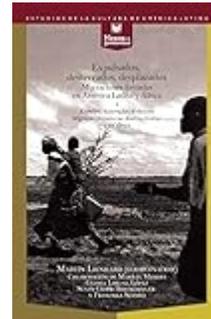


Martín Lienhard. *Expulsados, desterrados, desplazados [The Repealed, the Outlawed, and the Displaced]: Migraciones forzadas en América Latina y en África [Forced Migrations in Latin America and Africa]*. Madrid: Vervuert Verlag, 2011. 328 S. ISBN 978-84-8489-563-3; ISBN 978-3-86527-608-7.



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M. Lienhard (Hrsg.): *Expulsados, desterrados, desplazados*

This book is the result of the interdisciplinary symposium *Expulsados, Desterrados y Desplazados. Migraciones forzadas en América Latina y los países lusos-africanos* carried out at the Centro Stefano Franscini (CSF) in Monte Verità (Ascona, Italian Switzerland) in May, 2008. The text contemplates multiple relevant factors to the forced migration processes in which invariably found situations of violence and/or precariousness regarding the migrants' living conditions. However, the peculiarities revealed according to the varied contexts and their history are worth mentioning, as authors refer to them, both, in Africa and in Latin America, enabling the availability of other elements when it comes to face the complex nature of the issue.

In the introduction, Lienhard questions the usefulness and difficulty in defining categorical distinctions between deracination and other types of migration or displacement. The author points out that the displacement numbers do not faithfully reflect the individuals' urge to move based on the violence they are subject to, which, in most cases, are those who have already suffered from discrimination and exile, as is the case for ethnic minorities:

black communities, peasants, native communities, and others. Likewise, he notes the relevance of understanding that those displaced people are mostly women and children (p. 16-17). On the other hand, one of the arguments the author retrieves from the articles is related to the multicausality of deracination specially pertaining to war scenarios and extreme weather, but also to development projects such as oil exploitation, entrepreneurship, biodiversity, agricultural and mining megaprojects that are also articulated with a lack of action or absence of the State as the entity in charge of the surveillance of the citizens' rights. In the introduction, we also find the contributions by Ortega who, as a former officer of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), collects the categories created by the UNHCR to classify subjects in deracination and displacement situations. From this perspective, it poses a general scenario of the forced displacement situation in Latin America and Africa. Also in the introduction, Borges Coelho performs an interesting reflection on the province of Tete, in northeastern Mozambique, mentioning that location may be considered as a *lab* in which we may exercise the analysis and assessment of deracination (p. 37). The author

explains that, to build a broad idea of deracination, it is necessary to provide the forced migrants with a role of active subjects that sets them apart from the recurring idea of the victims.

The first part of the book, *El desplazamiento en debate* (Displacement through the lens of discussion) includes chapters related to the varied perspectives as regards the ways to understand migrating processes both, in Africa and in Latin America, from the point of view of different fields. The first article by Ávila deals with the internal and borderline diaspora issue in Equatorial Guinea after the decolonization processes. In this sense, the author states that the effects of inequality are complex, and that there would be less *silent* (p. 57) migrations if a broader state management was possible. On the other hand, Sebe Bom Meihy advocates the idea of establishing a relationship between population imbalances in terms of social inequality in Brazil and the driver of outlaw processes. According to this, the author explores the songs written by Brazilians in New York, the exit dilemmas they undergo. He calls them the *exile songs*, highlighting the idea of *saudade*, *jeito* and the perpetual love to Brazilian land (p. 72). In line with the author, we assume that music not only reflects the rhythms, but also stands as an expression of the critical reserve in the collective memory. In a third section, Ramos reviews the current hardship related to the differentiation between deracination and voluntary migration. To carry out an analysis on this matter, it addresses a critical perspective on the contributions made by Pedro Costa to the cinema in the film *Tarrafal*. In this, he explains how the state fiction clearly operates in there, along with the metropolis and the colony, allotting roles to the subjects and embody them as diasporic subjects in a fractured and dislocated space. In this regard, we also consider the essential nature of criticism the author applies to the colonial relationship in current democracies, which contribute to the consolidation of the waged labor regime within a capitalist context. The same occurs in literature, as Morales advocates a perspective which analyzes two novels related to frontiers and immigration. His analysis highlights the position of migrants's body commodization, and the role of violence towards women in the borderland displacement dynamics. In the last text on that section, Carrasco addresses the issue of the Mapuche people and the spatial mobility of native communities, and includes a historical narrative of the different times in the expulsion process. At the end he advocates a criticism to the territorialization process as a new form of uprooting.

Another section of the book is titled *desplazamiento*

y conflicto armado (Displacement and Armed Conflicts), stating the relationship based on the specific dynamics which, in turn, have peculiarities that are determining for the displacement. Therefore, González addresses the issue in the Colombian context, submitting a historical view of the conflict and posing what he calls *differentiated State involvement*, which affects in diverse ways the exercise of citizenship, sovereignty and varied territorial dynamics (p. 122). It is worth noting the proposed articulation between the structural issues like social inequality, the violent ownership of the land and the diverse and fragile presence of the state's institutions, along with the forced migration dynamics (p. 128). Working deeper on the Haitian context, Nascimento drives the attention to the problems caused by violence and safety, and states that in his case study they not only relate to the displacement but also, and specifically, to the *forced immobility*. The author's contributions based on his empirical work refer to a qualitative methodology. This interpretative exercise of subjects's discourse enables him to pose a debate with institutional and academic authors who construe a cultural idea of violence as a phenomenon in Colombia, and encourages a comprehension of violence from a historical perspective, that take into account the attached to tension between legitimacy and coercion. Cabanas, on the other hand, approaches the issue of violence in Guatemala originated by megaprojects forcing displacements. However, he considers current violence and dispossession are originated in the conquest and colony era. He discusses emigration to the United States, and reflects on this tidal movement as an option, a personal choice or an imposed need and, on the other hand, he evidences the ambiguity and difficulty when differentiating violence-triggered deracination vs. financially motivated migration, therefore agreeing with Ramos. Valderrama and Escalante adopt an approach to the internal displacement in Peru triggered by violence exerted between 1980 and 2000 in those lands. It is worth noting that the cultural discrepancies, emphasized by language hardships suffered by ethnic native communities being displaced, place them in a position of *refugees* in the eyes of the locals, as if they were national subjects of some other country. This matter gains relevance as it questions national border markers regarding the definition of a *refugee*, as limited to national border crosses.

In the third section of the book called *desplazamiento: pasado y presente* (Displacement: past and present), the pertinence of historical reflection is evidenced as regards the conception of the displacement category. At that

point, both, Helg and the coordination team of the Process of Black Communities (PCN), include reference on their paper to current conditions undergone by Afro-Colombian population regarding the historical ways the power, resistance, and population dynamics were construed in the Colombian Pacific. The texts describe the way exclusion and poverty conditions suffered by these communities are linked to the structures based on the colony times and slavery. They promote the way government-adopted actions are infused with racist visions from the rise of the national state, generating processes of ostracism both on right access guarantees and on the political-decision sphere, based on a "civilized" and homogeneous national image which subordinate native and Afro-Colombian communities and their socio-cultural constructions. This same section exhibits the way Murray offers a detailed narration of the Irish immigrants into Argentina, by the end of the 19th century, introduced in a migration policy implemented to promote European immigration in the National project frame by governing and middle classes for the territorial colonization and in line with the need for *civilization and whitening* of the native communities (p. 205). Along the article, the reader can observe the selective logic of said policy and the way its instrumentation assembled based on a form of privilege granted to certain interests and practices inside institutions and among officers, which had a harmful effect on the trajectory and survival options available to those very immigrants.

Wehrli addresses the Nations Society Commission in Leticia (Colombia) in 1932. This Commission was created to arbitrate on the territorial space based on a military-administrative process to provide some degree of stability for the resolution of the conflict between Colombia and Peru. This way, it dives deep in the territorial colonization, promoting a return to the so-called "immigrants", through a *modernizing* process which, even when it translates into infrastructure for this site, it brought about consequences in the lifestyle of colonist and native communities populating the region, which were pejoratively referred to by the pro-hygiene discourse of the time. On the other hand, this article reflects how the Commission gradually materialized and introduced the ideology pertaining to ethnocentric narration. Another case addressed, which also exposes historical records as determining factors for displacement processes, refer, for instance, to Paraguayan context Here Zambrano analyses the agricultural conflict subsequent to the adoption and expansion of soy monoculture which favored corporate interests which advocate the *dehuman-*

ization of agriculture (p. 222), therefore generating a socio-economical imbalance among peasant communities and their resulting outlaw, and encouraging a transformation in both, rural and urban spaces and a *discontinuation of lifestyle and production methods* (p. 226). The final texts of this section introduce the reader into a brief contextualization of the refugee conditions in Guinea-Bissau, where the lack of basic healthcare or access to education and lack of general response to emergencies and long-term projects for those who have displaced signal a scenario of complete withdrawal. Also, Bastian's text refers to the state of Chiapas in Mexico, to reclaim the central stage for interethnic conflicts in order to address the displacement situations, articulated with religious representations and belonging, deeply related to the political dimension in this context (p. 241).

Section four, *el desplazamiento desde la literatura* (Displacement from the Perspective of Literature) is perceived as a means to interpret several visions of the forced migration issue, which become evident in a certain historical context. We find several texts oriented to this reflection: Ram'ez Gr'bli reviews the book *Hoguera de las Ilusiones* (Illusions burnt at the stake), by the Colombian author Arturo Alape, in which young people's lives gain a leading role beyond statistics. Ram'ez Moreno centers his analysis in *Las mellizas de Huaguil* (Huaguil twins), by Zein Zorrilla. These twin sisters are, to the author, the opposite faces resembling a successful migration and a forced migration and, in a certain way, they express contemporary experiences of displacement in the context of the capitalist dynamic. It states, as many other authors in the compilation do, that those the system regards as incapable of producing earnings belong to the native communities and the Southern peasants. On the same line, it advocates that forced migrants have no immediate political value, and therefore their dramas go unattended and are, sometimes, *displaced* to the sphere of literature. Melis, on the other hand, addresses some Latin American literature works by the Italian Alberto Manzi. It is worth highlighting the position of "liminality" Melis attributes to migrants based on his readings of Manzi. In his analysis, he reveals that to Manzi, as well as to contemporary authors researching ethnic movements, the territory is conveyed as an essential component for subjects, and in that sense, the impact of outlaw ruptures the relationship to their land. Finally, Torr'eo, based on the analysis of *Rio Seco* (Dry River) by Manuel Rui, and on the analytical contributions by the geographer Yi Fu Tuan, carries out a differentiation between space and place, in which space is conveyed as a category of ab-

stract nature. The category of place considers the space as loaded with senses, in which experiences associated to a space define it as a place. Using vast skills, Torralba applies clarifying concepts that account for the understanding of the importance of place, as a potentiality for a battle for independence, and, at the same time, is defined as a mythical and sacred site through a supporting and intimate experience.

Interviews are another significant contribution of this book, as they broadcast the perspectives of the subjects involved in different ways, with political attitudes to gauge forced migration. For instance, the perspective by Juan José Lozano (Colombia/Switzerland) enables a reconstruction of the experience by the Colombian Peace Community of San José de Apartadó³ and, through the camera, expresses the war problems said communities suffer. This approach of the subjects' reality is an invitation to recognize forced migrants not as victims but as persons, along with the complexities it entails. The following interview is carried out by Angolan/Swiss artist Isabel Lukembisa, who theatrically narrates in her work *Cruda Belleza* (Tough Beauty) her personal migration experience from Angola into Switzerland. On the other hand, she questions the conception of Europe as the final stop, and happiness as the final destination. The last interview's author is the photographer Sergio Santimano, who practiced his art in the context of the war in the former Southern Rhodesia, now Mozambique. Us-

ing his biographical journey, this photographer contextualized the situation in the political history frame of his country. His exposition makes clear the discomfort resulting from human suffering, and considers political violence installed in his country is rooted on racist regimes from both, Southern Africa and Rhodesia.

As final conclusions, we consider, in the first place, the compilation evidences, in certain contexts, the persistence of racist colonial narrations which, along with other attributes, builds differentiated categories of citizens and immigrants. Peasants, natives and individuals with African origin are, in many cases, subjects who do not *fit* in the dominating logic and must adjust to the *civilization* and *modernization* projects. And, second, the book's journey shows the reader some axes which cross-section the exclusion dynamics and have a significant role when it comes to analyze the forced migration processes, which are articulated in multiple ways within each context, which include: a) the prevalence of gender, class, race, and ethnic dimension, b) the structural conflicts evidenced in the ostracism and socio-economic conditions of many communities involved in these mobility processes, c) the relationship with the territory as a space for dispute, as the scenario for violence and exploitation for the *development* and, in turn, as places for the construction and reproduction of new subjective and collective forms of life, in which several actors are involved and where state action or inaction are neural.

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