, as well as that of Native Americans, who had been dispossessed of their original territory.

In this way, the ideological affirmation of some Mexican migrants ("They stole the land from us") and of Mexican Americans in the United States ("We did not cross the border..."), has been the result of a long-standing historical process in which the imagined dispute over the original territory prevails. Seen this way, deportation would be the unjustified expulsion from one's own territory, a political belief that would stimulate irregular re-emigration after expulsion.

"Your American dream is over"

For some people who have been returned from the United States, deportation means the end of the American dream, the cancellation of a life project, a violent rupture that affects the beliefs they had regarding the northern country: "The American dream that I was looking after collapsed as a result of my deportation" (Varona, digital narrative #82, 2018); "I already forgot the American dream and all because I don't want to go there and give my time to the American government for free" (Jesús, digital narrative #31, 2017).

However, the way they negotiate with their belief system in the wake of the expulsion is highly subjective, so it cannot be generalized that the end of the American dream represents the same for everyone. People who face difficulties finding a job in Mexico after having resided for over a decade in the United States and having been deported, feel disadvantaged, uprooted, rejected, and defenseless before the lack of opportunities: "It's my country, but the truth is I don't feel comfortable" (Gómez, digital narrative #10, 2017); "You have to come to terms again with the fact that the United States is a first world country and Mexico is a third world country" (López, digital narrative #2, 2017).

In other cases, people feel disenchanted by the American dream because deportation made them aware that they had idealized their stay in the United States by not being able to develop fully, either because of their immigration status, because of discrimination and racism, for living in fear of being detained, or because they could not achieve other goals.

We Mexicans have been dreaming a false golden dream for years: you will go to the United Sates and will save dollars, you will be able to support mom, dad, the kids, then someday you will return and have all that good money saved [...]. And that is not true [...]. You have a ten or twelve hours job, which pays half what you deserve, rent is high, the basics to survive are expensive, you cannot make it and you are doing things that you could also do in your own country (Hernández, digital narrative #25, 2017).

For other people, the American dream became the Mexican dream, as deportation put them back in touch with their roots and they now have a more optimistic view of their future. Some have even found something positive in the deportation experience, as they discovered their strength and creativity to undertake a new life project: "The American dream, indeed, is possible in Mexico" (Grajeda, digital narrative #87, 2018); "You have to show our people that you can do it here" (García, digital narrative #32, 2017); "If as immigrants we help building a great nation like the United States, we can also do it in our beautiful Mexico" (Pastor, digital narrative #55, 2018).

The different testimonies show an ideological reformulation that occurs with deportation and is verbalized through the construct of the American dream. However, the dissipation of their dream does not mean that the hope of returning to the place where they forged their ideals and their lives also goes away.

THE CULTURE OF DEPORTATION AMONG MEXICAN MIGRANTS

Irregular re-immigration after deportation can be seen as a mobility practice that has its own specificity because it is driven by specific ideas, attitudes and beliefs regarding deportation. It is not a conventional irregular migration in which the border is crossed in order to build a life project, but rather includes the return of those who have already undergone assimilation, adaptation and integration processes in the United States, who go in defense of a life built, and who reverse, through irregular re-emigration, the deportation status.

From the educational perspective, experienced migrants learned this practice through processes of socialization and exploration throughout their trajectory, and such knowledge was reactivated in the face of new expulsions; while the inexperienced migrants had to face this informal educational process by exploration as soon as they were deported.

For some people with previous experience in it, deportation does not represent the end of the immigration project, but is rather part of the journey itself as a transitory state that can be reversed with a new successful re-entry. Depending on their expectations, many do not want to fully integrate into Mexico, but just want to survive in the best possible way while they achieve their goals.

Other individuals with the same experience have accepted that conditions have changed and have started life projects in Mexico, although many consider that after undergoing the penalty imposed on them with deportation, they should now be able to resort to legal means to return to the United States. In both cases, the prison sentences they have faced for illegal re-entry do not completely nullify their intention to re-emigrate.

The notion of a culture of deportation proposed in this research is different from the culture of migration proposed by Massey et al. (1993), since it refers to learning related to new lifestyles and the sense of social mobility evidenced by those who have had migratory experiences, and who are transforming the values and perceptions of their communities of origin, from the field of informal education, in such a way that they become zones of migratory expulsion.

Likewise, it is also different from the clandestine border-crossing culture proposed by Alonso (2015), which alludes, on the one hand, to the sociocultural capital possessed by migrant guides, and on the other, to the cultural capital of migrants learned and internalized through socialization and enculturation in their places of origin, which materialize in the practice of irregular migration. However, it is similar in that the border is crossed without authorization, in the participation of migration intermediaries or guides, and even in the legitimate sense that entering or re-entering that country without permission has for people.

Irregular re-migration after deportation as a social practice was not created spontaneously by migrants. In this sense, it does not fully match with one of the postulates of the clandestine border-crossing culture, when it states that Mexican migrants "have internalized in their ethos that the border and the laws can be bypassed and transgressed" (Alonso, 2015, n.p.). In any case, it is necessary to clarify that if they have assumed this practice as legitimate, it is because of the U.S. pragmatism that first promoted and tolerated it throughout the 20th century.

From this perspective, this practice could be redefined not as a transgression of immigration laws exclusively, but also as the result of a social process that started from an empirical exercise of trial and error, in the face of the contradictions of the immigration policies of the United States, then turning into a behavioral pattern that was developed and recreated over decades and generations. These practices were ordered through time and space, so that deportation gradually lost its punitive meaning.

Above all, people learned that immigration laws were different in legal discourse and in practice, as they could enter certain labor markets despite their irregular migration status, this reinforcing their ideas about the malleability of deportation. This is why the consolidation of these practices developed into customs and habits that were incorporated into their ways of thinking, feeling and acting regarding irregular re-emigration after deportation.

CONCLUSIONS

Mexican migration to the United States went from being a temporary practice that began with the first migration currents between 1848 and 1849, during the so-called "gold rush" in California, and later in the context of the first and second world wars, to become a one-century old practice involving millions of people in both countries, which makes it evident that these migration practices have been developed and transmitted from generation to generation.

In this article, the term *culture of deportation* has been brought forth, which can be broadly defined as a complex network of sociocultural and historical elements that, added to the circumstances faced by people who have been returned from the United States and the

motivations that they must return, materialize in the practice of irregular re-emigration after expulsion.

These elements include a) the tolerance that the United States government kept towards irregular migration throughout the 20th century, based on its economic needs and interests; b) the old model of repeated attempts, which was consolidated as the form of irregular migration into the United States; c) the imagined dispute over the original territory of Mexico; d) the defense of a right to mobility and permanence; and e) resistance to domination.

Irregular re-emigration after deportation responds to the defense of a right to mobility and permanence —taking the concepts by Mezzadra (2012)— that returnees consider having earned because they worked or grew up in that country, and even, in some cases, because they served the armed forces there. While for some this right to transit is justified by the ties they have with the United States, by feeling like citizens of this country, or by their children having been born in there, for others it has a moral and political support born from the imagined dispute over the original territory of Mexico.

The historical past of Mexico and its structural dependence on the United States created discourses of resistance in different social layers, so that the U.S. invasion prevails in the memory of Mexicans as the history of the defeated and is activated as a defense against oppression. From this perspective, the culture of deportation would represent the vision of a people that refuses to be defeated once more.

Within the framework of the new migration paradigm, in which the border is increasingly dangerous and more difficult to cross and the penalties for illegal re-entry are more severe, changes are gradually taking place in the minds of the people in the sense that expulsions have for the first time a real and permanent punitive sense, even when ways of thinking, feeling and acting persist that drive them to re-emigrate in spite of deportation.

Irregular re-migration is likely to continue, especially in the current scenario wherein mass deportations have become a new form of migrant exploitation. If migration, with its belief system, its social networks and the industry that accompanies it, generates more migration, deportation, likewise, with its belief system and the industry that frames it, generates more deportation as well.

Can we speak of resistance in the contemporary context, where the various channels for irregular migration and re-emigration have been closed? According to the ideas, attitudes and beliefs of the returnees, analyzed from their testimonial narratives, today more than ever they are in resistance, even those who are under precarious conditions, although this resistance is only manifested at the daily life or ideological levels.

While the new containment measures have forced people to change their mobility practices, ideas and beliefs cannot change at the same pace that migration policies do.

Furthermore, the discourse of the people shows the persistence of a belief system that has not been deeply transformed, whether or not they have actually crossed the border again. They may not have the same agency capacity that migrants of earlier times had, but in any case they still defend their individual project, from ideological resistance and as actors in their own history.

Translation: Fernando Llanas

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