

DEVELOPMENT AND MIGRATION: A READING FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF CRITICAL POLITICAL ECONOMY



HUMBERTO MÁRQUEZ COVARRUBIAS*

ABSTRACT: By deconstructing dominant views of migration, this article posits new theoretical elements with which to question the role played by this phenomenon in neoliberal capitalist expansion. Critical development studies serve to outline an analytical model that links unequal development to forced migration and remittances. I argue that neoliberalization entails an unsustainable social regime that excludes wide sectors of the population from production and consumption processes, tramples basic human rights, and destroys social subjects. Reproductive life cycles in societies of origin are fractured and forced migration becomes an expression of the permanent social crisis. Consequently, most of the migrant labor force –which is cheap, flexible and disorganized– works in conditions of super-exploitation. A fraction of earned salaries takes the form of remittances that, far from comprising processes of development, merely ensure the subsistence of financial dependents in places of origin.

KEYWORDS: unequal development, forced migration, remittances, political economy of migration, critical development studies.

RESUMEN: A partir de una deconstrucción de la visión dominante, este artículo propone nuevos elementos teóricos para cuestionar el papel de las migraciones en la expansión del capitalismo neoliberal. Desde la óptica de los estudios críticos del desarrollo se esboza un modelo analítico que relaciona las categorías de desarrollo desigual, migración forzada y remesas salariales. Nuestro argumento es que el proceso de neoliberalización incuba un régimen de insustentabilidad social que excluye a amplios sectores poblacionales de la producción y consumo, conculca los derechos humanos básicos y destruye los sujetos sociales. En los lugares de origen, el ciclo de reproducción de la vida está fracturado, por lo que la migración forzada aflora como una expresión de la crisis social permanente. Como correlato, la mayor parte de la fuerza de trabajo migrante –barata, flexible y desorganizada– es superexplotada. Una fracción de los ingresos salariales, las remesas, se canalizan para cubrir la subsistencia de los dependientes económicos radicados en los lugares de origen, sin que esto llegue a configurarse como un proceso de desarrollo.

PALABRAS CLAVE: desarrollo desigual, migración forzada, remesa salarial, economía política de la migración, estudios críticos del desarrollo.

* Professor and researcher at the Doctoral Program in Development Studies at the Autonomous University of Zacatecas (UAZ). E-mail: hmarquez@estudiosdeldesarrollo.net.

INTRODUCTION

This article intends to analyze the expansion of international migration during the neoliberal capitalist restructuring process, which has lasted for the past 35 years and today faces a severe general crisis (Márquez, 2010). Said examination entails a theoretical dismantling of a) conventional, apologist –or, at least, uncritical– approaches focused on the individual or the family, b) analytical schemes based on push-pull factors, c) descriptions of transnational socio-cultural trajectories, and d) the international political agenda on migration and development.

Critical development studies establish a link between unequal development, forced migration and remittances, providing new interpretations in light of the current role played by cheap (qualified and unqualified) labor in global capital accumulation and the new international division of labor. My intent is to provide a theoretical alternative that leads to new questions, hypotheses, concepts, explanations and solutions. This is why we must unearth the root causes of international migration –especially flows from underdeveloped to developed nations, and understand the role played by migrants in unequal development dynamics, both in terms of the cheapening of the labor force and the subsistence of financial dependents.

THE DOMINANT VIEW ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION

The global scale of migrant and remittance flow during the consolidation of neoliberal globalization has increased the political, academic and social importance of the bond between international migration and development. The dominant approach to migration and development is clearly partial to the interests of the central nations that receive most migrant flows: the focus on national security, migration management, and the idea that remittances can serve as a source of development in places of origin are all a product of said interests (Márquez, 2008a). The dominant view on international migration is woven around the following five key points:

1) *Microsocial approach*. As a byproduct of the methodological individualism that characterizes neoclassical theory, migration is often explained as an individual or, at most, familial decision (Todaro, 1976). It is seen as a strategy rather than a necessity and bereft of historical and structural causes, since the phenomenon is supposed to reproduce itself as part of a culture or tradition accompanied by established social networks (Kandel and Massey, 2002).

2) *Push-pull factors*. While not a theory per se, this analytic scheme separates all those elements that encourage migration from those that discourage it due to socioeconomic unbalances between regions. This is a unidirectional view based



on the theory of modernization by stages. It fails to consider the context, its historical nature, key processes, and the main agents.

3) *Orthodox neoclassical or neoliberal approach*. Salary differences propel migration and the decision to emigrate is a rational individual or familial choice; it can thus be considered an investment in human capital. That is, the migrant sees himself as a self-investing entrepreneur, his own human capital (Bate, 2001; Orozco and Wilson, 2005; Terry, 2005; Ratha, 2003, 2007). On the other hand, neoliberal processes such as free trade agreements sponsored by central nations in their area of influence are supposed to lead to economic convergence, which will eventually diminish asymmetries such as salary differences and discourage massive migration (Garrigues, Meissner, Hormats and Ogata, 1993; Meissner, 1992; U.S. Commission for the Study of International Migration and Cooperative Economic Development, 1990).

4) *Transnationalism*. The sociocultural practices established by migrants, which link places of origin and destination and are held together by social networks and organizations, constitute a type of social capital comprising the so-called transnational space in the wake of the supposed demise of the nation-state (Basch, Click Schiller and Szanton-Blanc, 1994; Guarnizo and Smith, 1998; Levitt and Click Schiller, 2004; Faist, 2000). Globalization is positively viewed as the force behind international migration, especially where the spread of information and communication technologies (ICT) is concerned, because these cheapen and facilitate migration flows. But transnationalism is a post-structural explanation that ignores the root causes of migration, the role played by migrants in capital accumulation, the dynamics of contemporary capitalism, and the role of the state. It takes a sociological approach and lauds social interactions between equals on a horizontal plane that comprises places of origin and destination without apparent contradiction, but fails to analyze relationships of production (exploitation) and reproduction (in both the family and labor contexts). It emphasizes the social organization of migration and the role of agency in development processes.

5) *Migration and development*. From a comprehensive viewpoint, migration is supposed to lead to development in nations and places of origin. Remittances are seen as the tool of development and the diaspora as the agency (BID, 2006; OIT, 2007). In order to make this possible, international organizations encourage a supposed «financial democracy» to foster the investment of remittances, the reduction in transference costs to increase profit volume, and the implementation of «good practices» to ensure local governability (Terry, 2005). Migration and development are linked by a unidirectional, ahistorical, and unresolved vision anchored by two central theses: international migration is a phenomenon that exclusively benefits sending nations, and remittances are a development tool. This has been the stance of international organizations such as the World Bank (WB, 2005, 2006a, 2006b, 2007), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB, 2000, 2001), the Multilateral Investment Fund (MIF, 2004), the International Monetary



Fund (IMF), the United Nations (UN, 2005), the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2009), the International Labour Organization (ILO, 2010), the International Organization for Migration (IOM, 2003, 2006a, 2006b), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 2009) among others. Adherents also include most governments in migrant importing and exporting nations.

All of these approaches fail to delve into the root causes of migration or criticize the phenomenon of neoliberal globalization. In fact, they tend to explain migration in and of itself, taking it out of context and ignoring the complex development problems that encompass it. Most analysts, governments and international organizations have centered the migration debate on the supposed development contributions made by migrants to their places, regions and countries of origin through the sending of remittances. It is a peculiarity of this view that development is barely ever defined as a concept; rather, it is considered the positive result of the migration dynamic and, in particular, of remittances and their uses, which include a decrease in the poverty of receiving families and local development via the financing of small productive enterprises and public works. If development is not defined, the root causes of migration are even less of a concern. There are no thoughts on the urgent need to reorient the global or regional insertion of underdeveloped nations specialized in workforce-exporting, nor of changing the institutional and political network currently supporting neoliberal policies of structural readjustment, both of which are at the source of increasing forced migration.

THE MYTHOLOGIZED BOND BETWEEN MIGRATION, REMITTANCES AND DEVELOPMENT

The dominant perspective on migration and development encouraged by international organizations and allied governments has produced a mythology of half-truths and flat-out fallacies that serve to mask real contradictions and paradoxes (see Table 1). Some of these, when critically analyzed, reveal symptomatic paradoxes:

- *First myth: Migration puts a human face on globalization and everybody wins –migrants, their families, sending and receiving nations.* Those who defend neoliberal globalization pretend that the increase in migration flows benefits everyone: sending nations receive remittances and avoid problems such as structural unemployment; receiving nations get an abundance of qualified and unqualified cheap, disorganized labor without having had to invest in its formation costs; migrants find paid employment they could not have found in their places of origin, and their families receive money that ensures their subsistence. This obscures the fact that neoliberal globalization has increased asymmetries between regions, countries and localities and deepened social inequalities at the heart of practically all na-



tions. At the same time, it has dismantled underdeveloped societies and economies and led to forced migration. The toll on sending nations is ignored: loss of workforce, depopulation, decline in productive activities, transference of formation costs, family rupture, abandonment of infrastructure, and the fracture of social processes.

- *Second myth: Regional integration based on a free market and structural adjustment policies will lead to economic convergence and decrease migration.* The configuration of economic regional blocs around «free trade» creates a false image of free competition where capital and producers from peripheral nations can benefit from access to an incommensurable mass of consumers in the developed world. What is left unsaid is that this space is controlled by capital monopolies and oligopolies that quickly take possession of strategic sectors and public, private, natural and human resources. In truth, neoliberal integration expands social asymmetries and propels migration from peripheral nations into the centers of global capitalism.
- *Third myth: Migration is an unstoppable phenomenon, we can only aspire to manage or direct it.* The governments of sending countries explain migration in a manner that exempts them from institutional and political responsibility: according to them, it has nothing to do with an excluding economic model, the monopolization and increasing foreign control of key sectors, or the dismantling of the welfare state. This phenomenological reduction claims that population mobility is ancestral, goes back to the dawn of time, and lacks current political or institutional responsibilities. In this view, migration has no structural or strategic causes, and the historical roots are seen as natural. Nevertheless, these governments surreptitiously encourage migration to avoid dealing with problems such as structural unemployment and social conflict; they benefit from remittances, which help maintain the fragile balance of neoliberal governability. The governments, politicians and media in receiving countries portray migrants as undesirable sources of problems and conflict; they fail to point out their contributions to receiving economies. So, for one side, migrants become the heroes of development while, for the other, they appear as criminals or barbarians.
- *Fourth myth: Migration is a cultural process, a self-reproducing tradition.* This happy idea places the decision to emigrate squarely on the shoulders of the individual or the family; the reason is no longer the impossibility of locally or regionally ensuring subsistence, nor the desire for a better life that cannot be accessed within that region, but a contagious drive to emigrate that, excised from its original source, is the now the one and only cause. Any reference to historical, structural or contextual reasons is considered deterministic and anachronistic. The interest of the individual, the desire to access capitalist modernity and the promise of a prosperous life are some ingredients in this migratory subjectivity.
- *Fifth myth: Migration is an individual and familial strategy meant to increase income.* Subjectively, migration is seen as a strategy through which individuals and families increase their profits and thus improve their living conditions. Families are portrayed as entrepreneurial entities that take rational decisions based on the promise of the capitalist dream proffered by the central economies, which are presented as the culmination of development, lands of opportunity and social freedom.



Remittances are private income or profits, and the structural causes for migration become secondary elements. Social networks become subsidiary organizations for families and the so-called transnational communities, orienting, informing and protecting migration flows.

- *Sixth myth: Migrants are agents of development and remittances their tools.* In the face of the socioeconomic decomposition brought about by neoliberalization, the state and international organizations now intend to make migrants responsible for constructing processes of development, mainly in places of origin, without contemplating any substantial changes to current structural dynamics and political and institutional frameworks. This in spite of evidence that most migrants belong to the labor sectors with the highest rates most precariousness and labor exploitation. This position paradoxically encourages the idea that migrants, who are among the world's most exploited workers, should make up for some of the most adverse consequences of neoliberal policy.
- *Seventh myth: «Good practices» are the best migration and development strategy.* Decontextualized and disconnected public policies lauded by international organizations have emerged as tools with which to foster development in areas of high migration. However, they lack a diversification strategy for public, private and social resources, not to mention alternative development policies that can reverse the root sources of forced migration.

TABLE 1

The mythology of migration and development

MYTH	PARADOXES
Migration is the human face of globalization and everybody wins: migrants and their families, countries of origin and destination.	Migration entails socioeconomic costs that are not offset by remittances and other resources.
Regional integration under a free market and structural adjustment policies lead to economic convergence and diminish migration.	Neoliberal integration expands asymmetries and social inequalities and fosters international migration.
Migration is an unstoppable phenomenon that can only be managed or directed.	Sending governments surreptitiously stimulate migration and promote the idea that migrants are heroes of development. Receiving nations paint migrants as criminals while taking advantage of their contributions.
Migration is a cultural process, a self-reproducing tradition among certain peoples.	Prevalent structural conditions lead to forced migration, destroying families and social processes.
Migration is a strategy employed by families and individuals in order to maximize profits.	Neoliberalism is unsustainable for most families; it diminishes the social responsibility of capital and the state, and makes marginalized populations responsible for their own development.
Migrants are agents of development in their places and countries of origin; their resources serve as tools or motors of development.	Migrant workers are exposed to extreme forms of precariousness and labor exploitation while being made responsible for promoting development in places of origin.
«Good practices» are the best migration and development strategy.	Decontextualized and disconnected public policies make migrants responsible for development.



TOWARD AN ALTERNATIVE APPROACH: A POLITICAL ECONOMY OF MIGRATION

The dominant approach to migration has been questioned by a number of authors (Canales, 2008; Castles and Delgado Wise, 2007; Delgado and Márquez, 2009; Delgado, Márquez and Rodríguez, 2009; Márquez, 2005, 2008a; Binford, 2002; Newland, 2007), and while these criticisms have dismantled ideological, argumentative and prescriptive paradigms, we are still missing an alternative theoretical/conceptual proposal that addresses migration in the context of neoliberal globalization. A political economy of migration can help fill this void.

A political economy of migration comprises a theoretical approach to migration in the context of global capital accumulation dynamics, the generation of surplus population, the mercantilization of the labor force, and the creation of unsustainable social spaces. This approach analyzes the exploitative and oppressive social relations that sustain the accumulation model, the global power system, and the role played by migration in said dynamic –that is, a source of cheap labor required by capital in central nations. With this in mind, I seek to evidence the structural causes of migration and show their inherent contradictions, paying attention to the social sectors and contexts that either benefit from or are affected by these.

Unlike dominant theories, we assume migration is not an independent variable, a self-reproducing phenomenon or something that can be taken for granted. Rather, it is dependent on the dynamics of unequal development that characterize contemporary capitalism on its global, regional, national and local levels. It is within this context that the dynamics of capital and the resultant mobility of the workforce are examined.

The study of migration involves three simultaneous issues often ignored in orthodox studies: 1) an analysis of the historical and structural causes for migration within the framework of capital accumulation, 2) an examination of migration strategies with attention to institutional and political practices based on capital relations, the role of migration in processes of unequal development, systems of migrant labor exploitation, and migrant subsistence strategies in places of origin and destination, and 3) the study of migrant forms of organization and mobilization, both in defense of migrants' basic rights and to foster development (and, eventually, promote development alternatives).

The tenets of this approach are: 1) the influence of unequal development (independent variable) over migration dynamics (dependent variable); 2) neoliberal globalization entails a concentration of capital, power and wealth among a reduced social elite, along with the economic, political and cultural subjugation of peripheral regions, which translates into the extraction of economic surplus and cheap natural and human resources; 3) neoliberalization promotes the appropriation of strategic and profitable sectors in the periphery and promotes social inequalities to stimulate competitiveness and profitability; 4) most of the popu-



lation lives in unsustainable social conditions that threaten their survival; 5) neoliberal capitalism threatens the sources of social wealth (human life and the environment) while menacing human reproduction and the balance between society and nature, and 7) migration is an expression of the permanent social crisis that devastates peripheral localities and nations.

In order to examine the equivocations found in the dominant approach to migration and development, which caters to the interests of developed receiving nations, we should begin by asking questions that search for the root of the problem and can suggest development alternatives with which to reverse forced migration and its multiple expression of social regression. What are the historical, structural and strategic causes of contemporary migration? What is the role of migration and migrants in the process of global accumulation centered on transnational monopolist and oligarchic domination? What role do migrants and remittances play in family subsistence and the underpinning of the neoliberal model? Is a centralized model of global accumulation based on strategies such as labor flexibilization and forced migration sustainable? What interests lie behind the dominant approach to migration and development? What sort of systemic alternatives can overcome forced migration as a mechanism that overexploits migrant labor and deepens underdevelopment in countries of origin?

The political economy of migration draws on elements of critical development studies and critical migration studies. Critical development studies emerge as a second critique of political economy. That is, this is no longer a critique of the classics (Smith and Ricardo), but of the neoclassic and neoliberal stance represented by authors like Hayek and Friedman, international bodies such as the IMF, WB and WTO (which have designed the key policies of neoliberal globalization), and organizations like the World Economic Forum (WEF) or expressions like the Washington Consensus.¹ Neoliberal ideology and policies constitute a model of development centered on the interests of big capital: the total market, the dismantling of the social state, the flexibilization of the labor force and the exploitation of nature. In this case it is important to dismantle the mainstream concept of development, which was been constructed around neoliberal globalization and concepts such as economic growth, free market and competitiveness. From a historical, structural and strategic point, the key is to examine issues of development, underdevelopment and dependency. The global capitalist system must be addressed on multiple dimensions and levels, and the dominant development

¹ Critical development studies also provide alternatives to normative approaches to development that, catering to neoliberal capitalism, only seek to correct superficial problems without suggesting structural, institutional and political changes. Normative approaches also fail to critically assess issues like the post-Washington consensus (Stiglitz, 1998), the UN's development goals for the new millennium (UN, 2000), sustainable development (Brundtland, 1987), human development (Sen, 2000; PNUD, 1990), ways of combating poverty (WB, 2008) and the current migration and development agenda (IDB, 2001; MIF, 2004; WB, 2005; UN, 2005).



theory and model must be questioned in order to propose systemic, post-neoliberal and perhaps even post-capitalist, alternatives.²

The dominant view of migration posits that this phenomenon is independent and self-reproducing, a cultural product with specific transnational strategies that empower migrants and invest them with social capital. Rather than criticize neoliberal globalization, this approach, espoused by most international bodies, governments, NGOs and research centers, seeks to complement it, supporting neoliberal development. Critical migration studies question these notions and reconstruct the dialectical relationship between migration and development. New and more potentially revealing questions are asked while key concepts are redrawn and new explanations found.

These two fields come together as critical migration and development studies, which address the current power discourse, its defense of migration, and the neoliberal agenda that seeks to make migrants responsible for achieving development. We suggest that the political economy of development is an ideal technical tool with which to approach the dynamics of contemporary capitalism and its link to international migration. This theoretical and methodological perspective is inscribed within a historical and structural tradition but is complemented by a strategic dimension that addresses the institutional and political framework and the practices of social subjects without circumscribing them to the so-called transnational space; rather, it examines the practices of state agents, capital and labor, within which migrants play a crucial role.

From a theoretical historical, structural and strategic perspective, a transdisciplinary approach to events must be combined with theoretical reflection. Political economy is, by definition, a transdisciplinary field that seeks to address the social whole, which is impossible when the approach is limited to one discipline, whether economy, sociology, political science or history. Social issues are addressed in a comprehensive manner in order to avoid single-discipline reductionism.³ In order to problematize the dialectics of development, political economy

² The main challenge is to generate development alternatives in the face of neoliberal capitalism, which caters to the interests of the reduced transnational capitalist class that has implemented structural adjustment policies; orchestrated a strategy of capitalist restructuring that monopolizes international finance, commerce and production; imposed an ideology of globalization and accumulation by dispossession; subjected the workforce to liberalization, precarization and transnationalization processes; exacerbated social inequalities and economic asymmetries between nations, and worsened environmental problems such as climate change.

³ This is not a multidisciplinary approach either, where separate disciplines fail to establish a comprehensive viewpoint. Political economy, it is often argued, proffers a structuralist and «economist» (i.e., determinist) approach, using old-fashioned structures that negate any sort of active participation by social agents. The idea is to create a dialectical process that pinpoints the contradictions inherent to the system and suggests change and transformation alternatives. The economist tag is often justified by the idea that this approach is overly focused on the material bases of production, but critical political economy has always been transdisciplinary in nature. What is more, it privileges the study of the social whole. Nowadays, the real economist approach is that of the hegemonic neoliberals, who have declared the triumph of the market.



proposes a critical study of the context, key processes, main agents, and hierarchical issues.

This requires an analysis of the global capitalist system on a series of levels and dimensions. The spatial context can be divided into complementary levels where development and migration processes are linked: the global, regional, national and local spheres (Table 2).

TABLE 2
Multilevel analysis of the global capitalist system and migration

LEVEL	STRUCTURAL DYNAMICS	AGENTS AND SUBJECTS
Global	Neoliberal globalization Financialization Militarization	Transnational corporations International organizations Central governments
Regional	Economic bloc Migration system	Peripheral governments Local governments Non-governmental organizations
National	Structural adjustment policies Dismantling of national development Encouragement of direct foreign investment Social inequality	Migrant organizations Media Scholars
Local	Lack of social sustainability Forced migration Depopulation Dependence on remittances	

Development and migration must be addressed across the several dimensions in which the social phenomena that characterize them take place: the economic, political, social, cultural, environmental and population-based levels (see Table 3).

TABLE 3
Multidimensional analysis of migration and development

DIMENSION	DEVELOPMENT DYNAMICS	MIGRATION
Economic	Concentration of capital Dominance of monopolies and oligopolies Structural unemployment	Super-exploitation of migrant workers Dependency on remittances
Political	Formal elite democracy Dominance of entrenched powers Minimal state and citizen Destruction of social subjects	Reduction of migrants' political rights Stigmatization of migrants as criminals, barbaric and undesirable
Social	Growing social inequalities Exclusion Public, social and labor insecurity Increase in violence	Social exclusion of migrants and their families

DIMENSION	DEVELOPMENT DYNAMICS	MIGRATION
Cultural	Subsumption of scientific/technological work Concentration of mass media Expropriation of cultural heritage	Ideological presentation of migration as an unavoidable natural phenomenon
Environmental	Unequal environmental exchange Rupture of the balance between society and nature Climate change Loss of biodiversity	Forced migration due to natural catastrophes and institutional inability to remedy conditions of vulnerability
Population-based	Generation of surplus population Demographic transition	Compulsive migration Depopulation Family reproduction as migrant workforce Transfer of the demographic dividend

These different levels and dimensions articulate in a dialectical reconstruction of unequal development, forced migration and salary-based remittances, as is explained later.

KEY CONCEPTS

The starting point for a critical analysis of migration is to rethink the key concepts that characterize the complex realities of contemporary capitalism. This can then reveal the causes of migration, migrant contributions, development programs and alternatives. Table 4 shows a series of initial comparisons between the dominant and alternative approaches that will be the basis for the following discussion.

TABLE 4
Key concepts of the dominant and alternative approaches

CONCEPT	DOMINANT	ALTERNATIVE
Migration	Population mobility	Forced migration
Remittance	Money, currency, productive resource	Social relationship (labor exploitation and reproduction of migrant workforce)
Development	Economic growth, war on poverty	Unequal development Neoliberalization Social transformation

UNEQUAL DEVELOPMENT: MONOPOLIZATION, NEOLIBERALIZATION AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

The problem of development must be addressed via two parallel and interrelated tasks: the critical analysis of reality and the creation of alternatives. The approach



to development as a critical analysis of reality is specific to this field of studies, since it is based on the relationship between development and underdevelopment but privileges the viewpoint of underdeveloped, peripheral or postcolonial nations. The purpose is to unveil the relationship between these and developed or central nations.⁴ Among the most immediate current problems is the fact that development is a historical progression that comprises processes of imperialism, colonialism, dependency, postcolonialism and underdevelopment; it has expanded economic asymmetries across the globe, especially between developed and underdeveloped countries; it has also exacerbated social inequalities within nations, both underdeveloped and developed ones.

The current development process, neoliberalization (Harvey, 2007b), is characterized by a concentration of power, wealth and resources into a few hands—the so-called transnational capitalist class that comprises foreign and national elites working in a symbiotic relationship. These exclusive social strata appropriate resources, surplus, profits, dividends, and information. The central agents are transnational monopolies and oligopolies. The majority of the population finds itself barred from social ascent and social inequalities, regional segregation and social exclusion increase.

The dismantling of extant ways of life and labor systems foster international migration and expose millions of workers to worsening living and working conditions, threatening their very survival not only because of the risks they face during their journey (especially in the case of undocumented laborers) but because of the conditions of precariousness and exclusion they experience in receiving nations, where they are perceived as mere labor, disposable people.⁵

Alternative suggestions must transcend normative and decontextualized notions, looking for a type of social transformation based on structural, strategic and institutional change that improves living conditions for the whole of the

⁴ Most development and migration theories elaborated after World War II cater to the vision and interests of developed countries. Underdeveloped countries have been subjected to their theoretical, conceptual and political instruments through the powerful influence of international organizations and developed governments. The ideology of globalization and neoliberalism is a prime example, just like postmodernism and its pessimistic relativism. Concepts like the free market, the end of history and liberal democracy; social capital and the war on poverty, and post-development and counter-development are all examples. However, there are important precedents of independent thought, including ECLAC's structuralism and dependency theories. With a different theoretical approach and different political implications, these perspectives took into account the interests of underdeveloped countries. However, they both succumbed to the theoretical and political counterrevolution of neoliberalism.

⁵ The elites in power do not seem to want to change the course of this model of development, which has failed in terms of growth and accumulation while concentrating power and wealth. There has been little response to constant protests, resistance and rebellions because power has a monopoly on violence, mechanisms of dissuasion, misinformation and manipulation through mass media. In spite of world-wide efforts on both the regional and local fronts (World Social Forum, Zapatista Army of National Liberation, Landless Workers Movement, and ephemeral manifestations such as immigrant protests in France and the United States), we currently do not have an alternative project of development nor a collective agent that can fight against big capital.



population. From this viewpoint, international migration is a product of the complex dynamics of development, which means that the two factors cannot be studied individually. The creation of a transformative political project demands the participation of a social agent and a dialogue based on critical discussion and research.⁶ Alternative development research entails an array of theories, from those inscribed on the margins of neoliberal capitalism («other development», alternative development, social democracy) and the post-neoliberal sphere (social transformation) all the way to socialist proposals. It should be pointed out that there is no single solution and none of these options are free of contradictions or problems of their own.

The need to transcend unequal and excluding neoliberal development requires further research into the theory and practice of post-neoliberal alternative development and a critical and creative dialogue with alternative social movements. From this perspective, the concept of development must surpass conventional frameworks that seek to combat poverty and improve living conditions without modifying structural dynamics, the institutional architecture and the political practices of neoliberal capitalism. The conservative approach is to suggest changes that ensure everything remains the same. It is not enough to suggest new development challenges for the millennium without making changes to neoliberal globalization. One cannot state that development is a type of freedom without changing the rule of «free market» or viewing human development as something more than a statistic. We must promote transformative development alternatives that can indeed improve the living conditions of the general population through profound changes in the structural and strategic dynamics of neoliberal capitalism.

Forced migration and workforce exporting

The conventional definition of migration describes a type of population movement that is taken for granted, merely measured and described rather than explained and contextualized. The main theoretical problem is to unearth the fundamental link between deepening underdevelopment, the generation of surplus population, forced migration, and the role of migrants in development processes in places of origin and destination. When workers are displaced from their source of

⁶ A critical analysis of reality does not restrict itself to description, explanation and understanding, but contributes knowledge, ideas and policies that can transform structures, institutions and policies. The ultimate purpose is to generate better living and working conditions for the majority of the population, which requires tackling problems like social inequalities and asymmetries between nations. Critically and realistically speaking, the required social change cannot come out of mere social practice (e.g., alternative social agents like rebellion and resistance movements); the theoretical and political examination of neoliberal capitalism, as well as ways of transforming or surpassing it, must be nurtured.



labor, the young are unable to enter the labor market, the employed experience a dramatic decrease in the quality of their living conditions and the subsistence system deteriorates to the point that it can no longer be sustained—either locally or nationally. Then, vast groups of people are forced to migrate. These sectors comprise a large part of the population that has been deprived of proper subsistence resources. Forced migration emerges as an individual and familial response to adverse economic, political, social, cultural and environmental conditions that threaten subsistence and social reproduction in the place or region of residence. Unlike what neoclassical, transnational and cultural sociology theories posit, this is not a freely or rationally adopted strategy. Also, forced migration does not refer exclusively to displacement due to political, ethnic and religious conflicts. Nowadays, the main cause for migration is labor, a pattern that caters to the demands of capitalist restructuring, the growing differences between developed and underdeveloped nations, and an increase in social inequalities.

The structural causes of migration can be found in the economic, political, social, cultural and population-based decomposition caused by capitalist dynamics in this phase of neoliberal globalization. On a local level, we have an erosion of the material and subjective bases that keep the population anchored to its place of origin. These should include access to decent and fairly paid work (family subsistence: food, dress, housing); productive resources (financial, natural, technological, human); public services (education, health, infrastructure); satisfactory living and working expectations; the enjoyment of free time; family stability; participation in productive activities, politics, democracy, and full exercise of citizenship. Fractures in all these elements negatively affect quality of life and future expectations, forcing families, individuals and entire communities to abandon their places of origin in search of better conditions, either in other national regions or abroad. Forced migration also includes displacement due to political, ethnic and religious violence or environmental disasters, neither of which is disconnected from the dynamics of development and underdevelopment. In short, the notion of forced migration expands on the traditional view involving refugees and asylum-seekers and incorporates the socioeconomic dimension. Given the intensification of the neoliberalization process, the economic and labor catalysts have become the most dominant forces behind migration. This is not an «economicist» view of migration, but a critical analysis of reality.⁷

⁷ On the contrary, the dominant, post-structural vision posits that migration flows no longer recognize structural causes but reproduce themselves as part of culture or tradition, and that population mobility is prompted by individual and familiar decisions backed by social networks and the social capital amassed by the migrant community. This type of explanation (social networks, migratory system and transnationalism) does not concern itself with migrant contributions to the processes of accumulation in receiving countries although this is, in fact, a fundamental element; the breadth and importance of sociocultural practices, organizational forms of migration (social networks, transnational communities, migrant organizations), the bonds with places of origin and destination (transnational practices: remittances, calls, trips, etc.), and forms of integration or assimilation (identity, property, citizenship and participation) are all exaggerated. In



The political economy of development considers forced migration from a comprehensive perspective, paying particular attention to the structural causes of migration, the generation of surplus population, the process of capitalist restructuring that demands cheap unqualified and qualified workforce, and the role assigned to remittances in the precarious socioeconomic stability of the country of origin and family subsistence. A dialectical analysis of development and migration allows us to understand a) what contributions migrants make to development processes (production, consumption, fiscal funds, culture, demographic reproduction); b) the socioeconomic costs of migration (depopulation, loss of workforce, abandonment of productive activities, family rupture, loss of sociability); c) transfer of resources (human and economic surplus, profits, dividends, intra-firm commerce, natural resources) from underdeveloped to developed nations, and d) new forms of dependence (remittances). At the same time, this vision criticizes the theoretical, political and ideological foundations of so-called globalization: this is, in reality, a class project that intends to concentrate power and wealth among the transnational capitalist class via the dismantling of national economies and at the expense of millions of people on the planet (Harvey, 2007a; Bello, 2006; Petras and Veltmeyer, 2003). This project fosters forced migration. For this reason, it is not enough to explain and understand these processes, but look for alternative forms of development that can reverse excessive migration and the precarious conditions created by labor exploitation, social exclusion and cultural segregation (Delgado Wise and Márquez, 2007a).

The export of cheap workforce is a conspicuous element of forced migration in the globalized neoliberal context. Underdeveloped nations that, under the neoliberal process, have lost control of their national development model and are subjected to the interests of transnational capital, also experience a loss of national sovereignty. Here, the latter is understood as a state's ability to generate sources of formal, decent and fairly paid employment for the majority of the population (Márquez, 2008b). The destruction of the productive apparatus and the imposition of monopolist interests result in vast surplus population that can no longer be fitted into the economic system and lacks resources to ensure its subsistence. Limited available alternatives include programs established by the neoliberal state («combating poverty»), precarious formal employment, subemployment, the informal economy, labor migration, and remittance dependence (Delgado Wise, Márquez and Pérez, 2007).

For the neoliberal state in charge of the underdeveloped nation, the generation of surplus population is a social problem that threatens governability given

addition, this approach takes to globalization to be a given process, a challenge in which one should aspire to participate under the best possible conditions. The idea that globalization (understood as the proliferation of new information and communication technologies) explains and encourages new migration flows (e.g., aerial and other types of quick transport facilitate population mobility) and consequent transnational practices (telephone calls, Internet use, and other mechanisms of remittance transference and political and cultural transmission) is even encouraged.



the potential for eventual resistance, opposition, and anti-establishment rebellion. Emigration becomes a peculiar «escape valve» as the state is freed from pressures involving employment, income and public services. In this sense, forced migration can also be seen as a process of labor exporting surreptitiously encouraged by the neoliberal state, which as a tendency to turn everything into merchandise. Thus, those excluded from employment and subsistence are put on the international market. Migrants, in short, are reduced to their fundamental condition as workforce. This export platform, which is currently booming, has double benefits: the state no longer needs to procure employment or decent living conditions while remittances provide currency flow.

*Remittances as a social salaried relationship
and a new form of dependence*

The dominant approach conceives remittances as money sent by migrants to their families (family remittances) or by migrant organizations to places of origin (collective remittances). This concept is taken at face value by institutions such as the WB and refers to private resources or money transfers between migrants, their families and communities. This is an ahistorical, decontextualized view that is also intrinsic to neoliberal ideology: private resources must be brought into the market sphere (e.g., commercial banking, microfinances, or productive investments). The question is whether they contribute or not to development. This definition and typology of remittances, which is fetishistic in nature, is also quite limited because it does not examine the social relations that generate and drive those resources or the role played by migrants in processes of development. Instead it exults in the social relations between migrants and their relatives.

From our perspective, remittances entail two levels of social relations: 1) production relations (exploitation of migrants through low salaries) and 2) reproduction relations (the part of the salary destined to the sustenance of family members or to migrant organizations that fund public works in places of origin). Remittances are not resources meant to fund development, as the official discourse that paints them as «instruments of development» would have it. As is the case with salaries, these resources are meant to ensure the subsistence of economic dependents through the acquisition of wage goods –that is, food, clothing, housing, domestic implements, luxury goods, transport, education, health, entertainment and, to a lesser extent, family savings and investment. The peculiarity of this income is that it gets transferred from one country to another and is therefore accounted for as currency. The actual purpose of remittances is the same as that of a salary and it is therefore a methodological mistake to give it functions pertinent to public policy (e.g., a catalyst for social development through pro-



ductive investment and the construction of municipal or communal public works, a way to combat poverty and marginalization, counteract social inequalities, etc.). These problems are caused by the structural, political and institutional dynamics of a national and international model of growth and accumulation. Remittances cannot lead to structural change. They are a fraction of salaries earned in conditions of super-exploitation and are meant to aid in the subsistence of economic dependents living in underdeveloped places of origin. Rather than generate development, they create a new form of dependence.

The current typology of remittances (family and collective) does not refer to their salary-based nature but to the receiving entity in the first place and the sender in the second. In addition, this typology does not account for the processes of development to which these resources are tied. From the perspective of a political economy of development, it is necessary to provide a new typology of remittances: salary-based, productive, participative and social (see Table 5).

TABLE 5
Types of remittances

REMITTANCE	DESCRIPTION
<i>Salary-based</i>	Most remittances come from the salaries earned by migrants and are meant to aid in family subsistence (i.e., basic consumption). As far as development is concerned, these contributions are limited to family reproduction and the formation of new migrant workforce. As is the case with any salary, their function and effect is limited, but currency exchange rates create the illusion that they indeed counter poverty and marginalization. In fact, they increase processes of social differentiation and remittance dependency without addressing the root causes of poverty, marginalization, and compulsive migration (Márquez, 2005).
<i>Productive</i>	These are investments by small-scale entrepreneurs in micro-projects. Some go into government programs such as <i>Invierte en México</i> (Invest in Mexico) and others are entirely private. Most of these projects take place in the context of a survival economy and are not tied to local development or the local economy. They also have limited profitability, lack infrastructure, etc. (Márquez, 2006).
<i>Participative</i>	These are gathered by socially organized migrants and destined for public works (e.g., Mexico's Programa Tres por Uno, or Three for One Program). These resources play a role in neoliberal decentralization, which makes local actors such as the municipality or, in this case, the migrant, responsible for local development. Nevertheless, these programs only provide basic social infrastructure and do not generate local development. Paradoxically, they tend to take root in localities with a tendency toward depopulation (Márquez, 2005).
<i>Social</i>	These are resources sent by organized or individual migrants to finance festive, religious or other types of activities the ultimate purpose of which is social/convivial and unrelated to development. Additional resources are sometimes sent to support specific causes, such as humanitarian action in case of a natural disaster, etc. (Márquez, 2005).

RECONSTRUCTION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN UNEQUAL DEVELOPMENT,
FORCED MIGRATION AND SALARY-BASED REMITTANCE

An analysis of the relationship between development, migration and remittances takes place on seven levels or dialectical moments, as explained below (see Table 6):

1) *Neoliberalization dynamics, led by transnational monopolies and oligopolies, lead to lack of social sustainability in peripheral and underdeveloped nations, which in turn leads to forced migration.* Under the influx of neoliberal globalization, big capital displays a restructuring strategy that internationalizes commercial and financial productive processes at the same time that it appropriates the natural resources, economic surplus and cheap workforce of underdeveloped nations. Relations of unequal exchange entail a transfer of surplus. As a consequence, underdeveloped nations generate vast reserves of surplus population the reproduction of which cannot be guaranteed. The lack of social sustainability fosters forced migration, understood as population movement due to a decline in living and working conditions or political and social conflicts that endanger the lives of the population. This translates into a loss of population and even relative or absolute depopulation in addition to abandonment of productive activities and the loss of potential wealth. The rights and demands of large private capital take precedence, leading to the appropriation of strategic and profitable economic sectors in peripheral economies, regardless of the human and environmental costs. Most of the population suffers from poverty, exclusion and insecurity. Migrants become subjects who have lost access to means of production and subsistence and whose most elemental human rights have been violated. Their position as social and political subjects in their own communities and countries has also been undermined.

2) *Migrants, being subject to necessity, contribute to the strengthening of accumulation, growth and development in receiving nations.* Central nations are experiencing a slow process of population ageing and require abundant qualified and unqualified workforce as a spurious competitive strategy. Migration is, in fact, a double transference: cheap workforce along with formation costs. Moreover, migrants contribute to the general cheapening of the workforce because they participate in productive sectors that are labor intensive, generate wage goods and are in process of being rescued, or substitute labor sectors that pay better salaries and benefits. Most undocumented migrants work under conditions of super-exploitation, which entails a series of risks and dangers with minimal retributions, which bars them from climbing the social ladder in the receiving nation. Overall, migrant workers and their families contribute to the strengthening of the receiving nation's internal market through consumption and taxes (while they contribute to the fiscal fund they do not enjoy public services and goods). Besides, migrants help alleviate the pension problems caused by the impending retirement of baby



boomers. And for all this, they are reduced to the condition of cheap human merchandise and used as competitive tools in the strategy of neoliberal growth.

3) *In spite of their role as superexploited workforce, migrants ensure the economic subsistence of their economic dependents and involuntarily underpin the neoliberal development model that has excluded them as producers, consumers and citizens.* The salary-based remittance is meant for family members living in countries of origin. Migrant organizations gather resources (participative remittances) that are destined for public works and social projects in places of origin.⁸ To a lesser extent, migrants who save or invest channel their resources (productive remittances) to the financing of microprojects, most of them within subsistence economies. As lack of social sustainability grows, remittances become a resource with which to ensure subsistence and artificially revive the neoliberal model. But rather than a tool of social transformation, they generate dependence on remittances themselves. On this level, migrants are portrayed as agents of development and given new responsibilities that drastically lessen the social accountability of the state and capital.

4) *Forced migration and remittance dependence are elements in the processes of social decline in places of origin.* In the places and regions with a higher rate of forced migration, material and subjective living and working conditions have drastically diminished, to the point that they have created conditions of social unsustainability. a) Insufficient salaried work and the decline in productive activities within a subsistence economy cannot guarantee family subsistence on a local or regional level; the progressive dismantling of the local productive apparatus is compounded with the absence of public management of regional development. b) Lack of minimal subsistence conditions and the rupture of expectations for a decent life destroy local processes of socialization, even if these are patched over by a «culture of migration.» Traces of social differentiation and the rupture of the social network add to other problems. But the most symptomatic aspect is the generation of surplus population, which is pushed into the informal economy, migration or even illicit activities such as organized crime. c) The deterioration of the natural environment is associated to the socioeconomic decline and the destruction of natural resources, either for reasons involving survival or out of sheer capitalist voraciousness. d) Migration leads to alarming depopulation, the squandering of the demographic dividend, and loss of workforce needed to activate local and regional development processes. Due to deepening conditions of underdevelopment, the excluded population becomes a source of migrant workforce. Remittances, in short, do not generate «human capital» but potential migrants.

5) *Current policies of migration and development veil the extant lack of social sustainability and cater to the neoliberal model.* Neoliberal globalization is supposedly

⁸ In cases such as Mexico's this practice has been institutionalized in the Programa Tres por Uno (Three for One Program), which has been replicated in other nations.



inevitable and promotes a total market and maximum profits at the expense of human rights; it entails the flexibilization of the workforce and the dismantling of the social state. The neoliberal model promotes social inequalities as an incentive through which to increase profit margins and competitiveness in areas eager to attract foreign investment, supposedly for the attainment of economic growth and job creation. Two of the main attractions are the cheapness of the workforce and political control of the labor market. Neoliberalism is a motor behind forced migration. Under this ideology, citizens are reduced to their minimal expression, egotistical individuals seeking to maximize their own interests. A «successful migrant» is one who becomes an entrepreneur and can modernize his place of origin thanks to the cultural knowledge he has brought back from the metropolis.

6) *Forced migration is an expression of the permanent social crisis that characterizes neoliberalism; that is, one of the elements of this civilization crisis.* The current, generalized crisis of neoliberal capitalism questions the use of a strategy (financialization, environmental destruction and labor super-exploitation) that threatens the survival of the majority of the population. The crisis, centered in the United States, shows the unsustainable nature of the neoliberal model as well as the rupture between human production and reproduction. This is a structural and systemic crisis, but also one of social relations where human rights have been violated and where vast sectors of the population, including most migrants, are seen merely as a productive tool and, if applicable, a disposable resource.

7) *In order to reverse the downward spiral of unequal development, forced migration and remittance dependence we must nurture an alternative development that leads to structural, institutional and political changes that can substantially improve the living and working conditions of the majority of the population.* The idea of nurturing alternative development posits the need to eliminate the asymmetric domination relationships between developed nations and the underdeveloped world. These have been taking place under the guise of several principles turned fetishes, including electoral democracy, the free market and economic growth. These support a system of accumulation and power that destroys the material and subjective elements that ensure human reproduction at the periphery of the global system. A real social transformation project should include the participation of migrant and non-migrant social sectors and go beyond stemming forced migration: it must counter the processes of social degradation that characterize underdevelopment and threaten human existence. An expansive alternative project demands the configuration of an alternative development agent. There are some peripheral national experiences involving progressive governments that are trying to implement alternative models of national development. And, of course, the alter-globalization social movement has its own agenda. Nevertheless, we still lack a collective agent that can effectively counter U.S. and European big capital and mobilize an articulate group of agents and actors participating in the financial,



entrepreneurial, political, diplomatic, military, media, academic, religious and cultural spheres. This collective agent should also encompass the social elites of peripheral nations.

TABLE 6
Dialectic between unequal development, forced migration
and salary-based remittances

THESIS	DESCRIPTION	DEVELOPMENT ISSUES
Lack of social sustainability in peripheral nations leads to forced migration.	The destruction of a national development model and the generation of surplus population lead to compulsive migration.	Loss of labor sovereignty, dismantling of the productive apparatus and transfer of the demographic dividend.
Migrants contribute to accumulation, growth and development in receiving nations.	Working in conditions of super-exploitation, migrants cheapen productive processes.	Migrants become a competitive tool for capital, contributing to unequal development between the center and the periphery.
Migrants ensure the subsistence of dependent family members and their contributions underpin the neoliberal model.	Salary-based remittances ensure the consumption of wage goods needed for familial subsistence.	Remittance dependence takes place in a context of productive decline, despair and depopulation.
Forced migration and remittance dependency are linked to social decline in places of origin.	High migration areas become spaces of social exclusion and unsustainability.	Areas of high migration experience an irreversible process of socioeconomic decline under the neoliberal model.
Migration and development policies cater to the neoliberal model and obscure social unsustainability.	The neoliberal model seeks to channel remittances into the market: bancarization, microfinance, productive investments.	Migrants are made responsible for nurturing development in places of origin and in the absence of structural, political and institutional changes to the neoliberal model.
Forced migration is the expression of a social crisis and a component in the current civilization crisis.	Crises involving social relations, the rupture of the society/nature balance and lack of means of subsistence turn migration into a necessity rather than a choice.	Migrants, being vulnerable, are reduced to human merchandise.
Alternative development is needed to substantially improve living and working conditions.	Progressive governments have begun alternative projects, but we still lack a collective transformation agent.	Development based on a total market has failed; decision-making should now focus on equality, the common good and environmentally sustainable reproduction.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE DOMINANT AND CRITICAL APPROACHES

The dominant view on migration and development is intrinsic to the institutional validity of neoliberal capitalism. Migration is presented as the human face of neoliberal globalization (OCDE, 2009), a way to overcome the poverty of the excluded (BM, 2008), attain human freedom (PNUD, 2009) and foster development in places of origin (BID, 2000). Current concepts of development do not contem-



plate structural, institutional and political change. Instead, they turn migrants, who are already superexploited, into agents of development.

A unidirectional and ahistorical view of migration and development turns remittances into fetishes (currency, a private resource or capital) and portray migration as a given. Migrants are secretly made responsible for their own development in a context where the neoliberal state let high-migration regions become hotbeds of surplus population. Paradoxically, while there is no evidence that migration leads to development in places of origin, we know that migrants contribute to development in receiving nations (Delgado, Márquez and Rodríguez, 2009).

Migration cannot be examined thoroughly if the underlying development problems (context, processes, agents, conflicts and alternatives) are not addressed. Trying to explain migration outside of context incurs substantial theoretical, epistemological and political mistakes. While it might help explain demographic, labor and other sorts of trends, it obscures causes, dynamics, processes, contradictions and alternatives. The critical approach seeks to implement structural, institutional and strategic change in order to reverse mechanisms of unequal development and a crisis involving social relations, environmental damage and human production, migration being one of many expressions. Table 7 shows the major differences between the dominant and alternative approaches.

TABLE 7
Dominant and critical approaches to migration

DIFFERENCES	DOMINANT APPROACH	CRITICAL APPROACH
Context	Globalization and advancements in ICT facilitate population mobility and reduce its costs.	Neoliberal unequal development excludes sectors of the population who must travel in search of subsistence while capital requires flexible, disorganized and cheap qualified and unqualified labor. This is a corporate strategy that leads to «competitive advantages» derived from immediate access to workforce in the periphery of the global capitalist system.
Theoretical perspective	Transnationalism, microsocial analysis, push/pull approach, neoclassical/neoliberal perspective and migration and development agenda.	Political economy of migration: the problem of unequal development is an independent variable, migration a dependent one. Critical studies of development: a critique of neoliberal globalization and proposed systemic alternatives.
Conceptual framework	Globalization, market economy, transnational social space, local development, social capital and empowerment.	Neoliberalism, unequal development, forced migration, underdevelopment, post-neoliberalism and social transformation.



DIFFERENCES	DOMINANT APPROACH	CRITICAL APPROACH
Methodological perspective	Methodological individualism: migrants take an autonomous decision to migrate in order to maximize individual and family income. Subjectivism: the culture of migration.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Historical: unequal development, exacerbated by capitalism, feeds most migration flows. 2) Structural: accumulation, growth and development dynamics lead to the sale of workforce in the transnational market. 3) Strategic: governmental policies are behind migration flows.
Argument	Migration is a self-reproducing phenomenon. It no longer obeys historical or structural causes but the individual decision to maximize benefits and it is bound by transnational social networks.	Migration is determined by the movement of transnational capital and the deepening of unequal development, which generates surplus population in the periphery. The latter eventually becomes a source of cheap labor for corporate capital. Migrants become highly vulnerable human merchandise exposed to labor super-exploitation.
Nexus between migration and development	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Remittances are a tool for development in places of origin. 2) Organized migrants encompass a diaspora of development agents. 3) Migrants introduce a modern and civilizing influence in their places of origin by imitating the culture acquired in their destinations. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Lack of development in peripheral nations leads to compulsive or forced migration to central or developed nations. 2) Migrants contribute to the cheapening of the workforce, the fiscal fund, and consumption in receiving countries but remain socially excluded. 3) Migrants contribute to the subsistence of economic dependents in places of origin and contribute resources to public and communal works. 4) In a context where the social responsibilities of capital and the state have been reduced and places of origin experience economic decline, migrants are made responsible for nurturing development in their home communities.
View of development	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Neoliberal concept: growth, competitiveness and free market. 2) Structural adjustment policies: liberalization, privatization and deregulation. 3) Minimalist concept: combating poverty by making the poor responsible for their own development (social capital, empowerment). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Unequal development between the centre and the periphery and social classes. 2) Neoliberalization process: new spaces for big private capital along with the dismantling of capital and the state's social responsibilities. 3) A minimalist notion of development is part of the capitalist institution, which seeks to put a «human face» on this process and guarantee governability without incurring in structural or strategic changes. 3) The need to promote a post-neoliberal type of alternative development.

TABLE 7 (*Continuación*)

DIFFERENCES	DOMINANT APPROACH	CRITICAL APPROACH
View of migration	Migration is the human face of globalization, it provides access to paying work and improvements in the quality of life.	Forced migration due to inequality and social exclusion, the tightening of the labor market, violence, catastrophes and conflict. Compulsive migration flows from underdeveloped regions to developed ones, both nationally and internationally.
View of migrants	Individuals who freely decide to emigrate in order to maximize personal and family benefits. Individuals with national and local identities that maintain bonds to their communities of origin. Agents of development.	The workforce drawn from precarized populations is a source of cheap labor for employers in transit and destination countries. Migrants are reduced to human merchandise. Migrant labor is disorganized, criminalized and overexploited.
The protagonists of migration	Individual migrants, social networks and a transnational community that organizes and direct migration flows. Sociocultural relations between migrants and their counterparts configure a transnational social space.	Private capital deprives the majority of the population from access to production and subsistence sources, freeing (or expelling) it to go in search of sustenance in areas with higher capital density.
View of remittances	Fetishistic viewpoint: currency that repairs faulty national accounts; private resources that improve families' quality of life; money that demarcates a difference in social status; circulating currency with multiplying effects for the local and regional economy; an instrument for local development under ad hoc government programs.	Salary-based resources that come from low salaries earned in conditions of super-exploitation and are meant to ensure the subsistence of economic dependents and form new migrant workers.
View of human rights	Neoliberalism favors the rights of capital over human rights and social and environmental costs.	A restitution of capital's and the state's social responsibility and a search for social transformation based on equality, solidarity, general human rights and the common good.
Costs and benefits of migration	Everyone wins: 1) Sending governments have access to remittances, which buffer the risks of unemployment and social conflict. 2) Receiving businesses have access to a cheap and highly productive workforce. 3) Migrants have access to jobs and income that are not available in their places of origin. 4) Families have access to an income that ensures their subsistence, consumption and improved social status in the place of origin.	1) Costs: remittance dependency, familial rupture, rupture of local social processes, dismantling of alternative social actors, deepening underdevelopment. 2) Transfers: migrant workforce, formation costs, demographic dividend. 3) Losses: depopulation, unproduced potential product, social transformation agents.



DIFFERENCES	DOMINANT APPROACH	CRITICAL APPROACH
Current state of the paradigm	Supported by mainstream agents in international forums and received uncritically by research centers and governments across the world.	Theoretical, conceptual and political proposal that presents itself as an alternative to the dominant approach.

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