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Editorial Note

Dear reader,

It is a pleasure for our Editorial Board to release the second volume of Encuentro Latinoamericano (ELA).

Once again we have to congratulate the effort of the authors included in this volume. Furthermore, we kindly thank ELA's external reviewers, whose voluntary contribution to a rigorous review process is reflected in the academic fundaments of the following articles.

The paper *Microcitizenship in Post-Neoliberal Argentina: The Political Articulation of Contentious Entitlements among the middle class in Salta* discusses the notion of citizenship, exploring how a cosmopolitan identity predominates over national identity among Argentinian middle class, particularly through the author's ethnographic work in the city of Salta. He develops an interesting approach to re-think the concept of citizens within the context of a neoliberal society.

The Mexican Drug War's Collateral Damages on Women examines the Mexican drug war from a postcolonial and feminist perspective, in order to analyze how the collateral damages of the war on drugs are affecting women more than other groups, since they have become more vulnerable to threats as rape, kidnapping and human trafficking.

Elizabeth Camargo Alzate, in the article *Familia, trabajo y sociedad en el proceso de reintegración de mujeres desmovilizadas*, assesses the difficulties behind the social and economic demobilization of women that once belonged to guerrilla movements in Colombia, based on extensive interviews and taking into account three dimensions of analysis: personal, familiar and production.

We are proud of this exclusive selection, and we would be delighted to receive your comments and suggestions for further volumes. As well, we hope to count on your future contributions to ELA. Enjoy.

The Editorial Board

Microcitizenships amidst Post-Neoliberal Insecurity: The Political Articulation of Contentious Entitlements among the Middle Class in Salta, Argentina

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Abstract

Post-national literature continues to depict citizenship as a status that clearly distinguishes insiders from outsiders. Writing against such groupism, this paper argues that in the Argentine city of Salta, temporal, multi-scalar notions of citizenship exist in fractious encounters. Using ethnographically derived data, the paper illustrates how middle class informants invoked transnational images of civil belonging to stake their political claims on the national state. This way, the research moves beyond conventional scholarly writing that emphasizes how normative civil boundaries are constructed vis-à-vis extra-national outsiders. Instead, middle class salteños principally demarcated cosmopolitan civil identities against the national lower class. Furthermore, by sketching the transnational spatial imagery through which middle class informants rejected state politics, the paper complements Latin Americanist theory that depicts insurgent citizenship as a monopoly of the poor.

Key words: citizenship; political identity; Argentina; class; post-neoliberalism.

Introduction

'Cristina buys votes. She gives a lot of subsidies to poor people in exchange for votes. Pure corruption! The lower class is having more and more children, because they receive 400 pesos a month for each child they have. That is our social program, to make sure people have children and do not work!' Vicky, a civil engineer student with whom I frequently went for coffee, angrily bemoaned the current sociopolitical climate in Argentina. 'Meanwhile, it is the middle class that is suffering', she continued. 'Before, our parents could send us to Miami or to Disney World Orlando. Now, we have to pay 30 percent of taxes over all our foreign expenses!'

Vicky's laments about economic and political instability were broadly shared among the middle class in Salta, the Argentine city where I conducted ethnographic fieldwork on civil identity and nationalism from September 2013 until January 2014. Since the 2007 presidential election of Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, Argentina has been struck by fierce monetary devaluation. Middle class *salteños* [inhabitants of Salta] attributed their financial instability to the protectionist measures upheld by the leftist Kirchner administration. Staring in the face of rocketing inflation, they stressed that it was their income segment that had to endure most severely the hazards of today's economic malfunctioning, facing unfavorable tax rises that were allegedly used to pay for the subsidies of the President's lower class electorate. Many informants used rich discourse to verbalize their concerns about the contemporary state of national democracy, economic stagnation, the impossibility to save money, and the scarce offer of white-collar jobs. Peculiarly, although through such discourse informants vented their dismay with the *national* state and its redistributive practices, their claims on civil entitlements were smothered within *extra-national* imagery, as they fell back upon the spatial imagination of Europe to communicate a cosmopolitan sense of citizenship.

Using ethnographically derived data, this thesis illustrates how middle class salteños, against a background of post-neoliberal politics, paradoxically invoked transnational civil identities of Eurocentric modernity to discursively stake their claims on the nation-state. Middle class citizens, anxious about their national positioning, employed imagined geographies *of* and identification *with* Europe as discursive tools of civil insurgency to protest the national state apparatus and its lower class electorate.

Writing against post-national academics that reduce citizenship to a right-bearing condition that clearly differentiates insiders from outsiders, I sketch how in Salta temporal, multi-scalar notions of citizenship co-exist in fractious encounters. Through emphasis on the flexible and opportunistic dispositions of civil belonging, I approach citizenship as a symbolic category that is in perpetual negotiation; an act of fractious *articulation*, rather than a legal or substantive *status*. To analytically grasp this fluxuous impetus of political engagement, I draw upon Centner's (2012) concept of *microcitizenships*: contentious claims of civil entitlements that are spatio-temporally circumscribed. Microcitizenships are specific to antagonistic social classes rather than the citizenry at large. Paradoxically, although microcitizenships concern the contestation of urban space, individuals appeal to extra-urban – national and transnational – political identities to stake civil claims.

In the first section I provide a theoretical background to post-national citizenship, pin-pointing the epistemological shortcomings of static perceptions among contemporary academics. In the following parts, I outline the stirring political climate of post-neoliberal Argentina and sketch its implications for the ethnicization of civil identity. Thereafter, I explain my methodology and introduce the social context of Salta.

Then follows the empirical section, divided up into three parts. I first illustrate how middle class salteños relied upon supra-national spatial imaginations to articulate political entitlements on the nation-state. Here, I move beyond Centner's preoccupation with the urban state, connecting microcitizenships to the *discursive* contestation of the national polity. Subsequently, I sketch how informants opportunistically shifted between different levels of political belonging, thereby relying upon the same notions of national sovereignty they themselves so often vociferously rejected. In the third ethnographic section, I analyze how informants, despite their occasional economic nationalism against Bolivian outsiders, principally demarcated their civil selfhood against the national lower class. This way the research complements conventional citizenship writing that merely emphasizes how normative civil boundaries and symbolic geographies are constructed vis-à-vis non-civil others. I conclude by pointing out how the civil insurgency of the Salta middle class highlights the conceptual flaw of Latin Americanist scholarship to conceive of informal citizenship as inherently restricted to marginalized classes.

Literature review: Moving beyond civil status

Numerous scholars have questioned the conventional understanding of citizenship as national political membership, because neoliberal deregulation has redefined state sovereignty in a fundamental way. In today's era of heightened global interconnectedness, the *Rousseauian* ideal of citizenship as a *social contract* between the individual and the national polity has lost thorough ground, as political responsibility has become increasingly detached from the nation-state (e.g. Appadurai 2006; Bauman 2006). Alternatively, authors stress that citizenship has shifted from the nation-state to the realms of both urban and global politics.

Bosniak (2000), one of the main advocates of the post-national argument, propagates that citizenship has become *denationalized*. She argues that global apparatuses have acquitted the nation-state from its institutional tasks, such as the organization of formal status, the protection of civil rights and the experience of collective identity. Other writers reckon the city to be the most significant site where civil belonging is manufactured nowadays. Holston and Appadurai (2003: 297) acknowledge that 'place remains fundamental to the problems of membership in society', but stress that such membership is no longer synonymous with the nation-state. Instead, cities represent the locales where national and transnational alignments of citizenship come together.

Some social academics take a less radical post-national stance and disparage the scholastic tendency to dichotomize the national and the global as two separate empirical domains. They underline that the nation-state has far from withered away, but has rather gone through a process of reinvidication. Ong (1993) demonstrates how individuals navigate global networks by seeking formal citizenship across countries. 'Flexible' citizens are members of different nation-states, who deploy strategies of 'shifting symbolic positioning' according to their economic needs (Ong 1993: 770). Likewise, Sassen (2002; 2006) examines how global processes work through reconfigured states, with the former remodeling the latter. She discerns between post-national and denationalized citizenship. The first refers to novel forms of citizenship located outside of the nation-state, while the second term denominates institutional alterations that derive from globalization but occur within the nation-state.

Although such post-national scholarship has provided substantial contributions to social and political theory, the paradigm continues to equate citizenship with an

inclusionary membership of a sovereign community, be it now on a sub- or transnational level. As Walker (1998: 198) notes: 'With very few exceptions, notions of citizenship are still overwhelmingly tied to the concept of political community and to the idea that citizenship is something that occurs in bounded space'.

To counter such categorical enclosure, Isin (2002) calls for a citizenship of alterity which recognizes that citizens come into being through non-citizens. Instead of considering citizenship a privileged political status that distinguishes insiders from outsiders, Isin highlights how *both* are constitutive of citizenship. In his line of thought, Ní Mhurchú (2014) observes that political life is irreducible to bounded unitary notions of inclusion/exclusion, such as 'local', 'global', or 'national'. Although such notions are invoked discursively in contentious encounters, in practice they co-exist in contradiction. She argues that our atemporal, sovereign paradigm of citizenship should make way for fragmented, deterritorialized conceptions of belonging, urging 'the need to reconsider how tension and conflict [...] exist *within* political identity and belonging' (Ní Mhurchú 2014: 121-122). This framework of alterity is not only helpful for explaining how non-citizens stake claims on political institutions of which they lack legal membership, as is often the case with irregular migrants (McNevin 2011: 4); it also illuminates how individuals securitize civil selfhood against those civil others with whom they share formal membership to a legal polity, as I witnessed during my fieldwork in Salta, where middle class informants projected their political anxieties on the lower class.

Hence, academic literature has gradually begun to emphasize the substantive, extra-formal assets of citizenship, meanwhile downgrading its legal underpinnings. Citizenship is increasingly equated with a 'claim rather than a status' (Das 2011: 320). Besides the mere study of policies and laws, social researchers progressively concentrate on the subjective reactions to these; the 'everyday understandings of citizenship' (Miller-Idriss 2006: 561). This active dialogue between state bureaucracy and (in)receptive citizenry is eloquently captured by Holston's (1995) concept of *insurgent citizenship*. As Holston sets out, urban landscapes painfully illustrate the nation-state's failure to deliver on its promise of legal entitlements. To mobilize for the rights that the state has omitted to grant them, marginalized groups construct extra-formal, 'insurgent' forms of civil life. By deploying normative conceptions of citizenship that go beyond legalistic discourse, lower class civilians defy and negotiate governmental administration.

Nevertheless, in Salta such civil insurgency also applied to middle class individuals, of whom many did not easily fit into the category of 'marginalized'. Frictions between official state rhetoric and on-the-ground perspectives on citizenship abundantly loomed up during my research. Inclusionist rhetoric on part of the Argentine state, epitomized by the governmental slogan *Argentina para todos* [Argentina for everyone], fell on deaf ears among the vast majority of middle class informants, neglected as they felt by this presidential agenda.

Microcitizenships: the exclusionist aftermath of political inclusionism

Given that the bulk of citizenship authors aim their academic lenses at the Western core, political patterns in the global periphery are somewhat overlooked within scientific literature. Contrary to the deregulation framework of the traditional West, many Latin-American nation-states are governed by a post-neoliberal agenda in which state rhetoric and policy are aimed at the inclusion of the poor. Therefore, the post-national gospel sounds somewhat awkwardly when applied to Latin America, as national states are back at the forefront of political command. After the turn of the millennium, several left-orientated presidents have taken office, promising to stimulate welfare spending and bend the preceding era of pro-elite democratization (Panizza 2005, 2009; Webber and Carr 2013). In the last decade we have witnessed what is prevalently conceived of as the *pink tide*: a resurgence throughout South and Central America of nationalist, leftist governments that loudly speak out against neoliberalism, while upholding protectionist measures that drastically decelerate flows of capital.

The case of Argentina is exemplary. Since the economic crisis of 1998-2002, the country has been governed by the leftist presidencies of the late Nestor Kirchner (2003-2007) and his spouse Cristina Fernández de Kirchner (2007-present). These administrations have capitalized on the popular discontent about crude neoliberal politics – regularly perceived as the cause of the millennial economic collapse – and have propagated an agenda of human rights protections, social welfare and economic nationalism (Levitsky and Murillo 2008; Riggirozzi 2009; Grugel and Riggirozzi 2012). Although some scholars applaud the Kirchners for opposing the neoliberal model (Laclau 2011; Katz 2013), others point out that their social programs are only mildly redistributive (Robinson 2008: 292) and that an ongoing implementation of labor flexibilization is at hand (Castorina 2013: 246).

Yet, one cannot deny the presence of, to use the words of Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, 'a paradigm shift with society' (Página 12 2011), as governmental discourse is targeted at the inclusion of impoverished Argentines. One finds it also hard to ignore that many recent state policies are strongly at odds with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Fernández de Kirchner has put strong limitations on import and has nationalized important private companies (Wylde 2011). Moreover, the IMF has officially censored Argentina, as the country's inflation rates do not comply with international standards for measurement. Economists have calculated the annual inflation rate between 2007 and 2013 to be at least 25 percent, while national figures estimate it to be only half of this figure (The Economist 2014).

Although post-neoliberal governance in Argentina might be slightly ambiguous, its on-the ground effects are certainly not. Kirchnerist politics have generated strong domestic class tensions. Argentine post-neoliberalism, as Centner (2012) demonstrates in his study of Buenos Aires, concurs with the presence of microcitizenships, which connote fractious claims of citizenship that – in contrast to the state's ideological inclusionism – are exclusionary and nestled within class antagonism. Microcitizenships relate to contending social groups and are communicated through the expulsion of civil others. These citizenships connote momentary claims and therefore do not acquire the atemporal deficits of an essentialist political status. Moreover, although microcitizenships refer to 'the strategic yet flexible attachment to material space in the city' (Centner 2012: 338), they are justified through various scales of politics. To stake claims on the urban state, citizens paradoxically attribute national and transnational models of civil belonging. Centner (2012: 346-348) for instance illustrates how desires for a safe and orderly *urban* scenery among the Buenos Aires middle class, arose from expectations of having certain *global* standards delivered. Well-off informants cloaked their desires as social rights of the developed world; a world they claimed to represent.

The Europeanness of Argentina and its middle class

Such cosmopolitanism has to be understood in the context of Argentina's immigration history. At the end of the 19th century, modernist elites propagated the influx of European migrants, whose labor power and alleged cultural superiority were believed to be essential for the development of the young Argentine nation-state (Martinez-Sarasola 1992). Subsequently, Argentina became the second-most important destination site for European migrants during the first half of the 20th century (Germani 1966: 166). Mass

migration initiated the rise of a large European-descended middle class that filled the gap between the post-colonial elite and the non-white lower classes (Germani 1964; Rock 1985; Svampa 1993). Before the hyperinflation of 1989, the middle class amounted for 70 percent of the Argentine population (Minujin and Kessler 1995).

Yet, at the end of the 1980s and throughout the 1990s the middle class declined sharply due to rocketing inflation, which eventually accumulated in the Argentine millennial crisis. Various ethnographies on the crisis (Joseph 2000; Guano 2003a, 2003b, 2004) emphasize how middle class Argentines, facing downward socioeconomic mobility, securitized their social positioning through the ethnicization of civil status. In the wake of class degradation, they retrieved to the identification with Europe ancestry and the racial stigmatization of the mestizo poor, in order to discard local governance and emphasize their social enhancement over the national lower class. The turbulent decade of the nineties encompassed a 'change in the rules of ethnic visibility in Argentina', as Grimson (2006: 1) puts forward; 'a growing hypervisibilization of differences'.

Similarly, in today's Kirchnerist epoch of political uncertainty and economic turmoil, normative claims of transnational citizenship are utilized to make demands on the local state. Such demands do not merely concern social struggles for urban space, as in Centner's study, but also apply to the symbolic contestation of national politics. Lederman (2013) delineates how middle class individuals in Buenos Aires fund their civil critique by 'a type of transnational citizenship based on their identification with more privileged locals and the norms of public space seen as defining these imagined geographies' (Lederman 2013: 23). His fieldwork informants explained away their civil entitlements through an emphasis on global rights which they, as possessors of a Eurocentric global modernity, should enjoy.

Putting transnational civil identity at the heart of my dissertation thesis, I have analyzed how the imagination of extra-national space functions as a discursive instrument of civil criticism in Salta. The three pillars of microcitizenships – multi-scalar belonging, temporality and class contention – were part and parcel of the civil narratives of middle class informants.

Research setting and methodology

Whereas post-national literature mainly focuses on metropolitan capitals, I have studied how microcitizenships are articulated in Salta. This peripheral city experiences post-neoliberal insecurity profoundly, being economically and geographically isolated from Argentina's legislative centre Buenos Aires. Salta – as the rest of northern Argentina – occupies an economically marginal position within the Argentine landscape. This was reflected in what informants perceived to be an undersized middle class vis-à-vis the Argentine south. This marginality simultaneously provided them with an explanation for why Salta is a political stronghold for the Kirchnerist party, as its leftist policies particularly gain popularity among low income segments. Moreover, due to its proximity to the border, Salta is home to many Bolivian immigrants, hosting around ten percent of Argentina's Bolivian population (Cerrutti 2009: 14, 21).

Salta counts an estimated 600 thousand inhabitants. This number is mainly accumulated through the many localities that are located at the outskirts of its metropolitan zone. While within a *global city* such as Buenos Aires socioeconomic segregation is overtly represented by physically secluded neighborhoods, in modest Salta social collision is inevitable, since class geographies strongly overlap. However, one cannot bypass a classed spatial identification and the majority of my research activities took place within sites that were identified as 'middle class', such as the city centre, Salta's two universities and the neighborhood of Tres Cerritos. Many informants lived in Tres Cerritos, which due to the white-collar background of its inhabitants and its privilege of hosting Salta's only luxury shopping mall, was popularly depicted as 'middle class' or – less frequently – 'upper-middle class'.

Although many citizenship theorists adopt top-down approaches, I have applied ethnographic research to understand how citizenship is used as an idiom in everyday practices through which people negotiate it. To comprehend the versatile and fragmented discourses through which middle class salteños *claimed* citizenship, I employed anthropological fieldwork methods such as open and semi-structured interviewing, participant observation, life-history interviews and focus group sessions. Applying a subjectivist approach to class, I demarcated my research population on the basis of self-identification. Furthermore, I make use of pseudonyms in order to guarantee the anonymity of my research participants.

The paper is the result of four-and-a-half months of fieldwork in which I interviewed more than 60 middle class informants, the majority on multiple occasions. To gain a broad perspective of middle class attitudes, there was no overrepresentation in terms of sex nor age. Informants included university students, white-collar workers – principally high school teachers, entrepreneurs and lawyers – and retirees and ages ranged from 23 until 75. Finally, university students amounted for at least one third of the interviewees, since establishing contact with young adults appeared to be relatively easy in comparison with other age segments. The large presence of students also supplied interesting ethnographic insights on citizenship, since these young salteños found themselves at the threshold of a white-collar career, while the prolonged economic crisis obstructed their vertical mobility.

The civil paradox of the Salta middle class: a transnationalist response to the nation-state

A decade of Kirchnerist rule has left its marks on the middle class in Salta. Taxes on middle class incomes have increased and protectionist restrictions have made it exceedingly more expensive to purchase foreign currency and luxury items. Scarce were those informants that did not express anxiety when discussing Argentina's perpetual rotation of economic and political arrangements. Depending on their own life projects, informants accentuated particular aspects of what they saw as a lack of vision of the current government. Flavia, an experienced lawyer, was approaching her upcoming retirement with a strong dose of skepticism: 'It is all very insecure. Our economy is in ruins. So when it goes worse, you just know they will cut in the retirement funds. The money that you have earned, they just take it away from you!' The geology student Marcelo worried about his future job prospects: 'Right now because of the restrictions on exportation … I mean importation … you know, the customs, the dollar, they have robbed me of work opportunities. Companies do not come here anymore. So yes, I do worry about the moment when I am done studying.'

Anxious about the impoverished state of the national economy and the durability of their own class positions, most informants vented their criticism on the contemporary government through arguments of cosmopolitanism. They contrasted the precarious state of the Argentine economy with Western democracies, veiling the latter within a mystique of modernity and political advancement. The following comments by Virginia, a interior design student who was in the possession of an Italian passport, are illustrative:

> I am done with Argentina. The lack of safety, the politics. In our public university you have to sit on the floor because there are not enough seats. Or the roof is leaking. This government is a disaster. I think I fit better in Europe. I have never been there, but when I hear the stories from my sister about how orderly you take care of things. We had a very open-minded upbringing. I think that our family is more like Europeans than like the people over here.

Through the discursive invocation of representations of Europe, informants constructed a sense of First World belonging. Such rhetoric served as a counter-image of political normalcy to the current state of Argentine upheaval. By evoking utopian portrayals of Europe, informants expressed ideas on how a modern state should look after its citizens and exposed Argentina's alleged state of authoritarianism. The safety, tranquility and economic stability of European countries – where many informants held secondary citizenship and some even have relatives – were treated as universal civil properties; global rights that any government of merit should grant to its citizens. Through the accentuation of their own European heritage and modern lifestyles, informants marked their symbolic linkages with these extra-national locales, thereby pronouncing their ownership of these global rights. They articulated cosmopolitan civil identities that intrinsically entitled them to the privileges of First World politics. Thus, ironically, although informants were preoccupied with the redistribution of national wealth, they marked their social distance from Argentina and adhered to transnational civil imagery to stake claims on the local state.

Middle class salteños stressed that they were the ones being tossed around and excluded under the governmental umbrella of nationalist inclusionism. Like many other young salteños, the economics student Hernán thought about migrating to Europe:

> Our financial devaluation is tremendous. What strikes me most is that our government denies it. They say that we have an inflation rate of 1,1 percent. But if a pack of citric costs 40 pesos, and one month later 48 pesos, how can that be an inflation rate of 1 percent? The IMF does not even trust our government anymore. It worries me to live here. In Argentina they do not care about education. I see my future elsewhere. Spain I guess. My grandparents came from Spain. In Spain they do respect education. When you finish university, you immediately have a job. That is what our government is lacking.

As the machines of political change were running at ramming speed, middle class salteños hastily looked for anchor points of social stability. They juxtaposed Argentina's controversial restrictive politics with the ontological superiority of international institutions and transnational entities, such as the IMF, commercial multinationals and European

nation-states. Informants exalted their own education and European descent to symbolically align themselves to such extra-national structures and legitimize their criticism on local governance. Such multi-scalarism encapsulates the fractious nature of political claims in post-neoliberal Argentina, eloquently captured by Centner's rubric of *microcitizenships*. This concept starts from the presumption that citizens appeal to various scales of political community to stake claims on the local state. However, whereas the urban municipality is the primary jurisdictional force in Centner's study of Buenos Aires, in the peripheral, smaller stage of Salta civil claims were primarily directed at the level of the national state. Middle class individuals appealed to extra-national nodes of territorial belonging to heighten the deprived state of national – rather than urban – citizenship.

Informants often complained about the lack of foreign capital and consumer goods that were flowing into the country, portraying the current government as a populist roadblock on the path of Western civilization. While we were having coffee in Salta's ultramodern shopping mall, Facundo, an accountant in his forties, elaborated the following:

> A couple of months ago I wanted to bring in a computer from the United States. It took me three months to get it past customs! I do not like their restrictions. When we are abroad they charge us 30 percent over all our purchases! So we purchase dollars illegally. More and more they are restricting our liberties. This is why in Argentina, a lot us are not proud of being called Argentines anymore. I identify strongly with Europe. Look at this shopping mall. Who do you think are the owners of these shops? Spanish, French, Italians. Regrettably, the *criollo* [romantic term for rural Argentines] idiosyncrasy is different. You will never see a criollo open a shop.

For Facundo, the shopping mall represented a cosmopolitan space that transcended local culture. He embraced this locus of Western consumerism as a global island within a sea of 'criollo idiosyncrasy'. Facundo's defiance to autochthony lays bare the regionalist biases within post-national citizenship literature and draws attention to the academic limitations of the study of the Global South. Many authors writing on citizenship emphasize that the current epoch of postmodernity enhances economic and ethnic nationalism. Neoliberal processes of privatization and deregulation ignite a collective sense of social insecurity, which concurs with communitarian desires for exclusionist nationalism and protectionist policies (Bauman 2006; Brubaker 2011; Hart 2012). In post-neoliberal Salta, an inverted logic occurred. Localism was not just the response to economic insecurity but rather perceived as its cause. Equally, civil identity, rather than being immersed within

nationalist rhetoric, was primarily sought through the identification with transnational society.

Temporal flexibility: juggling civil belonging

The reinforcement of global identity notwithstanding, middle class salteños occasionally resorted to primordial rhetoric aimed at non-nationals. Often I heard the fierce complaint that tax money extracted from middle class incomes went straight to the pockets of Bolivians – by far the city's largest migrant group – who like all non-nationals in Argentina were eligible to make costless use of public education and healthcare. The ambiguous legal status of these migrants formed a tangible challenge to informants' ideals of the nation-state. They represented the fact that the government did not look after its own middle class, but held the interests of non-nationals in higher esteem. This ambiguity converted Bolivians into the lightning rods of today's institutional fragility. In the words of Ezequiel, in his sixties and chairman of the local polo club:

> We have the responsibility to look after our own people. You cannot do that if you look after others. Public health care is free over here. What happens: they take care of a Bolivian and cannot take care of me. Look, this club has two hundred members. I have to look after the benefits of its members. I cannot do that if I start taking care of the benefits of outsiders.

When I confronted informants with their selective transnationalism, they seemed perplexed with my ingenuity. Although informants saw Argentina as an immigration country, many clung onto a vertical taxonomy of migrants, thereby reinstating the cultural inferiority of Bolivians. Javier, a company executive of Greek descent, summed this up to me:

> The Europeans who came here brought a higher level of culture and education than the Bolivians. That is why the Bolivian is not accepted in Argentina. Integration will be a difficult thing, because these are two completely different cultures. The Argentine does not want to feel Bolivian. He wants to feel European.

Being the unwanted guests at the Argentine party, Bolivians functioned as an outlet to dump frustrations about national inflation, as their extra-legal status personified the failure of national governance. Furthermore, their alleged ethnic inferiority converted them into the concrete embodiment of Argentina's eroded Western modernity. Bolivians symbolized the Third World status that middle class salteños so eagerly wished to distance

themselves from. By coating national citizenship with European lining, middle class residents retrieved to the same notions of national sovereignty which they at other times so fiercely refuted in their rejection of governmental protectionism.

This illustrates the temporal plasticity of microcitizenships, where 'everything is flexible in these processes of staking claims' (Centner 2012: 356). Informants switched opportunistically between transnational and national political belonging according to the situation at hand. Which scale of citizenship was picked depended on the stakes involved for the person that was picking. Civil belonging is malleable according to the way it fits one's narrative of civil superiority. However, as I will sketch in the following section, although civil conscience was constructed in opposition to non-nationals, it primarily arose through the dehumanization of fellow legal citizens.

Class adversity: civil insurgency gone awry

In spite of the xenophobic attitudes towards migrants newcomers, it was the Argentine lower class that was classified as the principal culprit of today's brutal omission of political stability. Middle class fingers of blame were generally pointed downwards, as the Argentine poor were believed to be the main benefactor of the current state of economic uprootedness. A common understanding reigned that the lower class was engaged in a clientelist relationship with the government. Lower class citizens had voted the Kirchner administration into power, profiting from its subsidy programs and thereby extracting money from quickly shrinking middle class pockets.

During Kirchnerist rule, social spending on family assignations has drastically increased and unemployed parents receive a monthly allowance to cover for the living expenses of their children. Informant frustrations arising from this subsidy program were aptly summarized by Virginia:

> I remember that when they started with these family assignations, we found it extremely difficult to find a housekeeper. Because who wants to work if she can just sit at home, while scratching herself and receiving money? That is why they continue to live in their mediocrity. They use drugs, they steal around, and they remain poor. And that's why they keep voting for her.

Many informants highlighted the perceived climate of laziness that was generated by governmental subsidies. Such condemnation arrived at its boiling point when discussing the collective lootings that took place in Salta in December 2013. As a consequence of

massive police strikes, groups of looters had seized the momentum of temporal impunity to target local shops and obtain material bounty. I was struck by the importance informants placed on the low work ethic of the Argentine poor to explain for the riots. When I was contemplating the ravages in the city centre with Damián, a civil engineering student, I was surprised to note the fury with which he criticized the city's *villeros* [slum dwellers]: '[The lootings] make me mad! These *negros de mierda* [shit blacks]. It is disgusting. But Argentines are like this. Because of this government, people want to get things for free. In any First World country people would be happy to receive a subsidy. Here they think it is normal.'

Such rhetoric mirrored that the economic gates that had separated informants' advanced class positions from those below them were slowly but surely opening up. As Virginia's father Pedro urged me during a family dinner: 'Look Jesse, with this inflation, the gap between the rich and poor is only getting bigger, with us, the ones in the middle, going down. And all this because we have a culture of raising your hand and receiving everything from the state!' To defend themselves against such class trespassing, middle class salteños embarked upon the stigmatization of the urban poor. They crystallized their civil superiority by cementing it with essentialist arguments. By placing emphasis on the European heredity of the Argentine nation, informants placed themselves at the forefront of that same nation. They often quoted the popular dictum 'the Argentines descend from ships', exclaiming their innate enhancement over the mestizo lower class. Facundo for instance complained:

> It is more and more difficult to stay in the middle class. I speak from my own experience. If it continues like this, in twenty years from now there will be just upper and lower class. It is because of the subsidies. Argentines do not want to work. This country has not been made by Argentines, but by Europeans.

Microcitizenships are imbued with civil antagonism; they are "particularized relationships that are staked out between specific groups" (Centner 2012: 355). Rather than an opaque plea for universal civil rights, middle class' claims on the local state were at the same time shout-outs to impede the rights of civil peers. Assertions of rights – to a fairer income distribution, to democratic governance, to travel freely and without additional taxes – coincided with appeals to mitigate the subsidy programs that were benefiting lower class citizens. Such class polarization exceeds citizenship literature that stresses how during social and economic crises citizens re-emphasize the national civil community by fencing it off from ethnic others (Wimmer 2002; Bauman 2006). In contrast, among the Salta middle

class, economic turbulence had ignited a search for transnational civil identities in which sparse space was made for fellow nationals that did not fit images of cosmopolitan selfhood.

This class-specific political discourse also shines a new light on informal citizenship. Latin Americanist literature has repeatedly demonstrated how marginal groups rely upon informal political belonging to act against or outside of a neglecting nation-state. Socioeconomically underprivileged actors aim for political engagement beyond legal understanding to seek what their state denies them. Such *insurgent citizenship*, to coin Holston's (1995) term, takes many shapes. It depicts the service provisions of illegal organizations that copy the protective function of the state (Sanjuán 1997; Koonings and Kruijt 2007), but also refers to normative citizenship notions that counter national policy by echoing a supranational human rights discourse (Nash 2001; Lederman 2013). In Salta, however, civil insurgency seemed to have gone awry. Insurgent citizenship transgressed the marginal classes as extra-formal perceptions of citizenship were far from restricted to the urban poor. In the wake of political uncertainty, middle class salteños stressed political belonging outside of the nation-state. Whether it concerned the illegal purchase of dollars to avoid protectionists taxes, the off-shoring of private capital to European bank accounts, or the mere condemnation of the Argentine presidency and its lower class electorate, informants re-instilled a transnational civil imagery of First World membership to validate their political protest and extra-legal activities.

Conclusion

Approaching citizenship as a meaningful, fractious idiom in practice, this paper illuminates how political belonging in post-neoliberal Argentina takes contradictory and multifaceted forms. In line with Centner's concept of microcitizenships, the paper outlines how the Salta middle class invoked multi-scalar and temporal civil imaginations that were immersed within class antipathy.

Due to political dissipation, middle class salteños experienced profound socioeconomic insecurity. While catching breath amidst economic disruptiveness, they tightly put their fingernails into narratives of cosmopolitan citizenship which stressed European heritage and First World membership. By comparing the porous state of Argentine governance with Western democracies, they underlined their symbolic proximity to global levels of political community. Thus, paradoxically, through such transnationalism,

they claimed their political entitlements on the local nation-state. Nonetheless, political identification is never devoid of temporal negotiation and middle class salteños navigated citizenship narratives opportunistically. When asked about the recent influx of Bolivian immigrants, middle class salteños defended their rights to privileged state access in terms of national identity, in spite of their own proclaimed disembeddedness from the national polity.

In tandem with this nexus of multi-scalarism and temporality, microcitizenships are highly class-contentious. Facing the diminishment of economic advantages, middle class salteños inflicted their political anxieties upon the Argentine poor. Class frontiers were crumbling down and lesser-off Argentines threatened to pull the middle class from its safe-guarded seat of excellence. Lower class citizens were the logical scapegoats for the usurpation of tax money, as they profited from social spending and formed the principal electoral base of the government. Not surprisingly thus, the middle class' quest for political advancement occurred in dialectic analogue with pleas to restrict state funding of lower class social programs. This is an inversion of the exclusionist nationalism that is the subject of the bulk of citizenship studies. Whereas many authors examine the relationship between economic uncertainty and nationalist xenophobia towards non-citizens, the Salta middle class rather responded to economic uncertainty through a transnational exclusionism that was casted down upon fellow nationals.

This gloomy observation invites us once-more to embrace ethnographic understandings of citizenship, since legalistic approaches often fall short to on-the-ground dynamics of political action. Yet, besides being wary not to simplify civil belonging as merely a legal condition, it neither suffices to portray substantive citizenship as a dichotomous status-scheme of the *have's* and the *have-not's*, wherein civil insurgency is treated as a monopoly of the lower class. The current pink tide of Latin American politics hosts a proliferation of informal civil engagements that tarnish the scholastic tendency to equate normative insurgency with economically marginalized citizens. Students confronting state politics in Venezuela, middle class Brazilians protesting international sports events, regionalist separatism in the prosperous Bolivian region of Santa Cruz; we have seen an emergence of social groups and political actors that do not comply with traditional Latin Americanist images of insurgent citizenship.

In sum, I applaud scholars to pay attention to those moments of friction when civil dichotomies are crossed and contested. This focus on alterity should debunk the rigid

interpretation of citizenship as a binary opposition of those possessing and those lacking political membership, albeit legally or substantively.

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The Mexican Drug War's Collateral Damages on Women

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Abstract

This paper examines the Mexican drug war from a postcolonial and feminist perspective. The postcolonial framework serves to expose how the U.S.-led War on Drugs is a new instrument of colonial practice that allows the U.S. to maintain a political and economic sphere of influence in Latin America. In addition the feminist perspective enables to examine how the collateral damages of this drug war affect people different depending on the intersection of their sex, gender, race or class. Consequently women have become more vulnerable to be the target of rape, kidnapping and human trafficking. Moreover, even though men engage more often with drug cartels women are more likely to be imprisoned for drug offenses. Focusing on women in this particular situation serves to explain that the drug trade is more than just a problem of criminality. It is an issue that stems from social and economic injustices.

Key words: Collateral damages of the drug war; feminist and postcolonial theory; Mexican drug war; War on Drugs; women and drug war.

Introduction

According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) 2014 report, the United States is one of the highest consumers of drugs in the world. The UNODC estimates 16% of the population aged 12 and older have used illicit drugs in the United States. Also, North America (Mexico and the U.S.) has the largest seizures of the cannabis herb; accounting for 69% of the global herb seizures in 2011 (UNODC 2013). Today, Mexico is the largest foreign supplier of marijuana and methamphetamines to the United States. The Mexican government estimates drug traffickers earned $132 billion between 2006 and 2010. With the eradication of the drug trade in Mexico, the Mexican economy will shrink by 63% (Morton 2010). These statistics are indicative of an enormous illicit drug market. To that extent, Mexico has been imbued in violence for the past eight years.

Just six days after taking office as Mexico's president in 2006, Felipe Calderon announced a war, backed by the United States, against organized crime, specifically drug cartels. Overall, Calderon's strategy consisted of the militarization of law enforcement in the country to fight drug cartels. Nonetheless, very far from dismantling drug cartels, during his administration more cartels emerged, spread, and some became even more powerful. At the beginning of this war in 2006, six cartels existed in Mexico. Recently, the Attorney General reported that nine cartels now exist and they have split into 43 criminal gangs operating throughout the country (Ramírez 2014). Edgardo Buscaglia (2013) criticizes Calderon's strategy of militarization. He argues that organized crime is a social and economic phenomenon and not just a military one that can be battled with the army.

This paper seeks to respond whether the collateral damages of the drug war have struck different men and women. Many authors agree the strategy has been unsuccessful up to this point (Buscaglia 2013; Correa-Cabrera 2013; Francis and Mauser 2011; Hernández 2010; Mastrogiovanni 2014; Mercille 2014; Morton 2012). Moreover, many people have died. The Mexican Institute of Geography and History INEGI reported that from 2006 to 2012, 121,683 violent deaths occurred in Mexico. Of these deaths, according to the current secretary of the interior Miguel Ángel Osorio Chong, about 70,000 deaths were related to drug trade violence (CNN México 2013). However, sources coming from nongovernmental organizations claim that the number of violent deaths related to drug trade violence during the Calderon administration is even worse. They argue 116,100 deaths were related to the drug trade (Libera 2013). In addition, drug cartels have extended

their illicit activities to human trafficking, kidnappings, and extortion (Office of the High Commissioner in Mexico 2012). It has been documented that drug cartels forced women to become sexual slaves, couriers, watchers, and assassins (CATWLAC, 2012).

An analysis of the dynamics that has led Mexico to this violent precipice will give insight into Mexico's grim situation. Taking a postcolonial and feminist approach is important; this allows the examination of the violence in terms of power dynamics, class, gender and race. This approach can give a close look at the impact of the drug war on vulnerable women in Mexico. The postcolonial framework is useful for two reasons. First, it places the drug trafficking within the entangled dynamics of international cooperation. Second, it sheds light on how imperialist states lead postcolonial states to assume foreign policies that do not necessarily benefit the majority of the population. In addition, feminist theory acknowledges that imperialist policies have a different impact over people depending on the intersection of their sex, gender, class, race or religion.

In Mexico, cartels have turned poor women into a commodity to possess or use in trade. They have done this with impunity. Drug traffickers have raped women (Castellanos 2013) and have added the trafficking of women to their illicit activities (O'Connor 2011). Focusing on women in this particular situation provides a lens to understand that the drug trade is not just a problem of criminality and legal justice, but it is also about inequality and social injustice. Consequently, the significance of this paper rests on presenting the U.S.-led war on drugs as a new instrument of colonial practice that violates people's most fundamental rights. Given that women are the most affected by tears in the social fabric, it is important to examine the particular ways in which the drug war has struck them.

The Mexican government has not provided clear and accurate information. They have not reported on the impact and collateral damage of the drug war. This paper will attempt to fill gaps in information provided by the Mexican government. It will further show how the government's drug strategy has affected vulnerable women. In addition, although many authors have examined organized crime and drug trade in Mexico, none of them approach the issue from a postcolonial and feminist perspective. As a result, the assumption is that the failure of the drug war strategy is solely a Mexican problem and not a transnational issue. This paper argues the collateral damages related to the drug war are a transnational issue because drug trafficking networks operate internationally. Those who

have examined the collateral damages of the drug war do not describe the specific ways in which this strategy strikes women.

This paper is organized to speak to several issues. First, a review of the literature that has examined the drug trade in Mexico as well as U.S. foreign policy. As a contributing factor, an analysis of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) is offered in order to grasp Mexican economy. Secondly, the post-colonial and feminist framework is described. Next, I discuss the drug war as an instrument of colonial practice that allows the U.S. to create a political and economic sphere of influence in Latin America. Lastly, the impact that the drug war has had on women is discussed.

Historical Development of the U.S.-led War on Drugs

To better understand the Mexican drug strategy it is important to examine the relationship between Mexico and the U.S. Lorenzo Meyer (2006) states that the political and economic relationship between the United States and Mexico has historically been a relationship of elites. However, Meyer asserts that the drug trade and Mexican emigration to the US has served to shape the bilateral agenda between these two countries as well. Let us start with the U.S.-led War on Drugs.

The US and Mexico have employed drug prohibition policies. These policies are rooted in the idea that drugs and alcohol are bad for individuals' health and are also amongst the ills of society (Campos 2011; Ogbonna 2012). Over the last 80 years, different governments and political parties from around the globe have supported drug prohibition. In 1914 the U.S. Congress passed the Harrison Act, which prohibited the sale of heroin, cocaine and their derivatives without a doctor's prescription; these kind of drugs are known as psychoactive substances. Later, in 1920, even the medical control of psychoactive substances was banned making the sale or possession of these drugs a crime. In 1937, marijuana also became illegal (Bertram, Blachman, Sharpe and Andreas 1996). In Mexico, the cultivation of marijuana and poppy became illegal in 1925 (Campos 2012). Since the mid-1930s Mexican President Lázaro Cardenas (1936-1940) fought the drug trade, coordinating the Mexican Judicial Federal Police and the U.S. Federal Bureau of Narcotics (Lopez 2011).

In 1971 President Richard Nixon launched the War on Drugs. He declared the abuse of drugs a "national threat" and drug trafficking as "Public Enemy Number One" (Bertram et al 1996:105). This strategy sought to impede the supply of drugs in the US by

expanding law enforcement. It also reinforced the drug strategy abroad. One of the main targets was the border with Mexico, where vehicles entering the US were searched for drugs. Subsequently, in 1986 President Ronald Reagan elevated drug trade as a national security threat and commanded the Defense Department to enhance its counterdrug efforts. One year later, on the other side of the border, Mexican President Miguel de la Madrid also declared drug trafficking a national security issue allowing the military to get involved in counterdrug efforts (Freeman and Sierra 2005). After the Ronald Reagan and George W. H. Bush administrations, the war on drugs intensified. Part of this intensification meant rigid legislation, enhanced law enforcement and elevated rates of incarceration.

As part of the intensification of the drug war, President George H.W. Bush launched the first major increase in counter-drug foreign military assistance in 1989. It was called the Andean Initiative. The Andean Initiative empowered police forces and militaries in Latin America by providing training and support. They specifically focused on Peru and Bolivia. Overall the U.S. foreign drug policy in Latin America has been "militarization" (Youngers and Rosin, 2005). Unfortunately, history has demonstrated that drug traffickers can adapt and recover after major drug-enforcement seizures. The adaptation of the traffickers even has names. The "balloon effect," for instance, is the shifting of the cultivation and production of drugs to places without the threat of drug enforcement. Also, the "cockroach effect" is the movement of smuggling activities to countries without drug strategies (Bagley 2013).

When the Andean Initiative hit Peru and Bolivia to eradicate coca leaf crops, the coca cultivation shifted to Colombia in the mid and late 1990s. Consequently, by 2000 Colombia became the largest producer of cocaine in the world, sinking the country into violence due to drug trafficking. As a result, Colombia became one of the most dangerous countries in the world (Bagley, 2013). In July 2000, President Bill Clinton backed Colombian President Andrés Pastrana, and launched Plan Colombia. Since 2000, this strategy has provided Colombia with more than $5 billion in military aid (Amnesty International 2013). The strategy worked. By 2010 Colombia had significantly decreased violence related to drugs (Bagley 2013). Nonetheless, Plan Colombia led to the "balloon effect" and "cockroach effect" amongst drug traffickers. This time, they shifted their operations to Mexico.

In 2007, the U.S. backed Mexican President Calderon's drug war with the Merida Initiative. According to the US. Department of State (2012) this initiative was a partnership

between Mexico and the US with the purpose of "strengthening institutions, improving citizen safety, fighting drug trafficking, organized crime corruption, illicit arms trafficking, money-laundering and decreasing the demand for drugs on both sides of the border." The Merida Initiative also provided $2.1 billion to Mexico in their anti-drug activities.) This initiative has provided hardware, inspection equipment, and information technology, besides direct and indirect training to different police departments and federal agencies. However, it is not clear what, exactly, this bi-national partnership does to undermine corruption within Mexico.

Despite bi-national cooperation, partial victories and drug enforcement efforts to impede the supply of drugs within the U.S., a huge illicit drug market still exists that it is able to offer drugs to 23.9 million of consumers in the U.S. –16% of Americans age 12 and older (UNODC 2014). It is noteworthy that the highest consumption corresponds to cannabis. The U.S. has 18.9 million consumers of cannabis. (National Survey on Drug Use and Health by the US Department of Health and Human Services 2012). In comparison, according to the 2011 Mexican National Survey of Addictions, Mexico has 1.5% of consumers of illicit drugs age 12 and older. Cannabis represents 1.2% out of this total (Cruz 2013).

The effects of the drug war have fallen far short of what was expected. The consumption of drugs has increased instead of decreased in the past decade. Many scholars have criticized the policy of prohibition in the U.S. (Alexander 2010, Bertram et al 1996; Campos 2012; Francis and Mauser 2006; Ogbonna 2005; Youngers et al 2005). However, despite the shortcomings of the War on Drugs the U.S. has not changed its strategy and continues to support anti-drug efforts abroad.

Mexican economic growth with North American Free Trade Agreement

Now, let's explore the economic relation the U.S and Mexico have. During the 70s a "restoration of class powers worldwide" occurred (Harvey 2005: 31). David Harvey (2005) argues that the restoration of class power does not mean monetary power was restored to the same people who held it in the past. New powerful entities emerged. An example of these entities would be the Wall Street investment banks. During the mid 70s these banks focused on lending capital to foreign governments. Set in U.S. dollars, these loans carried convenient interest rates for the banks. When developing countries had trouble paying back the loans, the U.S. Treasury, operating under the Reagan

administration and the IMF allowed countries to reschedule their debt. In return, indebted countries would have to abandon their Keynesian policies and move towards neoliberalism (Harvey 2005). Mexico was one of the first countries that accepted this proposal. Thus, in the mid 90s Mexico shifted its domestic economic model to a neoliberal model in accordance with the Washington consensus (Meyer 2006).

The Washington consensus refers to the international economic policies promoted by the U.S., U.K., International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (Cypher and Delgado 2010). These policies were presented as the answer to solve the global problems (Harvey 2005). The purpose was to pressure countries to follow the neoliberal road. The neoliberal economic model proposed that free market and free trade is the best scenario to advance the human well-being. This framework promoted the maximization of the individual entrepreneurial skills as the path to liberalization. Competition among individuals, privatization of national assets and private property rights was essential in this model as it still is today.

As a consequence, Canada, the U.S. and Mexico signed the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1994. This agreement set up a free trade area among these three countries. Since then the Mexican economic growth has been tied to the consumer market in the U.S. (Cypher and Delgado 2010). NAFTA opened Mexico to direct foreign investments coming form the U.S. NAFTA proponents describe the model as a "win-win" situation that would be beneficial for the economic growth of the three countries. Nonetheless, far from achieving this goal, the Mexican economy has been stagnant. It has only grown at an average rate of 0.9% (per capita) from 1994 to 2013 under NAFTA (Weisbrot, Lefebvre and Sammut 2014).

Moreover, in 2013 Mexico ranked 18th on average annual economic growth out of 20 Latin American countries from 1994 to 2013 (Weisbrot et al 2014). In addition, NAFTA had a particular negative impact on agricultural employment, producing a net loss of 1.9 million jobs. Full time jobs have decreased as well. According to INEGI (2015) out of the total of employed population 57.9% of employees are employed in informal jobs. This means their jobs do not offer such benefits as health care, paid vacation retirement plans, etc. Moreover, 63.5% of the employed earned less than $14.13 USD a day. The minimum wage in Mexico is $70.10 pesos ($4.71 USD)1 for an 8-hour day of labor. These numbers

[1] Exchange rate in February 2015 1US dollars =14.88 Mexican pesos

demonstrate that the neoliberal policies adopted by Mexico since the mid 90s have maintained economic stagnation.

Method and Theoretical Framework

One of the purposes of this paper is to examine the effects of the drug war policy from a postcolonial and feminist perspective, with a focus on how this strategy has impacted vulnerable women. In order to display how criminal organizations have targeted women I examine through different media sources, government documents and non-governmental organizations' reports the situation of violence that Mexico faces. I assert that due to the drug war has not decreased the consumption of drugs in the US cartels have become more powerful and now they have expanded their illicit activities.

In addition, this essay places Mexico in its relation with the US-led War on Drugs In Latin America. Thus, the purpose is to present a broader picture of the elements that have led Mexico to reach its current condition. Having more research on the key factors that have contributed to the expansion of drug trafficking will serve to design policies that effectively battle the illegal drug market. I acknowledge the postcolonial framework serves to read social issues taking into account power dynamics among international relations. Thus, let me clarify in what sense it is used the postcolonial and feminist perspective.

Postcolonial and Feminist Approaches

Much of the history of colonialism is fraught with Western domination (Narayan 1997). Historically, colonizers became the ruling class, while the colonized were left powerless with little to no autonomy. Presently, few countries still live under a situation of colonization, or, as the United nations defines them, non-self-governing territories. (UN 2015) Many countries, such as the U.S., England, France, Spain, Belgium and the Netherlands acquired and maintained colonies because of needed natural resources or strategic military location. In effect, they exploited the resources of their colonies and helped accumulate wealth for the upper classes. At some point in their history, colonies were granted independence but were unable to maintain a viable economy for various reasons, one of which was the fact that their resources had been taken from them. A negative effect of years of colonization followed by independence was that the newly independent countries became economically dependent. (Fanon, 2004).

A closer look at the relationship between colonial and postcolonial approaches encourages an examination of social phenomena taking into account the asymmetric power relations between the ruling class and the powerless people. In doing this, one needs to focus on the dynamic of international relations of nation-states and the relations of power within the states. Since the West is presented as a model of the natural way of life, its values are widespread worldwide. In addition, colonialism is also about the history of the creation of racial distinctions and oppressed populations (Narayan 1997). Hierarchy was set by the colonizer when the colonizer considered the colonized as inferior. Chandra Mohanty (2003) asserts that the colonial discourse defines the colonized people as incapable of self-governing and thus the colonial rule creates and "ideal imperial agent [that] embodie[s] authority, discipline, fidelity, devotion, [and] fortitude" (p.59). Hence, white men are seen as naturally born to rule. Race, ethnicity, sexuality, and class display the difference between the powerful, the colonizer, and the powerless, the colonized.

Some feminists have approached gender issues from postcolonial perspectives. Feminist theory centers on gender analysis. It addresses how women are oppressed because they are women. Feminist and postcolonial perspectives together focus on the "various ways in which women from different culture, ethnicities, races, and classes experience patriarchy and oppression" (Tong 2013 :231). In order to grasp how women are oppressed is important to pay attention to all the particular ways in which women from different cultures experience oppression. This is called intersectionality. Intersectionality encompasses the intersections of race, sex, gender, age, ethnicity, nationality and citizenship that together cause the oppression of women. As Patricia Hill Collins (2000) puts it "oppression cannot be reduced to one fundamental type and oppressions work together in producing injustice" (p.18). In developing countries injustice is seen as the result of inappropriate domestic policies. Nonetheless, in a global world ruled by capitalism, domestic policies are driven by imperialists' interests.

The Mexican government adopted the neoliberal model driven by the West, which has increased income inequality within the country. The literature that presents Mexico as a failed state (Correa-Cabrera 2013, Grayson 2011) asserts that the increase of drug trade in Mexico is explained in terms of corruption and failed policies of the Mexican state. On the contrary, I argue that the violence which has exploded exponentially in Mexico is the result of the mistaken international policies of drug prohibition as well as the failure of the wealthiest countries to decrease the consumption of illicit drugs. In a hierarchical relation

where the colonizer, or imperialist, is superior to the colonized, it is better that developing countries pay the social costs that policies of prohibition produce. Today Mexico suffers the consequences the drug trade produces. Interestingly this drug trade is possible mainly due to a foreign demand of drugs. Mexico did not strengthen drug cartels by itself. Thus, it is essential to focus on the dynamics of Mexico and the U.S. The following section presents an analysis on how the US-led drug war is a new instrument of colonial practice.

The drug war as a colonial practice

Mexican economy has been stagnant under the neoliberal model. As a developing country heavily reliant on the U.S. market, Mexico's sovereignty can be questioned. Some authors claim that the U.S. foreign drug policies have had negative effects for the consolidation of democracy in Mexico, and that Mexico and the U.S. were able to have a military relation due to the drug war (Francis and Mauser 2011; Freeman and Sierra 2005). Moreover, despite knowing the human rights violations and torture cases the Mexican police have committed, the U.S. continues to support the Mexican drug war and continues to train some Mexican officials (Chew 2014).

It is also suggested the military relationship these countries have, serves to keep NAFTA secure from the menace of popular mobilization (Mercille 2014; Morton 2012). Thus, in this way the U.S. maintains a sort of military intervention in Mexico. In case Mexican social movements escalated to violent riots throughout the country causing instability, the army backed by the U.S. will have the means to easily deter these riots. One historical example is, during the late 70s the U.S. knew about the corrupted practices within the intelligence units towards drug traffickers. However, the U.S. remained silence because these units were also fighting communists and left wing guerrillas in what was known as the 'dirty war' (Freeman and Sierra 2005). Therefore, it appears that during the cold war, the U.S. was more concerned in combatting Communists than drug traffickers. This may explain why the U.S. continues to support a Mexican strategy that is not succeeding in dismantling drug cartels.

Cooperation between the U.S. and Mexico to fight drug trafficking has been going on for decades. However, Mexico strongly felt the impacts of such cooperation after 2006 when violence in the country spiked at unprecedented levels. It became apparent that cartels were gaining strength and an increased power to corrupt the justice system, politicians and public servants (Hernández 2010; Mercille 2014; Ravelo 2013). It is known

that various members from the Revolutionary Institutional Party (PRI), the party that has mainly ruled Mexico since the 30s, has connections with drug kingpins. Bruce Bagley (2013) documents that the PRI "developed almost tributary relations" with drug cartels (p.114). Hence, in terms of battling organized crime, a strategy that does not account for undermining corruption within the state is doomed to failure. The support the U.S. offers to Mexico does not include a clearly defined strategy against corruption and corrupted high profile state officials.

The past decades in Mexican history have demonstrated that cartels are quite capable of co-opting officials at all levels, no matter how many new special anti-drug units appear. Following are some historical examples of this. In 1985, after the assassination of a DEA agent, Enrique Camarena, by a drug cartel, the Mexican government disbanded the Dirección Federal de Seguridad (Department of Federal Security) because of the connections some of its members had with drug traffickers. Later, under U.S. pressure, Mexico created special units to dismantled cartels. In 1988, it created the Instituto Nacional para el Combate a las drogas (National Institute to Combat Drug). This institute was dissolved under allegations that some of its members were part of the Juárez cartel narco payroll. It was replaced by the Fiscalía Especial para Atención a Delitos contra la Salud (Special Prosecutors for Crime Against Health). This unit of special prosecutors was subsequently replaced by the Agencia Federal de Investigación AFI (Federal Investigation Agency) in 2003, because it was discovered its members were extorting drug traffickers (Freeman and Sierra 2005). Another case of corruption involved the AFI, which was supposed to be a more specialized police unit for dealing with drug trafficking occurred. Thus, the AFI was disbanded in 2009. The current police unit specializing in drug trafficking is the Policia Federal Ministerial (Ministerial Federal Police).

It is clear that drug policies have had devastating outcomes. However, the government still maintains the prohibition strategy instead of moving towards more comprehensive reforms. Meanwhile, corrupted officials continue unabated, the cartels' finances remain untouched, and the justice system remains un-reformed, current drug war policies will not succeed in eradicating the cartels and the drug problem. Thus, it is possible to conclude the U.S. has being using the drug war as a colonial practice that serves to intervene politically and militarily in Latin America.

Both the U.S. and Mexican government need to reevaluate the drug strategy and adopt a strategy that considers drug trade an issue of human security instead of national

security. Edgardo Buscaglia (2013) recommends using the human security approach proposed by the United Nations Development Program in 1994 in order to decrease organized crime. This approach centers the efforts in the individual well-being and not the state and its territory as the national security approach does.

Buscaglia also points out that Mexican politicians have not had the political will to fight organized crime. The main reason for this is that the ruling classes seem to enjoy an impunity from prosecution that stifles the will of anyone wishing to fight or expose them. Although Mexico is a democracy, it is an "elitist democracy" (Meyer 2013). In other words, the citizens elect their political officials. However, citizens' votes count only when the competing forces have similar agendas, as in the case of the 2000 presidential election when the PRI allowed the Patido Acción Nacional (National Action Party) PAN presidential candidate Vicente Fox to take office. The 2006 PRI presidential candidate Roberto Madrazo claimed that former President Ernesto Zedillo (1994-2000) set up an agreement with the PAN and Vicente Fox to allow a peaceful succession in 2000 (Garrido 2008). This was not the first time that the Mexican people voted a party other than the PRI. Documentation exists that points to electoral fraud in the 1988 elections (Fish 2005). It is believed that Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas from the National Democratic Front NDF won the election. However, suspiciously, when the votes were counted and the NDF was winning, the system shut down suddenly. Later the PRI candidate was announced winner.

Other suspicions of fraud in presidential elections existed in 2006. Although some feel that the 2006 election had inconsistences that did not constitute fraud (Aparicio 2009), others felt that the 2006 election was clearly a fraud (Diaz-Polanco 2012). Whether the 2006 election was a fraud or not, it was clear that the Mexican state supported the PAN candidate, Felipe Calderon at the time. Moreover, the Fox administration sought to derail the leftist leader Andrés Manuel López Obrador with several strategies such as corruption scandals, impeachment and more, even before he announced he was running for president (Meyer 2013).

These examples demonstrate that impunity is not unique to the drug war in Mexico, but Mexican political figures have been empowered by impunity to keep their hold on power in ways that are highly suspect. Hence, the question is, how authentic is a drug strategy that was launched by a president who achieved the presidency because weak democratic institutions legitimated his winning in 2006. In other words, why would Felipe Calderon be interested in battling corruption and strengthening institutions when he

himself benefited from corruption and weak institutions to achieve the presidency? In order to battle drug cartels from the perspective of prohibition it is necessary to undermine corruption, strengthen institutions and follow the rule of law. If the rule of law had been present in 2006, the results of the 2006 election would have been negated due to abundant evidence that pointed to fraud (Diaz Polanco 2012).

Drug war impact on women

As mentioned previously, the Mexican policy started in 2006 of direct confrontation between the state and drug cartels caused drug cartels to venture into other criminal activities in order to increase their power. Among these criminal activities were kidnappings and human trafficking. Human trafficking and kidnappings struck women, especially poor women, with severity.

The Global Report of Trafficking in Persons reports that women and children are more vulnerable than adult males to become victims of human trafficking. 75% to 80% of trafficking victims are women (UNODC, 2012). Human trafficking is considered a contemporary form of slavery because people are exploited by forcing them to work against their will. Although the work may be some form of labor, it is also sex. In the case of sex, women are more likely to be sexually exploited than men. The Regional Coalition Against Trafficking in Women and Girls in Latin America and the Caribbean (CATWLAC) (2012) stresses that it is difficult to obtain accurate statistics of this form of slavery. However, they assert that in Mexico, trafficking in women for sex is one of the activities of drug cartels. Besides sexual slavery, CATWLAC asserts that drug cartels forced women to become, drug couriers, watchers or lookouts, and assassins.

Most of the victims of human trafficking in Mexico are Guatemalans (UNODC 2012). This follows the general pattern that the UNODC report describes. That is, the victims come from poorer countries and end up in wealthier neighboring countries. Thus, in Mexico, Central American migrants are recruited for this trafficking networks operated by drug cartels. The U.S. Department of State Trafficking in Persons Report (2014) has confirmed that organized criminal groups have forced migrants to work in the production, transportation and sale of drugs. It is estimated that at least 47 Mexican criminal organizations are in the business of trafficking in persons (Flores 2014). The profit to the drug cartels from human trafficking in 2012 was $10 billion (Cota 2013).

Due to its border with the U.S., Mexico is a country of transit for migrants coming from Central America or other parts of the world. It is estimated that hundreds of thousands of undocumented migrants transit Mexico to reach the U.S. every year (Vogt 2013). However, there is not accurate data on the exact number of migrants transiting Mexico without a visa. Undocumented migrants seek to hide from immigration authorities and thus are not registered on their entrance into Mexico. The most common transportation used by undocumented migrants is the freight train. Because of the abuses suffered by undocumented migrants who use this form of transportation, the train has been given the name, La Bestia (The Beast.)

Women who use La Bestia as their mode of transportation to reach the U.S. are usually raped or abducted for the purpose of being exploited sexually. Amnesty International (2010) estimates that out of the total of undocumented migrants going through Mexico via the freight train, one fifth are women and young girls. Moreover, human trafficking networks capture six out of every ten female migrants (UNODC 2014b). Amnesty International and media have documented life stories of women who have being sexually assaulted in their journey through Mexico (Amnesty International 2012; Mariscal 2011; Mariscal 2014).

Andrea Smith (2005) claims that women who are considered "dirty" are labeled as "rapable." Smith points out that sexual abuse of native women, prostitutes and migrant women crossing the U.S. – Mexican border are rarely prosecuted. Thus, poor women are targeted as "rapable." Undocumented migrants are poor people with few opportunities in their countries of residence. They reside at the bottom of the socio-economic ladder. Therefore, they become even more vulnerable to state abuses or trafficking gangs while they are moving through countries that do not guarantee their rights as in the case of Mexico.

Feminists have warned about the sexual objectification of women and have argued that male dominance is sexual. Catharine MacKinnon (1989) asserts "all women live all the time under the shadow of the threat of sexual abuse" (p.149). Thus, when social conditions become more dangerous the intersection of gender, nationality, race and class turn women into an easy target for organized crime. Drug cartels find it easier to harass people who are invisible for the state.

One of the main reasons Mexico is not capable of responding effectively against organized crime is impunity. The UNODC National Diagnosis of Trafficking in Persons Mexico (2014) reports that in Mexico many crimes are not reported to police because people are afraid of organized crime intimidation and revenge. Impunity at every level of the Mexican political hierarchy and intimidation from cartels are quite effective at stopping people from reporting crime. This report highlights that most of the human trafficking cases reported in Mexico come from states with less presence of crime related to drug cartels. Therefore, if crime is ignored, strategies and interventions to end such activities become non-existent. This is beneficial for criminal organizations.

Corruption within the police departments also fosters people mistrust in the judicial system. Indeed, corruption creates weaker institutions. Thus, this environment of impunity where judicial institutions do not ensure citizens safety breeds more crime. One example is the number of femicides –femicide refers to homicide of women– that have occurred in Mexico in the past decade. As violence spiked throughout the country femicides have spiked as well. Since 2006, femicides rose 40%. It is estimated 6.4 women are murdered in Mexico everyday; just in 2010 there were 2 335 femicides. The northern state of Chihuahua has a femicide rate of 34.73 per 100,000 people. In this state the femicide rate rose 877% from 2006 to 2010 (UN women 2012).

It is also noteworthy that in some cases women just disappear and their bodies are never found. During Calderon's administration 26,121 people went missing (Torres 2013). Out of this total women account for 6,385. Missing women are usually younger than missing men. The average age of the female victims is 21 years old while disappeared men average age is 29 years old (Merino, Zarkin and Fierro 2015)–however, one needs to be cautious with these numbers because they change depending on the source.

Women have also joined to cartels voluntary. However, they are more likely than men to be imprisoned for drug offenses. 80% of women in prisons is due to drug crimes, compare to 57.6% of men (Turkewitz 2014). The rate of women incarcerated rose 400% between 2007 and 2011. Women who join the cartels are usually poor. Some of them decided just to transport a pack of drugs in order to get some money to feed their families and they got caught (Turkewitz 2014).

In short, the Mexican case demonstrates that the consequences of the drug war are gendered, and race and class also play a role on who is more likely to become the target of

collateral damages. The Mexican state is sunk in an environment of impunity, which makes women and girls more vulnerable to become the target of murder and sexual crimes or be recruited to serve as mules or scapegoats.

Concluding remarks

Social inequalities, economic policies, and lack of policies to undermine corruption are part of the reason why Mexican drug trafficking has not decreased. This essay attempted to examine the Mexican drug war strategy from a postcolonial and feminist perspective. In so doing, it was highlighted that the Mexican drug trade supplies 16% percent of Americans. In addition, Mexico was examined in relation to the U.S.-led war on drugs in Latin America and its economic dependency on the U.S. consumption. It was also documented how NAFTA has maintained Mexican economy stagnant leaving many Mexicans with few job opportunities other than joining the drug cartels.

Through a feminist postcolonial lens this paper highlights that the U.S.-led drug war in Mexico is a new mode of colonial practice that affects people differently according to the intersection of their sex, gender, race and class. Consequently, the collateral damages of the drug war are gendered. The impacts have struck women differently from men. The femicide rate in Mexico rose 40% since 2007. Moreover, women have become more vulnerable to become the target of rape, kidnapping and human trafficking. And even though men engage more often with drug cartels women are more likely to go to jail for drug offenses.

Despite the consumption of drugs has not decreased in North America, the U.S. and Mexican governments perpetuate the status quo and do not seem to undertake a different path from prohibition policies. Perhaps this is because ultimately the drug war serves as a vehicle to maintain some sort of control politically and militarily in Latin America. Hence, as researchers it is our duty to properly document the effects of the U.S. led War on Drugs on Mexico.

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Familia, trabajo y sociedad en el proceso de reintegración de mujeres desmovilizadas

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Resumen

Este artículo es el resultado de la investigación realizada para mi trabajo de grado presentado para optar al título de Politóloga. El objetivo es explorar el estado del proceso de reintegración individual de mujeres, centrándose en la fase de reintegración económica y social, identificando sus dificultades y límites para dar algunas recomendaciones a partir de las experiencias de cinco mujeres desmovilizadas, dos funcionarias de la Agencia Colombiana para la Reintegración y una mujer dedicada a emplear a desmovilizados. Los principales hallazgos de esta investigación se clasificaron en tres dimensiones. En la dimensión personal se hace referencia a las barreras que impone la sociedad civil para el proceso de reintegración social de las desmovilizadas. En la dimensión productiva se identifican las dificultades que tienen en su proceso de reintegración económica. Finalmente, en la dimensión familiar se analiza la participación de sus hijos y sus familias en el proceso de reintegración.

Palabras clave: Conflicto armado; Desmovilización; Mujer; Proceso de paz; Reinserción; Reintegración.

Abstract

This article is the result of a research developed for a dissertation paper presented to obtain a degree on Political Science. Its objective is exploring the state of the process of individual reintegration of women, focusing on the economic and social reintegration phase, identifying its difficulties and limits, to provide some recommendations through the experiences of five demobilized women, two employees of the Colombian Reintegration Agency (Agencia Colombiana para la Reintegración), and a woman that employs demobilized people. The main findings of this research paper were classified in three dimensions. In the personal dimension, we allude to the barriers imposed by civil society for the social reintegration process of demobilized women. The productive dimension evidences difficulties for economic reintegration. Finally, the familiar dimension analyzes the participation of their children and their families in the reintegration process.

Key words: Armed conflict; demobilization; women; peace process; reinsertion; reintegration.

Donde haya un árbol que plantar, plántalo tú;
Donde haya un error que enmendar, enmiéndalo tú;
Donde haya un esfuerzo que todos esquivan, acéptalo tú.
Sé el que aparta la piedra del camino, el odio entre los corazones y las dificultades del problema.

El placer de servir, Gabriela Mistral

Introducción

Este artículo es el resultado de la investigación realizada para mi trabajo de grado presentado para optar al título de Politóloga. La cual se realizó con el objetivo de explorar el estado del proceso de reintegración individual de mujeres, centrándose en la fase de reintegración económica y social, identificando las dificultades y límites durante estas fases, para dar algunas recomendaciones a los actores implicados en el proceso. Esta investigación se llevó a cabo durante el segundo semestre del año 2014 y el primer semestre del año 2015. Es un trabajo exploratorio de tipo aproximativo que me permitió hacer un análisis retrospectivo de situaciones particulares basadas en el género con el objetivo de proponer ideas de alcance nacional para la construcción de una sociedad reconciliada en el marco de un escenario postconflicto, dando así una visión general sobre la situación de mujeres desmovilizadas en proceso de reintegración.

Los instrumentos utilizados para la investigación fueron, por un lado, la realización de entrevistas a cinco mujeres desmovilizadas que se encuentran en proceso de reintegración, a dos funcionarias de la Agencia Colombiana para la Reintegración (ACR) y una mujer dedicada a emplear y buscar oportunidades para desmovilizados. Por otro lado, se aplicaron 100 encuestas para conocer la percepción de la sociedad respecto al conflicto armado y el proceso de DDR, las cuales fueron posteriormente ingresadas al sistema SPSS, generando tablas de análisis. La importancia de esta investigación radica en identificar los límites que puedan estar infringiendo la efectividad en el proceso de reintegración de mujeres, dado que en la efectividad del mismo está el éxito y la prolongación de un estado de paz en la sociedad colombiana.

Los principales hallazgos de esta investigación son presentados en tres dimensiones. La primera de ellas es la dimensión familiar, en la cual se analiza la participación de sus familias y, sobre todo, sus hijos en el proceso de reintegración, teniendo suma importancia porque en los casos entrevistados, estos últimos son la razón de su desmovilización. La segunda, es la dimensión productiva, en la cual se identifican las dificultades que tienen en

su proceso de reintegración económica, especialmente por la negativa de la sociedad para emplearlos, evidente también en las encuestas aplicadas. Por último, la dimensión personal, en la cual se hace referencia a las barreras que impone la sociedad civil para el proceso de reintegración social de las desmovilizadas, lo cual limita el desarrollo de sus proyectos de vida dentro de la legalidad y en comunidad.

Estos dos métodos me permitieron conocer de primera mano las opiniones y experiencias tanto de los encuestados como de las entrevistadas. De manera que pudiera relacionar las experiencias de reintegración social obtenidas durante las entrevistas a mujeres en proceso de reintegración, con los resultados obtenidos de la realización de las encuestas, para identificar contradicciones en las opiniones y límites para el proceso de reintegración efectiva de las mujeres desmovilizadas. Tomé la decisión de aplicar estos dos métodos de recolección de datos porque las encuestas me permiten interpretar las dificultades que dentro de la opinión pública ponen límites al proceso de reintegración, las cuales se identificaron en las entrevistas realizadas a mujeres desmovilizadas.

Así, la pregunta de investigación es ¿Cómo reintegrar a las mujeres para vivir en autonomía para construir su proyecto de vida, generando oportunidades para el desarrollo de sus capacidades y, no dentro de los roles tradicionales que se les ha impuesto?

Procesos de Desarme, Desmovilización y Reintegración DDR

Ball y Van de Goor (2006: 4) definen el proceso de desarme, desmovilización y reintegración como un proceso de desmilitarización de grupos armados controlando y reduciendo la posesión y utilización de armas, desarticulación de grupos armados no estatales, reducción del tamaño del servicio de seguridad del Estado y ayudando a los excombatientes en su proceso de reintegración a la vida civil. Los autores reconocen el carácter no lineal o secuencial de ocurrencia de los elementos del proceso dado que puede variar de acuerdo a las características de cada país y de cada acuerdo de paz.

Desarme

Es el proceso de entrega, documentación, control y retención de armas y todo tipo de municiones que estén en poder de los combatientes y, en otros casos, de la población civil (Naciones Unidas, 2001: 25). Este proceso no implica simplemente apartarse físicamente de ellas, sino que además, sugiere un proceso en el que, quien se desarma, entienda lo que significa dejarlas completamente, es decir, el arma supone poder y dejarlas

supondría dejar de tener ese poder del que gozaban y con el que subyugaban a la población (Observatorio de Desarme, Desmovilización y Reintegración, 2010: 5).

Para Farr (2002: 20), el éxito del desarme puede encontrarse en las circunstancias del conflicto, en la garantía del desarme por parte del grupo armado y en el grado en que las armas se han convertido en la manera de subsistir de los integrantes del grupo. Finalmente, Zirion (2012: 26) señala que aunque el desarme se centre principalmente en los combatientes dado que los grupos armados entregaran las armas que consideren conveniente, el proceso debe ir de la mano con otras estrategias de desarme más comprehensivas que busquen transformaciones sociales profundas en trabajo conjunto con toda la sociedad.

Desmovilización

De acuerdo a la definición de las Naciones Unidas (2001: 25), la desmovilización es la acción de abandono de la lógica de la guerra por parte de combatientes activos de los grupos armados. Se da de una manera oficial y controlada y puede extenderse desde el agrupamiento de éstos en centros temporales, hasta su agrupamiento en cetros habilitados y especializados para ello (Naciones Unidas, 2001: 25). Este elemento también implica apartarse de los vínculos ideológicos e identitarios que supone estar dentro de la guerra y dentro de un grupo armando determinado (Observatorio de Desarme, Desmovilización y Reintegración, 2010: 6).

Zirion (2012) señala que para llevar a cabo este proceso, los excombatientes son llevados y agrupados en zonas destinadas para tal fin durante un tiempo determinado para la realización de las actividades previstas, entre ellas: la identificación y censo de los excombatientes y verificar el cumplimiento de los criterios establecidos que le permitan al desmovilizado participar en el proceso; se satisfacen necesidades básicas (alimentación, ropa, atención sanitaria, entre otras) y se evalúa el estado físico y psicológico de los excombatientes; se realizan también actividades de orientación sobre sus necesidades y expectativas, se realiza un perfil sociolaboral, las posibilidades de reintegración que incluye educación, seguridad, empleo, formación laboral, etc.; Se hace entrega de un certificado de desmovilización que además lo avala para continuar el proceso de DDR; por último, en algunos casos, de acuerdo con el autor, se traslada a su lugar de origen o a la nueva comunidad receptora (Zirion, 2012: 27-28).

Reinserción

La reinserción supone la asistencia ofrecida por parte del Estado al desmovilizado en el cubrimiento de sus necesidades básicas y las de su familia, donde se incluyen prestaciones de seguridad, ropa, alimentos, servicios de salud, capacitación, empleo y educación a corto plazo, siendo esta, una ayuda provisional previa al proceso de reintegración (Naciones Unidas, 2014: 25).

Reintegración

Entre los años 2003 y 2006 funcionó en Colombia el Programa para la Reincorporación de la Vida Civil (Giraldo, 2010: 41), el cual estaba adscrito al Ministerio de Interior y de Justicia, buscando reformar y preparar a las personas desmovilizadas, a través de atención psicosocial, apoyo económico, capacitación académica y acceso al sistema nacional de salud (Agencia Colombiana para la Reintegración, s.f.). De acuerdo con Giraldo (2010), en el Plan Nacional de Desarrollo 2006-2010 "Estado comunitario: desarrollo para todos", se evidenció por primera vez la necesidad de "reintegrar a cambio de reinsertar", de manera que abrió las puertas para dar una nueva visión y desarrollar nuevos objetivos para el tratamiento de los desmovilizados y la manera como éstos alcanzan la reincorporación a la sociedad civil (Giraldo, 2010: 41), fue así como en el año 2006, se expidió el Decreto 3043 mediante el cual se creó la Alta Consejería para la Reintegración Social y Económica de personas y grupos alzados en armas, la cual iría a asumir todas las funciones del PRVC (Giraldo, 2010: 41).

Posteriormente, en el año 2011 fue creada la Agencia Colombiana para la Reintegración (ACR), como una Unidad Administrativa Especial -adscrita al Departamento Administrativo de la Presidencia de la República (DAPRE)-, por medio del Decreto 4138 (Agencia Colombiana para la Reintegración, s.f.). La entidad cuenta con mayor autonomía administrativa, financiera y presupuestal, y con una sólida estructura organizacional y actualmente es la encargada de fortalecer la implementación de la Política de Reintegración (Agencia Colombiana para la Reintegración, s.f.).

A diferencia del proceso de reinserción, la reintegración, es un proceso social y económico a largo plazo que tiene lugar como primera medida, en las comunidades locales (Naciones Unidas, 2001: 25), de manera que supone abandonar por completo las lógicas de la guerra y cualquier adscripción a este tipo de acciones. Por otra parte, es quizá, el paso más complejo en el retorno a la sociedad civil, porque tiene ciertas dificultades y asuntos

mayormente complejos que en muchas ocasiones se convierte en una barrera para que los procesos de reintegración se lleven a cabo plenamente y tales dificultades pueden favorecer el retorno de los desmovilizados a la ilegalidad y la violencia (Observatorio de Desarme, Desmovilización y Reintegración, 2010: 6).

Caramés (s.f) señala la reintegración basada en el excombatiente y la basada en la comunidad como los dos enfoques del proceso de reintegración. El primer enfoque centra sus acciones en el individuo, supone la necesidad de desarrollar soluciones individuales de reintegración a largo plazo, esencialmente siguiendo el modelo clásico de los programas de DDR presentado por las Naciones Unidas (2001). Fisas (2011) señala que en este enfoque se ofrecen beneficios jurídicos, sociales, laborales y educativos al desmovilizado. La reintegración comunitaria, por su parte, se ha entendido como una alternativa o complemento al enfoque centrado en el excombatiente. El objetivo principal es dar a las comunidades los instrumentos para apoyar el proceso de reintegración de desmovilizados orientado a la reconciliación para evitar la discriminación y estigmatización de los desmovilizados. Además es importante, de acuerdo con el autor, que el excombatiente reciba formación profesional de acuerdo a las necesidades y el contexto de la comunidad receptora para que ambas partes resulten beneficiadas del proceso de reintegración (Fisas, 2011: 12).

Zirion (2012) describe cuatro tipos de reintegración –económica, social, política y psicológica–, por ser un proceso de larga duración y multidimensional que requiere del apoyo de sus familias y de la comunidad receptora, suponiendo además un proceso de reconciliación (Zirion, 2012: 30).

Precisamente es en la reintegración económica y social donde se centra la investigación porque supone la aceptación de los desmovilizados en la comunidad permitiéndoles el desarrollo de sus proyectos de vida individual, significando un nivel mayor de aceptación y compromiso por parte de la sociedad receptora.

Reintegración económica

El riesgo de que los desmovilizados abandonen el programa y retomen las armas porque su nueva condición civil no le ofrece mejores condiciones de vida a la que tenía en el grupo armado, se convierte así en una prioridad de los procesos de DDR. De acuerdo con el autor, los medios ofrecidos para garantizar una efectiva reintegración económica, entre otros, son: la educación, formación profesional, becas, servicios de inserción laboral,

fomento de la creación de microempresas y pequeños negocios, microcréditos, entrega de tierras, acceso preferente a viviendas, búsqueda de empleo, etc.

Reintegración social

Este proceso puede ser difícil para las personas desmovilizadas por los años vividos al interior de una estructura rígida, jerárquica, patriarcal y violenta, de la misma manera que para las comunidades receptoras, aceptarlos. Pero, el papel de esta última es fundamental en este componente del DDR porque pueden facilitar, dificultar o rechazar definitivamente la reintegración de los desmovilizados. Si los desmovilizados no son bien recibidos o perciben que no lo serán, puede impulsarse el regreso a los grupos armados o pueden alejarse de sus comunidades de origen, de manera que terminan alejándose nuevamente de sus familias, precisamente evitando el rechazo social y evitando dar demasiadas explicaciones sobre su pasado, lo que lleva a que las ciudades cada vez más se conviertan en las zonas de acogida de los desmovilizados (Zirion, 2012: 33).

Reintegración política

Durante el proceso de reintegración a la vida civil, los desmovilizados deben participar de manera activa en los procesos de toma de decisiones en los diferentes ámbitos de poder, de manera que logren reconstruirse como ciudadanos responsables, activos y pacíficos preocupados por las necesidades y los intereses de las sociedades a las que pertenecen (Zirion, 2012: 34)

Reintegración psicológica

Es un proceso complejo y de largo plazo que busca superar el comportamiento violento y arraigado que cada desmovilizado ha tenido durante sus años en el conflicto (Zirion, 2012: 35). El autor reconoce la complejidad del proceso porque durante el conflicto, los desmovilizados han estado del lado de acciones violentas como secuestros, torturas, violaciones, asesinatos, etc., que han dejado profundas huellas psicológicas (Zirion, 2012:35). Por otra parte, asegura el autor que puede ocurrir que debido a la edad de los desmovilizados o a la prolongación del conflicto, haya quienes no tienen conocimiento ni experiencia en formas de vida pacíficas (Zirion, 2012:35).

Mujeres en proceso de reintegración y participación de la sociedad civil

Luego de aclarar los conceptos y las implicaciones del proceso de DDR, me permito retomar las entrevistas realizadas como parte de la metodología de investigación, con lo cual identifico las principales dificultades para el proceso de reintegración. Recordando el carácter exploratorio de esta investigación, a partir de las historias de vida de cada una, concluyo sin ánimos de generalizar.

A continuación presento las características básicas de identificación de las mujeres entrevistadas. Por un lado, entrevisté a tres mujeres que no hicieron ni hacen parte de grupos armados ilegales, pero que se han dedicado a trabajar de diferentes maneras en el proceso de reintegración de desmovilizados: Sandra Gutiérrez, quien emplea a personas desmovilizadas y a Diana Sarria y Rocío Gutiérrez, funcionarias de la ACR Valle del Cauca:

Nombre	Lugar de trabajo	Cargo	Ciudad
Sandra Gutiérrez	Jegar Construcciones S.A.S	Recursos Humanos	Villavicencio
Diana Sarria	Agencia Colombiana para la Reintegración	Reintegradora profesional	Cali
Rocío Gutiérrez	Agencia Colombiana para la Reintegración	Coordinadora regional ACR Valle del Cauca	Cali

Tabla 1 – Relación personas entrevistadas

Fuente: Autora

Por otro lado, entrevisté a cinco mujeres[2] desmovilizadas en proceso de reintegración, quienes pertenecieron a las Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (AUC), a las Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) o al Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN), son mujeres que tienen entre 33 y 40 años de edad, cuya edad promedio de ingreso al grupo armado es de 19 años y quienes se desmovilizaron a una edad promedio de 28,8 años. Todas tienen entre 1 y 4 hijos y, al menos uno fue concebido mientras hacía parte de la organización:

[2] Sus nombres reales han sido cambiados por decisión de cada una.

Nombre	Grupo armado al que pertenecía	Ocupación	Edad actual	Edad de ingreso al GA	Edad de desmovili-zación	Tiempo de vincula-ción con la ACR	Lugar de origen	Lugar de residencia	Estado civil	No. de hijos
Camila	AUC	Secretaria	34 años	20 años	28 años	6 años	Villavicencio	Villavicencio	Soltera	2
Gabriela	FARC	Coordina-dora	40 años	23 años	35 años	5 años	Villavicencio	Villavicencio	Casada	1
Daniela	FARC	Ama de casa	35 años	21 años	29 años	6 años	Alcalá	Ulloa	Casada	4
Marisol	ELN	Ama de casa	33 años	16 años	26 años	7 años	Carmen de Atrado	Tuluá	Casada	2
Sandra	ELN	Auxiliar de aseo	38 años	15 años	26 años	12 años	Cauca	Cali	Casada	5

Tabla 2 – Relación mujeres en proceso de reintegración entrevistadas
Fuente: Autora

Los resultados de las entrevistas realizadas muestran que las razones por las cuales las mujeres deciden ingresar a los grupos armados ilegales varían de acuerdo al contexto de cada una. Por ejemplo Marisol, quien ingresó al ELN con un ideal de transformación social, lo hizo porque estuvo influenciada con los discursos del grupo armado, mientras que Daniela lo hizo por su gusto por la vida militar y porque creía que con las armas podría mejorar su estatus social. Por su parte, Gabriela y Sandra lo hicieron por la violencia psicológica y el maltrato físico que sufrían en sus hogares. Mientras tanto, Camila tomó esa decisión por falta de oportunidades de empleo.

En lo que respecta al proceso de desmovilización, las cinco mujeres desmovilizadas coincidieron en que la razón de esta decisión fue haberse convertido en madres y al encontrar límites para ejercer este papel, decidieron escapar. Finalmente, durante su proceso de reintegración, todas han tenido al menos una experiencia negativa.

A pesar de que el CONPES 3554 detalla y recomienda una serie de procedimientos, hay otras dimensiones que pueden incidir negativa o positivamente en el proceso de reintegración, las cuales deberían ser atendidas. Por ejemplo, las razones de desmovilización en todos los casos fueron sus hijos, lo que supone que deben ser tenidos en cuenta en el proceso; o la necesidad de educar a la sociedad en el perdón y la reconciliación para que den oportunidades a las personas en proceso de reintegración.

De acuerdo a la entrevista con Rocío Gutiérrez, el modelo de reintegración que desarrolla la ACR es un modelo basado en la reintegración de individuo que busca identificar sus necesidades y los mecanismos mediante los cuales se generen garantías de no repetición. Esta mención es necesaria para hacer énfasis en la importancia que debería tener el proceso de reintegración comunitaria en el proceso de reintegración de los desmovilizados porque es precisamente a lo que hace referencia Caicedo (2007) cuando afirma que el proceso de DDR en Colombia se ha centrado más en la persona desmovilizada que en lo que implica el hecho de reintegrarse, es decir, la entrada en el juego de un segundo actor fundamental: la comunidad receptora (Caicedo, 2007: 4). Este aporte es importante porque es precisamente la ausencia de esta participación de la comunidad lo que ha generado en la sociedad la discriminación y estigmatización no solo de las mujeres desmovilizadas sino también de los hombres que intentan reconstruir sus vidas.

De igual manera, tal como lo mencionan Herrera y González (2013) es parte fundamental la participación de la comunidad receptora en la reintegración económica de

los desmovilizados y su reincorporación a la sociedad civil. Pero además este acompañamiento y participación de la sociedad significa también la autonomía de los desmovilizados evitando la dependencia del programa de DDR (Herrera y González, 2013: 281) y además, haciendo que los desmovilizados se mantengan en la legalidad (Nussio, 2013: 9).

Otro método utilizado durante esta investigación fue la aplicación de 100 encuestas aleatoriamente, donde el único requisito para su aplicación, era ser mayor de edad. A medida que aplicaba las encuestas, ingresaba los resultados al sistema SPSS y evaluaba variables como el género, el estrato socioeconómico y la edad, de manera que hubiese diversidad en las características de las personas encuestadas para garantizar en lo posible que las respuestas no estuviesen sesgadas por alguna característica particular del encuestado. Las encuestas fueron aplicadas en las ciudades de Cali, Buenaventura, Villavicencio y Alcalá entre enero y marzo del año 2015.

Esta encuesta fue realizada con el propósito de conocer la opinión de parte sociedad colombiana sobre la participación y el compromiso que sienten frente al proceso de reintegración y la percepción que se tiene frente al conflicto armado y el proceso de paz. En búsqueda de responder a la pregunta de investigación sobre cómo reintegrar a las mujeres para vivir en autonomía para construir su proyecto de vida, generando oportunidades para el desarrollo de sus capacidades y, no dentro de los roles tradicionales que se les ha impuesto, es necesario conocer, además de las experiencias de las mujeres en proceso de reintegración, la opinión de la sociedad porque son en últimas quienes permiten o no un efectivo proceso de reintegración al generar o no oportunidades de empleo, socialización y aceptación.

Hallazgos

Los hallazgos de la investigación se centran en los testimonios recogidos y las encuestas aplicadas. Resaltando la característica exploratoria sin ánimo de generalizar, hay tres puntos en común que quiero resaltar como los hallazgos principales de este proceso investigativo en las dimensiones personal, productiva y familiar de acuerdo a las dimensiones de la reintegración atendidas por la ACR.

Estos hallazgos son básicamente las limitaciones y dificultades encontradas en el proceso de reintegración de las mujeres entrevistadas y en relación a los resultados de las encuestas, de manera que al identificarlos, objetivo general de esta investigación, pueden ser

contrarrestados, convirtiéndose en una herramienta fundamental para reintegrar efectivamente a las mujeres en autonomía y fuera de los roles que tradicionalmente se les ha impuesto.

Dimensión personal

En esta dimensión se enmarcan las relaciones entre el individuo y la sociedad. De manera que se parte del reconocimiento de la influencia del contexto social y de las características de cada individuo para la construcción de su identidad y de su proyecto de vida. Con esto, se busca el mejoramiento de la calidad de vida del individuo con su entorno.

Los hallazgos de esta dimensión están relacionarlos directamente con los resultados de las encuestas y con las experiencias de reintegración de las mujeres entrevistadas. Por un lado, la sociedad mantiene una percepción negativa sobre el proceso de reintegración, visto en el 44% de los encuestados que manifestaron no tener intenciones de participar en este proceso porque creen que esto es injusto con las víctimas y es alcahuetear sus acciones violentas. El 87% de los encuestados respondieron que no aportan al proceso, frente a un 8% que aseguró que sí aportan. Pero, ¿Cómo aportan? Las respuestas de esas ocho personas que respondieron que sí lo hacen, son realmente tres diferentes respuestas: sus oraciones, dan clases a personas relacionadas con el conflicto armado como los hijos de desmovilizados y, finalmente, la más repetida es el hecho de pagar impuestos.

Este punto es fundamental porque en mi interacción con los encuestados, logré identificar que no conocen el proceso de reintegración, desconocen la ruta, el tiempo y el compromiso que las personas en este proceso deben tener para continuar. Esto es lo que finalmente limita que la sociedad acepte y participe en el proceso de reintegración. Los encuestados reconocen ampliamente que este proceso nos compete a todos, pero sus pocas intenciones de participar limitan generar oportunidades de empleo y redes de apoyo que impacten positivamente el proceso de reintegración.

Dimensión productiva

En esta dimensión, la ACR busca generar capacidades en las personas desmovilizadas en proceso de reintegración que faciliten su integración económica para que ellos y sus familias puedan beneficiarse y disfrutar de sus derechos económicos y desarrollar

sus proyectos de vida productivos. Todo esto, de acuerdo con las capacidades, las expectativas y el entorno en el que cada uno se encuentre.

Lo que en mayor medida resalto es que la literatura y estudiosos del tema afirman que la condición de mujer y sobre todo, haber transgredido el papel que tradicionalmente se nos ha asignado, al renunciar a la maternidad o al tener un hijo en un contexto de conflicto armado, o haber desarrollado acciones antinaturales en las mujeres como participar de acciones violentas o asesinar, automáticamente disminuye las probabilidades de ser contratadas, tal como lo asegura De Watteville (2002) y Blair y Londoño (2003). Por otra parte, De Watteville (2002) hace referencia a que las mujeres en la mayoría de los casos tienen mayores posibilidades en el empleo informal por esa misma condición, pero para ella esto termina siendo ventajoso porque permite a las mujeres cumplir con todas sus obligaciones domésticas (De Watteville, 2002: 12-13), dando por sentado que son obligaciones de las mujeres, negando, de acuerdo con López (1998), oportunidades de cambio y de desarrollo personal y profesional.

En contraste a lo descrito por De Watteville (2002) y Blair y Londoño (2003), lo que encontré en este proceso investigativo es que son precisamente ellas quienes tiene mayores probabilidades que los hombres de ser contratadas, tal como lo demuestran las encuestas, en las cuales los empleadores serían más propensos a contratar a una mujer que a un hombre y, además, las razones por las cuales las mujeres entrevistadas no encontraron rápidamente oportunidades de empleo, no se debe a que son mujeres, sino a que son desmovilizadas, es decir que un hombre tendría estos mismos límites. A la pregunta de si en una situación hipotética emplearía o no a un hombre o a una mujer desmovilizada, de los 48 encuestados, el 28.94% aseguró que sí contrataría a un hombre desmovilizado, mientras que un 36.84% aseguró que sí contrataría a una mujer. Por un lado, quienes dijeron que no contrarían ni a hombres ni a mujeres, se basan especialmente en que temerían por su seguridad y la de sus intereses. Por su parte, quienes aseguraron que contratarían a alguno de los dos, lo harían por darles una segunda oportunidad, por el compromiso con el proceso de reintegración que tenemos la sociedad y porque consideran que en el perdón están las instrucciones de Dios. Hubo quienes aseguraron que preferirían contratar a mujeres que a hombres en sus empresas y la justificación que me daban era que consideran que la mujer tiene más necesidades que los hombres y porque consideran que en ellas sí pueden depositar su confianza.

Claro, esto no supone, ni me permite afirmar que no haya discriminación por género en los argumentos que tendrían otros empleadores para no contratar a mujeres desmovilizadas. A lo que me refiero, es que de acuerdo a las fuentes consultadas y a los resultados obtenidos de este proceso investigativo, la dificultad de las mujeres de emplearse viene de su condición como desmovilizada y de los límites que esto supone y no precisamente, de su condición de ser mujer.

Sandra Gutiérrez (2015), asegura que el mayor límite que ha tenido en el desarrollo de su iniciativa es a nivel de oportunidades laborales porque las empresas tienden a ser desconfiadas para la contratación de personas desmovilizadas, pero además se suma la falta de capacitación y formación profesional en las áreas demandadas ellas.

En la literatura consultada no se aborda claramente los límites que tiene la mujer en su proceso de reintegración económica dadas las labores domésticas y cuidadoras que se les han impuesto, tal como lo menciona López (1998), además de su responsabilidad como proveedoras de su familia y que además cuentan con la necesidad de educarse, tareas que finalmente terminan oponiéndose por cuestión de horarios y disponibilidad. De hecho, las fuentes internacionales consultadas como la Organización Internacional del Trabajo, el Consejo de Seguridad de las Naciones Unidas y la Corte Interamericana de Derechos Humanos, e incluso fuentes nacionales, ratifican la necesidad de igualdad de oportunidad en la generación de ingresos y empleo a las mujeres como si el único limitante para ello fuera su condición de ser mujer, pero realmente no reconocen, como lo dije anteriormente, la necesidad de enfrentar otra serie de dificultades que se presentan como la disponibilidad de tiempos y espacios para las mujeres en el cumplimiento de sus labores diarias. Fue este punto precisamente que Rocío Gutiérrez (2015) resaltó durante la entrevista, frente a las oportunidades laborales y educativas de las mujeres en proceso de reintegración, destacando que las dificultades se presentan por el tiempo del que ellas disponen, agregando también que es una tarea que está desarrollando la Agencia Colombina para la Reintegración, al buscar nuevos convenios que permitan incluir todas estas características particulares de la mujer en el proceso de su reintegración económica que le permitan tener autonomía y desarrollar sus capacidades.

Las cinco mujeres en proceso de reintegración que fueron entrevistadas tienen en común que son madres, cuatro de ellas están casadas y sólo una es soltera. De acuerdo a lo obtenido en sus testimonios que previamente han sido expuestos, se logra reconocer la sumatoria de tareas que tienen como cuidadoras del hogar pero también como sustento

económico del mismo. Por ejemplo, en el caso de Gabriela, ella manifestaba que en principio su esposo quería asignarle labores del hogar que ella consideraba que él también podía cumplir y, aunque esto no le afectaba su horario laboral, si ejercía como una presión más entre sus labores.

Dimensión familiar

En esta dimensión, se reconoce a la familia como un espacio fundamental de socialización de los participantes del proceso de reintegración. Esta dimensión se aborda a partir de la identificación de pautas de relaciones funcionales, el fortalecimiento de vínculos y la prevención de la violencia intrafamiliar, de manera que se genere un ambiente de no violencia y de convivencia familiar al interior de las familias para que se logre el reconocimiento y efectivo ejercicio de los deberes y derechos de cada uno de sus miembros en ese ámbito.

La razón que llevó a las cinco mujeres en proceso de reintegración a desmovilizarse, fueron sus hijos. Para unas, haber quedado embarazadas y no poder disfrutar de ellos como lo querían, fue su impulso, para otras, haber dejado a sus hijos para vincularse al grupo armado, fue finalmente lo que las hizo regresar nuevamente a la vida civil. Cada una fue concreta en dar esta justificación.

Sólo una de las cinco mujeres entrevistadas, Sandra, manifestó haber tenido un proceso de reintegración donde participaron sus hijos de manera activa. Las otras cuatro mujeres dijeron haber contado con límites importantes para su vinculación porque la ACR ofrecía una perfecta atención pero sin vinculación mayor de sus hijos o su familia.

Dos mujeres, Gabriela y Daniela consideran que han tenido dificultades importantes en su rol de madres, por un lado Gabriela dice que quisiera que la ACR introdujera mayor atención en este aspecto pues al interior de los grupos armados ellas no cuentan con un ejemplo de ser madres y fuera de ellos, como el caso de ella misma, quienes no cuentan con familia, no tienen el apoyo en este aspecto. Por su parte, Daniela manifestaba que tenía serias dificultades con uno de sus hijos pues estaba en una etapa de rebeldía pero que al ella acudir a sus psicólogas para encontrar apoyo en ellas, la respuesta que obtiene no es alentadora pues le dicen que a ellas no les corresponde a tender casos de este tipo.

En la literatura abordada para esta investigación, no se reconoce la necesidad de participación de la familia en el proceso de reintegración como parte fundamental de él, haciendo parte activa durante los talleres y actividades que permitan al desmovilizado ratificar la importancia de su permanencia en el proceso. Esto es importante, hablo específicamente para el caso de las mujeres entrevistadas porque fueron precisamente sus hijos la razón de desmovilización. Es decir que reconstruir esas relaciones familiares y de madre e hijo, no solamente es vital como acompañamiento psicológico, sino que significan una gran fuente de motivación para volver a ser parte de la sociedad civil, de la crianza de sus hijos, del relacionamiento con su familia, etc., que terminan por ser lo que mantiene en el tiempo y la efectividad su proceso de reintegración.

Conclusiones y recomendaciones

Con los hallazgos descritos me permito aportar a la construcción de conocimiento frente al tema de la reintegración, de manera que sea apropiado tanto por el Estado y sus principales gestores como la Agencia Colombiana para la Reintegración para fortalecer el proceso. Pero, también es un llamado a la participación por parte de la sociedad civil.

Así, de acuerdo a las entrevistas realizadas, a las encuestas aplicadas y a la bibliografía consultada, reconociendo los esfuerzos de la ACR en la aplicación de diferentes estrategias de reintegración, sobre todo, en la implementación de una estrategia de género y resaltando el carácter exploratorio de esta investigación, me permito concluir con una serie de recomendaciones a los diferentes actores inmersos en este proceso con el objetivo último de aportar al mejoramiento del proceso de reintegración de las mujeres desmovilizadas en autonomía para construir sus proyectos de vida generando oportunidades de desarrollo de sus capacidades para que reintegren fuera de esos roles tradicionales de género que se les ha impuesto.

En primera medida, es menester reconocer el esfuerzo que el actual gobierno ha realizado en el desarrollo de nuevas políticas que buscan la terminación del conflicto armado en nuestro país, lo que supone el impulso de acciones que promueven la desmovilización y la reintegración de hombres y mujeres que han hecho parte de grupos armado al margen de la ley, para que se reincorporen a la sociedad civil y mejoren su calidad de vida. Sin embargo, es necesario que el Estado, de la mano de todas sus instituciones continúe trabajando en la prevención de la vinculación de mujeres por parte de los grupos armados, pero, ya en un proceso de reintegración, se recomienda que el

Estado mejore las condiciones de vida de toda la sociedad en general de manera que, para el caso de las mujeres desmovilizadas, no regresen a la sociedad civil para vivir en las mismas condiciones o peores que antes de irse a la guerra, sino que se encuentren con un panorama distinto, con oportunidades de cambio que garanticen su permanencia en la legalidad.

También, en el proceso de reintegración, es necesario que el Estado mejore la capacitación y profesionalización de las personas en este proceso para aumentar las posibilidades de contratación por parte de las empresas, pero además, es importante que el Estado genere mayores vínculos y estímulos al sector privado para mejorar los niveles de contratación de personas desmovilizadas.

Por otra parte, es necesario que el Estado eduque y vincule a la sociedad civil en la generación de nuevas oportunidades de aceptación social a los desmovilizados. Esto lo puede lograr a través de la promoción de los programas del Estado. Me di cuenta durante la realización de la encuesta que la sociedad no tiene conocimiento de la ruta de reintegración. Es vital que la sociedad conozca esto para que se den cuenta que el estado ha desarrollado políticas importantes para mejorar la situación y garantizar un efectivo proceso de reintegración. También pude lograrse a través de la difusión experiencias exitosas de reintegración de desmovilizados.

Para continuar, reconociendo los innumerables esfuerzos de la Agencia Colombiana para la Reintegración, me permito volver sobre algunos puntos en los que hay mayor debilidad y sobre los que se pueden trabajar para mejorar el proceso de reintegración. Por un lado, es importante que las mujeres puedan acceder, en igualdad de condiciones que los hombres, a oportunidades de empleo que le permitan construir nuevas identidades distintas de las maternales y las domésticas. Esto debe ir de la mano con la flexibilidad de horarios que se ofrecen para estudio a mujeres madres, que aunque no necesariamente sean cabeza de familia, sí cuentan con limitación de horario por tema de trabajo. Durante el proceso también es importante que se tengan en cuenta la realización de actividades y talleres con las familias de los desmovilizados, siempre que sea posible, para mejorar las relaciones al interior de ellas y sobre todo, que se trabaje en conjunto en la prevención de vinculación a grupos armados o de comportamientos inadecuados a futuro.

Por otra parte, también se hace importante que la ACR difunda los casos exitosos de reintegración y los programas que se desarrollan en su interior para mejorar el

conocimiento por parte de la sociedad y así, mejorar el proceso de reintegración social de los desmovilizados.

Para terminar, quiero reiterar tres puntos a la sociedad civil que me parecen esenciales a manera de reflexión:

Por un lado quiero hacer un llamado a identificar las falencias del proceso de reintegración ahora, dado que somos un caso especial en el que ocurren desmovilizaciones sin un acuerdo de paz previamente, de manera que tenemos todas las oportunidades para mejorar las estrategias de desvinculación de los grupos armados y reintegración a la sociedad civil para que en la eventual firma de una acuerdo de paz, no nos quedemos cortos en las respuestas y logremos aplicar un proceso de reintegración efectivo que mejore las condiciones de vida de todos y sobre todo, que no dé pie para la repetición de acciones violentas de los desmovilizados y en caso de no darse una firma de un acuerdo de paz, podamos demostrar fielmente a los integrantes de los grupos armados, que es mejor estar del lado de quienes buscamos que la sociedad cuente con condiciones de vida alejadas de la violencia.

Por otro lado, quiero resaltar la necesidad de concientizar y mejorar las redes de apoyo y participación en la sociedad civil para incentivar y mejorar el proceso de desmovilización y reintegración de manera que sea un proceso exitoso y minimicen los estigmas y aumentemos las oportunidades para quienes, como dice Rocío Gutiérrez, tiene una deuda con la sociedad y deben resarcirla con acciones. Es necesario que hagamos parte del cambio, que demos nuevas oportunidades, somos nosotros como sociedad civil quienes abrimos o cerramos las puertas al cambio y cada vez que negamos una oportunidad a un desmovilizado, estamos también negándonos una oportunidad para darle fin a un conflicto armado que ha dejado tantas consecuencias negativas al país. También, se hace necesario que los empresarios, como importantes fuentes de empleo, generen mayores oportunidades laborales que garanticen independencia económica a los desmovilizados y sus familias y además, su permanencia en la legalidad.

Finalmente hago un llamado para que las nuevas generaciones aportemos con investigaciones, con ideas e iniciativas a esta labor que nos corresponde a todos. Pero además a que nos concienticemos y tratemos de concientizar a los demás de dar nuevas oportunidades, de abrir las puertas al cambio y sobre todo, de aportar con nuestra conducta diaria a la transformación que necesita nuestro país.

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