Plenary Session of the First Mexico-Central American Symposium on Women Studies, of which Lourdes Arizpe was Secretary-General, which took place in Mexico City in 1977. This photo is from the author's photo collection

Chapter 5
Women Moving Across Boundaries: Movements and Migrations

5.1 Introduction

In the last decades, women have moved across many boundaries: in labour participation and professional work, in political commitment and elected office, in scientific research and education, in cross-border flows, and in daring to question why theologies and churches exclude them from hierarchy and power.[1] The discourse and narratives of women's hopes have been greatly enriched by a myriad experiences in different arenas and by soaring demands not only to be heard but to have authority and influence in decision-making. The diversity and richness of this movement has intertwined with neoliberalism with very mixed results. While neoliberal policies have opened up economic opportunities that diverse groups of women, both rich and poor, have benefited from, such policies have failed to inspire the profound changes needed to balance men's and women's roles in paid and unpaid work, in gaining freedom and entrepreneurship, in providing care and sociability, and in receiving respect and recognition. In all these arenas, what women receive and what they give decisively influences the well-being of the whole of society. When social injustice is added to gender inequality, development is held back and a sustainable future is not possible.

Democratic societies are built on the core values that are also emphasized in feminism: self-reliance, participation, and freedom from violence. In some societies that still have atavistic values of non-recognition and disrespect for women, the struggle for democracy has now strengthened fault lines of resistance to change as far as the role and status of women are concerned. In spite of this, these core values of democracy and feminism have been adopted by active women's movements all over the world, with each group deciding at what speed, at what rhythm, and with which priorities they will be moving across hitherto forbidden boundaries. For some women, human rights and dignity are all that is needed; others emphasize decent work and political influence, as well as selfhood and autonomy. As women's movements broaden the

[1] This chapter was presented and discussed at the Committee for Development Policy of the UN Economic and Development Council in New York, 28 April 2009 and is unpublished.

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arenas and issues that they deal with, all the above, in terms of social justice, freedom from war and conflicts, and development, are claims that are made for everyone, for women and men in all countries. As Harcourt (2009: 133) in her editorial for the journal *Development* remarked with reference to the 2008 Forum on the 'Power of Movements' of the *Association of Women's Rights and Development* (AWID) 'Women and Development Meeting' in South Africa: "As ever, the Forum was highly professional, filled to the brim and driven by numerous agendas. Attending an AWID Forum no one could say there is no global women's movement. Nor could one say there is a homogeneous women's movement. Nor that it does not attract the young" (on new activisms, see also Harris 2008). Harcourt (2009) concluded by saying that "… the women's movement is diverse, but definitely… it is global".

5.2 Diversity of Women's Movements

That the global expansion of women's movements reflects great diversity should come as no surprise. Yet there are striking commonalities. A 2008 study by the *United Nations Research Institute for Social Development* (UNRISD) showed that there are many differences and similarities in the way the genders carry out care and non-care work in countries from several different regions, yet, in all countries, the mean time spent on unpaid care work by women is more than twice that for

With Egyptian female students at the Library of Alexandria, Egypt 2010. This photo is from the author's photo collection

men (Budlender 2008: v). It also showed that, when data in the *System of National Accounts* (SNA) and unpaid care work are combined, women are found to do more work than men in all countries (Budlender 2008: 45).

Social science studies have generally shown that diversification is one of the indicators that a political and social movement has expanded beyond small groups to influence the whole of society. Nancy Fraser locates the thrust of the women's movement on the left, as it focused initially in problems of distribution and was drawn, in a second stage, to one of 'identity politics' (Fraser 2004). She argues that the shift from a state-organized variant of capitalism to neoliberalism resignified feminist ideals within the framework of a 'new spirit of capitalism', one that created a new 'connexionist' project for capitalism (as Luc Boltanski and Eve Chiapello have proposed), decreasing traditional hierarchies to give way to horizontal and flexible relationships, thereby liberating individual creativity (Fraser 2009: 109). She is right in saying that a new form of feminist activism—transnational, multi-scalar, post-Westphalian—has emerged, yet the impact of such a movement has to be understood in developing countries within the framework of the new inequalities that have brought about high unemployment and the expansion of illicit activities.

Women's movements have been enriched and broadened in the new century: to the traditional demand for political participation and economic autonomy, new activisms have been added. More women of all generations are now present in human rights initiatives, in civil society, and in voluntary associations from the local to the international level. They are very active, as noted in the above-mentioned AWID 'Women and Development Meeting', in struggles against religious fundamentalisms, in sexual and reproductive rights, in communication strategies, in union organizing, and in fighting against gender-based violence (Harcourt 2009).

A trend to be monitored closely is how 'identity politics' is pushing feminism into a very narrow lane. As in other feminist meetings, Harcourt (2009) reports that identity, difference and sexuality issues were in fact the primary issues at the AWID forum, while only a few women attended workshops to discuss hunger, famine, natural disasters, migration, and the global financial crisis. At a time when channels of organizing for public action are disappearing, many women are being driven to take refuge in their private world of psychological and emotional changes. That such a rapidly expanding movement has created a backlash is, as Chun/Boyd/Lessard (2007) argue, an overly simplistic and pre-Foucauldian conceptualization, based on a view of power as omnipotent and one-dimensional, centred on patriarchy, the state or civil society institutions. At the same time, while postmodernism and deconstructivism have opened exciting new perspectives on women's identity and expression in the arts, Scott (1995) warns that they give "an impulse that makes feminist theory impossible".

That such a diverse global movement has achieved more in 'symbolic politics' than in concrete achievements, as Naila Kabeer (personal communication) has observed, is perhaps true. Yet an interesting new development as the economic recession deepens is the opinion expressed ever more often that if more women were in power, the sad state of crisis, warfare, and violence prevalent at present in the world would perhaps be transformed towards a more sustainable way of living.

Interestingly, more women seem to be participating now as militants in conflicts or as military combatants. It is important to note that, at one time, women formed the majority of militants in the Zapatista movement in Chiapas, Mexico, as also seems to have been the case in the guerrilla movement in Guatemala. However, a distinction must be made between two very different kinds of militants: on the one hand, young women who see their path to higher education and autonomy thwarted by traditional male or religious gatekeepers or by the lack of jobs, and so become militants in social and political movements; these women are fighting for change. On the other hand, young women who give up their lives out of religious zeal, such as the young women who have blown themselves up with bombs as part of Islamist terrorist tactics in the Middle East; these women are fighting to stop change. A third group of women are not militants but become involved in violent and frequently criminal activities, such as the Mexican beauty queen Miss Sinaloa; these women may find themselves in the midst of drug trafficking or criminal activities and end up taking this opportunity to gain access to money and power. Do we know why they have all acted in this way? No, since there have been very few studies of the increasingly violent militancy of women.

If most of the gains of the feminist movement are in 'symbolic politics', is some of this active militancy of women an attempt to turn such symbolic politics into real advances? This would be the case, in my view, with the young women involved in the Zapatista army. But not in the case of women retrenching to subordinate positions, or getting involved in violent criminal activities. There is some evidence that, just as happens with men, if doors are closed to women's active participation in mainstream development, women will slip into extremism and violent choices.

This points to a fact that needs to be highlighted: women are no longer passive onlookers at processes that are changing their lives. Nevertheless, their participation is uneven and leads to very different and sometimes unexpected outcomes. How women may gain greater influence through this participation is captured in the title *Developing Power*, the 2004 book edited by Arvon Fraser and Irene Tinker.

It is this realization, I think, that is coming to the fore as the Beijing plus 15 Conference approaches. The Beijing plus 15 review of progress, due in 2010, will require detailed analysis of development policy and programmes, with a call for new, bold perspectives that should influence initiatives for international policy reforms.

5.3 Gendered Impacts of Development Policies

In the last 20 years economic growth policies have given genders uneven and unfair choices, to which must be added that the present economic crisis is already having a gendered effect that may push many women back into poverty or is placing an added burden of unpaid work on them to compensate for the fall in jobs and incomes. As the UN Under Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, Sha Zukang, recently stated "…historically, economic recessions have placed a disproportionate burden on women" (Deen 2009: 3).

Using 'patriarchy' as an analytical concept, Moghadam (1996: 19–20) questions whether development and industrialization have increased or decreased gender

inequality. Partly basing her analysis on the Human Development Index, she shows that positive advances have been made in women's life expectancy, literacy, educational attainment, labour force participation, contraceptive use, and political participation. Yet major gaps continue to exist in wages, subordination in the market, health care, nutritional support, and education.[2]

Studies have shown that women face disproportionate hardships in labour markets, wage levels, lack of access to capital, advisory services, and access to technology. Additionally, the weakening, and in some cases collapse, of traditional organizational, cultural, and security structures as a form of social capital has left them with less support for the care work expected of them. Women's vulnerability, with the additional risks they face in conflict and war zones, and as victims in the illicit drug trade and in human trafficking, requires that careful attention be given to the impact that the financial crisis is having on their lives. Importantly, a 2007 study presents transnational empirical evidence showing that a decline in the gender wage gap in the South relative to the North has a positive impact on the net barter terms of trade of the South (Van Staveren/Elson/Grown/Cagatay 2007). Thus, governments of developing countries should take an interest in reducing wage labour discrimination against women in their manufacturing sector. The study also points out that equivalent research has not been carried out in the services sector which, in fact, has had such a high profile in recent years in international trade negotiations.

Studies have also shown that the 'comparative advantages' that give countries an edge in the international market have in many sectors been based, in fact, on 'women's disadvantages', as they are vulnerable in labour conditions and have restricted access to credit, technology and markets (Arizpe/Aranda 1981; Van Staveren/Elson/Grown/Cagatay 2007).

A very important indicator is that the OECD has reported that women's labour force participation has stagnated, both for women aged 20–24 and for those aged 25–49, with wages in manufacturing lagging far behind those of men (Buvinić/Morrison/Ofosu-Amaah/Sjöblom 2008: 1). The *United Nations Development Fund for Women* (UNIFEM 2008/2009: 17–18) also reports that eight out of ten women workers are in vulnerable employment in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia (see also Sandler 2007). These reports also indicate that one in five members of parliament are women; that one in four women die as a result of pregnancy and childbirth who could have been saved by effective access to contraception; and that there is a feminization of AIDS in Africa.

A high-priority issue is to assess progress in the Millennium Development Goals related to women. In fact, the Millennium Development Goals overlooked the role of women as producers so there has been no advance in policies aimed at avoiding discrimination and bias in women's access to productive inputs. This explains why poverty has not diminished in some parts of the world.

There is, however, a brighter side with the Millennium Development Goals' target of parity in primary and secondary education, with the OECD reporting that of 106 countries, eighty-three achieved the target in 2005, although nineteen

[2] A few years earlier, Marie-France Lebrecque (personal communication), in her study of rural development in Mexico, had posited a double masculine domination, as gendered institutions were added to traditional cultural domination.

countries will not meet this target even by 2015 (Sandler 2007). As is well known, better education not only leads to higher individual incomes, decline in child mortality and other benefits, it is also a necessary (although not sufficient) precondition for long-term economic growth (Lutz 2008/2009). Despite this progress, statistics show that 57 % of those left out of school are girls.

By the beginning of the first decade of this century, 'unfair globalization' (World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization 2004), had led to the 'crisis of development', a term echoing many field studies of the impact of neoliberal policies on gender showing that the rich had grown much richer in a context of economic instability and growing social conflicts fuelled by inequality (Benería 2003: 6). In this context it is essential to consider the social construction of markets affected by government policies aimed at increasing capital mobility and expanding market-oriented production. Such policies do not consider how market-oriented production might impact livelihoods that sustain households or how people without any access to capital might be able to participate in production (Benería 2007). Additionally, in many cases, as shown by Agarwal (1989), women take on additional unpaid duties in assisting their husbands in projects for development (see also Pedrero 1996).

In sum, despite attempts at the end of the seventies to 'integrate women' into development, or to mainstream gender in development policies in the eighties, women's advancement shows a picture of unfulfilled promises, a situation well described in the title of (Tinker's 1990) book *Persistent Inequalities*. Embedded discrimination which had already created unjust distributions of power and resources between men and women has in many cases been strengthened by development policies which do not take into account their impact on women's employment, unpaid work and added care work (Sen/Grown 1988; Jackson/Pearson 1998).

The unevenness in women's advancement in global development is reflected in women's participation in cross-border migrations. Geographical mobility has opened doors for women, especially for rural women, but the outcomes of their experiences of migration show mixed results. In this chapter, reference will be made to this process, primarily in Latin America and using empirical evidence derived from fieldwork conducted by the author in rural villages in Mexico.

5.4 Cross-Border Migrations and Illicit Activities

Cross-border migrations and illicit trafficking of people is high on the list of concerns on the development agenda. International migrants—191 million in 2005, probably closer to 200 million if illegal migrants are included—send more than 250 billion dollars annually to their home countries (DESA 2006).[3] The economic

[3] Note that figures on international migration are based primarily on the number of foreign persons registered in national censuses and other official sources. They therefore do not include undocumented migrants, nor those involved in the trafficking of human beings, in the drug trade, or in other criminal activities. See the website at: http://esa.un.org/migration.

crisis is already bringing about a steep decline in such remittances, which have become vital for poor households in many developing countries.

The United Nations (DESA 2006) reports that the migration stock (the permanent nucleus of international migration transfers) rose from 0.8 % of the world's population in 1960–1965 to a peak of 6.7 % in 1985–1989, then fell back to 1.5 % in 2005–2007. Cross-border migrant flows have now become a global phenomenon. Data shows that twenty-eight countries have received more than one million immigrants each, and sixty-three countries have received more than 100,000. Interestingly, international migrations, overall, represent the same percentage of the world's population, 3 %, as they did at the start of the twentieth century, but with a very different composition (Centre Tricontinentale 2004).

Recent studies have referred to the 'feminization' of international migrations, since women's participation in these flows increased to 49.6 % in 2005 (UN 2006). Until the eighties, trends in international migration showed a higher gender ratio of male to female workers. The exceptions were labour-specific, for example, male labour migration to mining regions in Africa and labour migration to Islamic countries in the Middle East, or culture-specific, such as the migration of women from the state of Kerala in India, where, in contrast to Hindu states, women migrated to work as nurses and other service economic activities.

The ratio of male workers to female workers began to shift as cross-border migrations increased in the last three decades. A gender perspective is necessary to understand these shifts by ascertaining, in each case, whether a greater number of women are migrating or whether the ratio is due to fewer men becoming involved in such flows. The increase in women migrants was initially related to more women joining their spouses or families who by then were permanently established in countries of destination. In recent years, however, women began to migrate as independent workers, following a trend which was also evident in most countries' internal migratory flows.

One of the reasons for this 'feminization' in cross-border flows is the expanded demand for care work, both skilled such as nurses and unskilled such as domestic workers, in industrialized countries. This highlights the centrality of care work as the basis on which social policies can either promote gender equity or exacerbate gender divisions and inequality (Zimmerman/Litt/Bose 2006: 376).

Among skilled migrants, internationally, women lead the 'brain drain', now called the 'brain gain' in industrialized countries. Evidence for this is that the difference between the number of men and women migrants with tertiary education is 3.2 % in Latin America and the Caribbean, 8 % in Oceania, and 10 % in Africa (UNIFEM 2008/2009: 11).

The market is becoming global but the rules that migrants encounter in their cross-border movements are always national. A distinction must be made between the 'transnational' character of their travel and the national definition both of their working wages and conditions, and of their access to housing, schooling and other social services. Additionally, the situation of women migrants varies in segmented markets. For example, for women migrants who are care workers in institutions, the prevailing national laws and attitudes define their situation, but for those who are care workers in private family homes, rules are much less defined and subject to government supervision (Zimmerman/Litt/Bose 2006).

5.5 The Changing Lives of Women Migrants in Mexico

In the case of migrants from Latin America and the Caribbean, the shift from women migrating to the United States with their kin (husbands, brothers, aunts, and other close kin) to travelling independently is very marked. During the eighties, and especially the nineties, the routes for this massive flow of migrants to the '*Norte*' were set up, as family or kin members began to reside in the US. This opened up opportunities for women to live with trusted families or village friends in the receiving communities, and to find jobs. Over time, this has given women, especially younger women, confidence in making the trip on their own and striking off on their own in American society.

Since the nineties, the 'pull' factor has become more important as a motivation for young women to migrate out of their rural villages. Through education and the mass media, young girls and women have acquired new values of self-confidence, and a desire for personal achievement. To the question "Why do you migrate?", most young women answer along the lines of "*para superarme*", "to better myself". For women, however, in addition to overcoming traditional norms and expectations, the returns from education may be relatively higher in the US, because, for example, of gender discrimination in Mexican labour markets (Benería/Roldán 1987; Kanaiaupuni 2000). Although young women are seeking a better status through migration, studies have found that even though women's salaried work does tend to improve their gender relationships in the household, migration does not change the traditional gender roles (Briones 2002: 183).

In the last decade, however, the 'push' factors in female migration in Latin America and the Caribbean have also become stronger in many countries. Neoliberal policies that have undermined traditional agricultural livelihoods and economic growth with high levels of inequality and unemployment have worsened the situation of women in low-income families in many Latin American and Caribbean countries. Another factor influencing women's outmigration rates is the increased monetary needs of their families as government social services have diminished.

In Mexico, liberalization policies have practically destroyed smallholding agriculture, forcing millions of rural people to migrate from rural areas. This has worsened the situation of women, many of whom have to migrate either to cities, to the United States, or on to the seasonal circuits of agricultural labourers. Working as agricultural labourers is perhaps the most debased and exploitative work situation for everyone, but especially for women and children, as my own fieldwork research has shown (Arizpe/Aranda 1981; see Chapter 7 "Women Workers in the Strawberry Agribusiness in Mexico" in this book). Many studies confirm this degradation in which, as Sara Lara explains, agribusiness employers are able to exercise domination over women migrants, many of them indigenous women, "… through threats, deception, pressures and harassment but most of all by humiliating them. This finally has the same effect as direct violence. But, additionally, this unleashes the worst sentiments towards the 'other' among the workers themselves….allowing, at the same time, the most brutal expression of violence inside the families" (Flores 2003: 394).

For women it takes courage to migrate now that the darker side of migration has grown more dangerous in many regions of Mexico, especially the border areas, in recent times. Indeed, on the Mexican border the toll of 'feminicides'—a new type of homicide, now defined in Mexican law as a hate crime against women, typically perpetrated by the husband or a close kinsman—has reached more than 600 women killed. This number has greatly increased in the last decade because of the federal and state governments' total incapacity to investigate, arrest, and punish the perpetrators. This impunity has led to young women becoming the victims of a horrendous web of human traffickers, drug '*sicarios*' (assassins), perverts (as in 'snuff' films in which women are actually killed), and corrupt police and government officials.

It is important to mention that when the doors mentioned above are closed to young women (jobs, migration to cities, migration to the US), they then have two other options. One which has already been mentioned is political militancy as guerrillas, as in the case of the Zapatista army in Chiapas.

The other is the grey and black economy. This may mean work in the grey 'entertainment' industry, such as in 'table dance' bars which have proliferated along the border, or down the slippery slope, voluntarily or involuntarily, into prostitution and illicit human trafficking. Or, increasingly, since this rarely happened a decade ago, into direct involvement with the drugs trade. It must be said, though, that in many cases women are inducted into such activities after falling in love or being seduced by men displaying wealth and power and promising these young girls things they had never dreamed of. In exceptional cases, such love affairs have ended with women becoming heads of drug circuits after their husbands or lovers are killed. One such woman is Sandra Ávila Beltrán, '*la Reina del Pacífico*' (the 'Queen of the Pacific'), who at one point controlled the drug supply routes over the Pacific, was jailed in Mexico without being extradited to the United States and is now free.

As to the women who stay in the rural household while their husband or children migrate, it is worth noting that their precarious situation will vary according to the income level of the family, access to inputs for productive activities, and the support of broader kinship networks. The presence of the female household head is crucial for maintaining the integrity of the household for the migrant men: "For the typical migrant labourer who prefers not to remain permanently in '*el Norte*' it is much easier to negotiate a strange country with a wife at home sustaining the family and social relationships. Having a wife at home is cost-efficient, conforms to the gender norms, and also enables him to move back and forth without losing social standing in village and kinship structures" (Kanaiaupuni 1995, 1998, 2000: 1319–1329). This does not preclude his having a second family, often with another Latino woman, with whom, in the end, he stays. Whether or not he continues to send remittances back to his first family, or to keep up his ties with his children by his first wife, will depend on his affective and psychological make-up, but will be greatly influenced by his cultural background. This is why I have always argued that remittances are a cultural phenomenon.

As to Mexican women migrants' experiences in the United States, (Hagan 1998, cited in Parrado/Flippen 2005: 608–609) gives the broad setting of their employment: "The sex segregation of migrant occupations also limits the networks of migrant women. Hispanic migrant men tend to concentrate in construction,

manual labour, and services in which they have extensive and varied contacts with other men. Hispanic migrant women, on the other hand, are concentrated in domestic and small-scale service occupations, which are more isolated and have fewer avenues for advancement than the occupations of migrant men".

Several studies suggest, however, that women-based networks can transform the female migrant experience, providing links to employment, assistance, and information in destinations (Donato/Kanaiaupuni 2000; Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994). In their 2005 study on migration and gender among Mexican women, Parrado and Flippen challenge an assimilationist, emancipating view of migration and gender that would predict a gradual and unidirectional increase in Mexican women's power associated with migration and US residence. Instead, they argue that "…the effect of migration on gender relations is highly variable, with gains in some realms offset by losses in others. In keeping with the selective assimilation literature, we find that Mexican migrants selectively incorporate some aspects of the receiving society while simultaneously reinforcing cultural traits and patterns of behaviour brought with them from their communities of origin. Although this process of adaptation without assimilation may help insulate migrants from the destabilizing forces arising from residence in a foreign environment, the end result is that in some instances, migration actually exacerbates gender imbalances" (Parrado/Flippen 2005: 626–627).

More generally, they also conclude (2005: 606–632) that the association between migration and gender relation is not uniform across different gender dimensions: "the reconstruction of gender relations within the family at the place of destination is a dynamic process in which some elements brought from communities of origin are discarded, others are modified, and still others are reinforced. Results challenge the expectation that migrant women easily incorporate the behaviour patterns and cultural values of the United States and illustrate the importance of selective assimilation for understanding the diversity of changes in gender relations that accompany migration".

A further important conclusion (2005: 628) is that "Prior theorizing about the effect of migration on gender has in many cases portrayed the vestiges of traditional gender arrangements from communities of origin as an important constraint on migrant women's socioeconomic advancement. Contrary to this interpretation, our research suggests that the causal connection is likely to work in the other direction as well. It is not that migrant women fail to 'progress' toward more egalitarian norms because of their cultural background or patterns of behaviour brought from their communities of origin. Rather, it is their structural position within the US society including their precarious legal status, unfavourable work conditions, and lack of social support that undermines their well-being and power within relationships".

In spite of all these hardships, as Sara Lara concludes, migration creates the possibility of new scenarios in which gender and cultural structures may be altered and in which women, especially indigenous women "are able to generate spaces of interaction that give them weapons for a new counter power that they do not have in their villages of origin" (Flores 2003: 395).

5.6 Monitoring the Impact of the Economic Crisis on Gender and Cross-Border Migrations

To monitor the impact of the present crisis on women in the field of international migrations, it is important to continue to develop research on the following topics:

1. *The decline in remittances from migrants*
   Declining remittances will have serious consequences in households that use remittances for day-to-day living expenses, especially if women have been left as heads of households and may have to expand their income-generating activities in the informal sector. If remittances decrease, then investment in small business or trade activities in their regions of origin will slow down.
2. *Return migration*
   The number of returning migrants to Mexico, as a result of the decline in jobs in the construction industry and, generally, of the economic recession in the US as well as the patrolling of border areas and the hardening of migratory regulations in the US, will probably reach several million. Many of these migrants may use the skills they learned in migration to set up small businesses, shops, or trading activities, but they would need credit support and either government extension services or private support for small businesses to be successful in such initiatives. Mexican migrant women who were employed in the domestic care economy will not have acquired new skills, but hopefully, they will have been able to set aside savings for their return home. Migrant young women, whether in the domestic or industrial care economy or in other jobs, may have acquired new skills, but most of them will also have increased their aspirations as to jobs, incomes, respect from men, and protection from domestic violence. This is especially and poignantly true of those born to families of Mexican illegal migrants who have gone through elementary and high school studies and who have already absorbed the achievement habits of American youth. It is for this reason that programmes for amnesty or regularization of those in such a situation is a priority.

If urgent measures are not taken to create employment and educational attainment for returning Mexican migrant youth, especially in the deprived rural regions from which they first tried to escape, there is the risk that illicit activities—drugs, organized and petty crime, and prostitution—may again expand. According to research carried out by my students, those in danger of being deported may cling to their clandestine situation and turn to the black economy, always connected to cross-border networks.

If young returning or deported migrants land back into hopeless situations, where neither jobs nor educational opportunities nor any other window is open to them, apart from the black economy, they will hide their anxieties through mindless violence, taking drugs or, in case of young women, becoming pregnant and forever living on the margins of poverty, violence and suicide.

Those women who still try to keep their families and kin and life together will bear the brunt of these criminal and tragic events as family caretakers and as victims of abductions and domestic violence. Also, as outright rage or, more

usually, as the level of internalized rage that becomes depression rises, they may break with the passivity of the traditional female construct and become willing and active participants in the drug and prostitution trade, or in abductions.

Social policies that comprise only handouts to just a few selected mothers in towns and villages or to just one of their offspring whose selection is never fully explained—where other mothers know and seethe about it!—are totally useless in stopping the fraying of the social fabric and the destruction of young lives. Had the money that the Mexican government spends fighting the drug trade and organized crime been invested in quality education, in supporting small enterprises and in protecting women from violence, the brutal decay of many Mexican regions and the ruined lives of its 'demographic bonus'[4] would have been avoided.

5.7 Conclusions

This review of the literature on women's advancement in international development in recent years shows areas of improvement of women's lives and also regression due to the stagnation of their status or to an increase in their work burdens or in risks of violence and criminality. Quite significantly, the same trend is evident in the review of recent research on women's international migrations and in my own research observations. Parrado/Flippen (2005: 609) put it succinctly when they say that "…Taken together, the broad literature on migration and gender highlights the need to distinguish between domains in which migration has led to gains in women's autonomy and those in which inequities are maintained or reinforced". To allow for such an analysis it is very important, then, to treat gender as a "…theoretical basis of differentiation and not simply as a control variable…" (Kanaiaupuni 2000: 1312).

Given the inequality and exclusion that has been fostered in the last two decades through economic growth, it is vital to define development as the growth of markets which are embedded in the broader political and social ideals of societies. Women's advancement will depend on whether they are included as a constitutive part of these ideals and their outcomes. Consumers must be simultaneously theorized as citizens of a nation state and as members of social communities. The State must be strengthened in order to curb abuses by financial and business enterprises; this includes paying attention to obesity and health issues, especially in children,[5] and to levelling the fields of opportunity in education, employment and investment for small income-generating activities. Very importantly, the State must provide opportunities for unemployed youth, and must have the necessary autonomy to stop the infiltration of organized crime into all sectors of society.

[4] The 'demographic bonus', in Spanish '*bono demográfico*', is the bulge in demographic growth in many developing nations occurring just after the demographic transition and which, in most countries, is seen as a dynamic way to have young people promote economic growth.

[5] In the last decade, Mexico has risen to one of the highest levels of child obesity in the world.

Given the economic recessions, have women been able to influence the international development agenda? The authors of the book *Developing power: How Women Transformed International Development* (Fraser/Tinker 2004) argue that the Women in Development movement has taught women in and out of government to think and act differently in virtually all fields of activity.

Again, however, studies have shown that analysing the impact of development on women requires new theoretical tools to address contradictory and uneven outcomes. Nancy Fraser defines this challenge as a dilemma posed by the 'post-socialist' condition in capitalism. She defines the 'post-socialist' condition as "… an absence of any credible overarching emancipatory project despite the proliferation of fronts of struggle; a general decoupling of the cultural politics of recognition from the social politics of redistribution; and a decentering of claims for equality in the face of aggressive marketization and sharply rising material inequality" (2004: 1103–1124). She proposes a model of radical democracy that will "…combine the struggle for an antiessentialist multiculturalism with the struggle for social equality" (Fraser 2004: 1105).

As a final comment, I believe Nancy Fraser has expressed the issue very aptly: "In seizing this moment, we might just bend the arc of the impending transformation in the direction of justice—and not only with respect to gender" (2009: 117).

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