

TRAPPED IN LIMBO
Women, migration
and sexual violence



TRAPPED IN LIMBO
WOMEN, MIGRATION AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Sonia Herrera Sánchez

| | |
|---|----|
| 1. INTRODUCTION: POVERTY, INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND WOMENS' RIGHTS | 3 |
| 2. BORDERS AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE: A COMPLEX PHENOMENON | 6 |
| 3. GLOBAL SCOURGE, GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE | 12 |
| 4. ACCOUNTABILITY AND REDRESS | 23 |
| 5. FOR REFLECTION | 26 |
| 6. INFORMATION CENTRES AND FURTHER RESOURCES | 29 |
| 7. BIBLIOGRAPHY | 30 |
| 8. NOTES | 31 |

It seems to me that those who dare to rebel in every age are those who make life possible, it is the rebels who extend the boundary of right, little by little..., narrowing the confines of wrong, and crowding it out of existence.

NATALIE BARNEY

«It is only by walking that you make a road», this saying depends on the type of road, whose feet they are and who the shoes belong to.

ÁNGELA BOTERO PULGARIN
INMACULADA LOZANO CARO

Sonia Herrera is the editor of the blog of Cristianisme i Justícia. She is a specialist in educational media, journalism and armed conflicts, film, and feminist studies. She has done research on the audiovisual representation of the murders of women in Ciudad Juárez. She belongs to a number of organizations and associations working for a culture of peace and in defense of women's rights.

CRISTIANISME I JUSTÍCIA Edition - Roger de Llúria 13 - 08010 Barcelona

+34 93 317 23 38 - info@fespinal.com - www.cristianismeijusticia.net

Printed by: Edicions Rondas S.L. - Legal deposit: B 25789-2014

ISBN: 978-84-9730-345-3 - ISSN: 2014-6566 - ISSN (virtual edition): 2014-6574

Translated by Gerarda Walsh - Cover illustration: Ignasi Flores

Printed on ecological paper and recycled cardboard - November 2014

Privacy Policy: The Fundació Lluís Espinal lets it be known that its data are registered in a file under the name BDGACIJ, legal title of the Fundació Lluís Espinal. These are used only for providing the services we render you and for keeping you informed of our activities. You may exercise your rights of access, rectification, cancelation or opposition by writing to the Fundació in Barcelona, c/Roger de Llúria, 13.

1. INTRODUCTION: POVERTY, INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND WOMENS' RIGHTS

Migration, whether it is internal (within a country), or international, has been present in history since the beginning of mankind. The reasons for migration are diverse (socio-economic, political, cultural, familial, religious, because of climate change, natural disasters, wars, etc.), and the differing types of migration are equally diverse: regular/irregular, long or short-term, voluntary or forced, temporary or indefinite, individual or collective...

As Olivia Alejandra Maisterra explains, the reasons for migration have also historically responded to certain worries or needs such as the search for a better quality of life or an escape from poverty, persecution or violence:

There is the curiosity to cross borders, to get to know new places, cultures and people, the desire to civilise or evangelise, the desire for colonial expansion, the need to broaden one's horizons, to safeguard beliefs, ways of life and worldviews, there is the need to flee from violence, to acquire and exchange knowledge, goods, services and commodities, but there is also the need to survive.¹

It is precisely this need to survive which is currently the main cause of global migration. Migration trends can be broadly described in the following points, taking into account that we do not have all the official statistics since the year 2005² and that it is more than likely that these statistics have substantially increased as a consequence of the global economic crisis in recent years:

- On a global level, the number of international migrants reached 191 million in 2005.
- Approximately one-third moved from one developing country to another, while another third moved

from a developing country to a developed country. In other words, «South to South» migrants are almost as numerous as «South to North» migrants.

– In 2005, Europe received 34% of the total number of migrants; North America received 23%, and Asia received 28%. Only 9% were living in Africa; 3% in Latin America and the Caribbean, and the other 3% in Oceania.

– Although one would be inclined to think that it is predominantly men that migrate, women migrants that cross borders (since as early as 1960) make up almost half of the global total of migrants and outnumber male migrants in developed countries.

Traditional gender roles and inequalities,³ as well as the power dynamics that arise from this, determine the migratory process and at the same time are affected and transformed by it. We could say that on one side of the coin, the decision to migrate on their own offers women a new way of escaping from oppressive relationships, thus improving their quality of life and offering an opportunity to transform the behaviour, role and expectations that are traditionally assigned to women. It may allow them to earn their own wage, which in turn gives them greater autonomy and self-confidence, thus moving away from the patriarchal idea of the man as head of the family and sole provider. However, on the other side of the coin, through migration, women encounter a whole host of vulnerabilities

and risks (harassment, assault, verbal abuse, threats, extortion, inadequate settlement camps, illness, long working hours, job insecurity, irregular legal status, death, etc.) resulting from the isolation, discrimination and exclusion that often accompanies migration, and which often leads them to suffer the same social inequalities associated with their gender which they were already suffering in their place of origin.

Taking into account the fact that we have previously noted that women make up almost 50% of the international migrant population, in this booklet we would like to highlight, from a woman's point of view, a reality which is often hidden or only treated in passing by traditional media sources: that is the reality lived (and suffered) by thousands of migrant women on the move who begin their journey searching for better living conditions and yet often find themselves caught up in a web of chauvinistic violence⁴ (economic, symbolic, psychological, institutional, physical, etc.), so that just by the mere fact of being women they experience a continuous violation of their basic human rights⁵, and this often manifests itself in one of the most cruel ways: sexual violence.

As a woman, it is difficult to tackle this issue without looking at it through the filter of empathy and identifying oneself with the victim. How can we turn a blind eye to the suffering of those who because of their origin or social class find themselves forced to undertake a long journey with an uncertain end, which so often leaves them in limbo, unable to return or to move forward?

Furthermore, how can we not feel hurt or angry when faced with the indifference of a patriarchal or chauvinist society which continues to look for excuses for violence against women? And why do we not speak out when in every country in the world (to a lesser or greater extent), women continue to suffer the consequences of historical discrimination and we continue to see on a daily basis

how our bodies are invaded, judged, objectified and sold? This should not be allowed to continue. This is why this booklet is the result of an internal desire to revolt against this reality, as well as resulting from an unswerving commitment against chauvinist violence in all its forms, in order to draw attention to these shocking injustices and promote change.

2. BORDERS AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE: A COMPLEX PHENOMENON

If risk and vulnerability characterise migratory movements in general –particularly in cases of undocumented migrants–, the situation is severely exacerbated in the case of women given that the attacks and the abuse they suffer is often of a sexual nature, attacking their physical, psychological and emotional integrity.

Sexual violence is a complex phenomenon, polymorphic in nature (in that it touches on the physical, the psychological, the social and the institutional), and very difficult to document because of the lack of migration statistics relating to gender in some parts of the world, and also due to the absence of reliable statistics and reports on sexual attacks in particular.

As a concept, we can define sexual assaults suffered by women migrants as any act or attack, whether physical (rape, for example) or symbolic (threats or verbal attacks, vulgar comments, harassment, etc.), which is directed

towards the sexuality, identity and body of the female migrant and which is interpreted and received as such.

In short, and as affirmed by the Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Platform for Action among other international projects, the actions which define sexual violence can be considered as examples of the power imbalance that exists in relation to women, which continues to happen in society and which continues to subordinate women in relation to men solely because of their gender.

2.1. Vulnerable bodies: patriarchy, capitalism and the objectification of the female body

Violence is a cruel way of dominating the other person and objectifying them: «Targeted violence against women covers a broad spectrum, ranging from the extreme conditions of war to the daily reality of the domestic sphere»⁶.

This objectification of women is no more than a denial of their equality and equivalent to an attitude of «ownership towards the body and sexuality of the woman»⁷, regarding her as a possession that is subject to the will of the attacker to do with as he wishes. Based on this premise, it is logical to conclude that sexual violence is carried out with greater impunity in the context of border regions (which we will be looking at later), where an objectified understanding of women is widespread and lacks any social censure. Objectifying women turns women into a commodity, and as such, one that is vulnerable to rape (and even death).⁸

In this way, the capitalist notion of private property and patriarchal ideology are perversely joined together to constantly validate the subordination and domination of women through control and forced non-consensual use of their bodies, which is accentuated in the case of sexual violence against migrant women in border regions or in areas that are migratory movement zones.⁹

We need to reflect on this question: why is exposure to sexual violence or death resulting from it the main price that women have to pay in order to participate in this so-called intercultural

celebration of globalisation? It looks instead like a global game of chess played by the kings of capitalism, colonialism and patriarchy, where the pawns or the female figures that leave their starting squares are lost, devoured on their journey or slaughtered. Nevertheless, feminism and critical thought must also realise that these pieces can be crowned as Queens if they get as far as the eighth square.¹⁰

Sometimes, moreover, rape is used as a means of humiliating and terrorising other women, as well as the men that accompany them, given that in many cultures and societies sexual attacks are viewed as attacks against male honour or even against the entire community to which the victim belongs. In this way, as Olivia Ruiz states, «to rape a migrant woman in front of her husband, brother, son or whoever is with her, degrades the woman in the eyes of the man (or men) who are accompanying her».

Another aspect of the objectification and commodification of the female body during the course of the migratory journey is linked to the use of sex as a survival strategy. Some migrant women use their body in exchange for money or in exchange for a ticket to their destination, and offer sexual favours in exchange for protection, food, help or in order to avoid police checkpoints, attacks or gang rapes, among other obstacles.

Be this as it may, the most basic rights of citizenship pertaining to migrant women are violated at every stage of the migratory process. At the outset of the journey, during the journey and often at the final destination point, women lose

their right to «physical integrity, to a dignified form of work and a life free from violence». But going beyond the socio-economic context, what specifically defines the sexual abuse suffered by migrant women? Let us consider two essential characteristics:

– In the first place, sexual violence in itself is an intrinsic element of female migration, which systematically occurs in many border regions around the world. Yet despite its gravity, it has come to be regarded as an «inevitable» part of the journey.

– Secondly, from this notion of the «inevitability» of violence comes the concept of «learned helplessness», which Bridget Wooding describes as «a feeling of resignation among female victims of violence who see themselves as being already “beaten” and end up viewing these attacks as a punishment and an unavoidable destiny».

2.2. Risk and vulnerability: human traffickers known as the *coyotes* and *polleros*, the military and drugs

During the journey, women who decide to migrate are exposed to specific risks and obstacles linked to the fact that they are female, which puts them in a particularly fragile position, and as we have previously mentioned, they become victims of abuse, theft, rape and sexual exploitation, among other forms of violence. This violence can be perpetrated by a wide variety of attackers, whose actions and behaviour have been formed against a broader chauvinistic

backdrop of violence against women: *coyotes* or *polleros* (a name that is given to people that are hired by migrants and used as undercover guides to help them cross the border, mainly between Mexico and the USA), corrupt members of the police force, immigration authorities, members of the military, gang members, common criminals, drug traffickers and even other migrants.

Writing on the violent acts carried out by the authorities, the Mexican journalist Sara Lovera stated that «nobody is taking the migrants’ parts. They are suffering so many violations of their basic human rights, and extortion is one of the worst crimes: in order to allow them to cross through Mexico, the payment demanded by the authorities is sex».

This is how Olivia Ruiz explains the situation in her article «Sexual violence: the case of Central American migrants on the southern border»:

They face robbery and assaults from criminals, extortion and bribery by officials as well as the multitude of diverse dangers that go with getting transported on top of heavily laden trucks or freight trains, or crossing deserts, rivers, forests or mountains on foot.

There are in fact many authors such as Amy Friedman who maintain that crossing the border between countries becomes a high risk and vulnerable situation for migrant women who must overcome several dangers in this singular context, even when they are supposedly under the protection of the authorities or under the wing of a

smuggler or *coyote*, who is supposed to be helping them cross the border (if the latter does not flee with their money and abandon them to their fate). The situation becomes particularly precarious when these women are trafficked through by human trafficking networks and then become subject to sexual violence and mistreatment by the very men who were supposed to be assuring their safe passage.

Approximately 6 out of every 10 migrant women suffer some form of sexual attack during their journey; attacks that are often carried out as a display of power, and as an instrument of repression and oppression used by men against women. As well as gender inequality, the context of vulnerability in which sexual violence takes place in these border areas is also closely linked to the violence that is commonly suffered by undocumented immigrants, to their helplessness that is due to their lack of financial resources and absence of social power, to the loss of their basic rights, and on many occasions, to their ethnicity, and to cultural and historical factors linked to their place of origin and to the background of each woman.

2.3. Sexual violence, HIV and reproductive health

In addition to the emotional and psychological consequences of sexual violence, (limitation of one's emotional capacity, apathy, insomnia, hypervigilance, irritability, etc.), rape also directly affects the sexual and reproductive health of migrant women.

Firstly, and in spite of the fact that the relationship between international migration and HIV/STIs has not been studied in great depth yet, we know that the movement of people and the vulnerability of migrants plays a decisive role in the spreading of sexually transmitted diseases like AIDS, particularly in international border regions which, as we have seen, are particularly hostile places for women migrants.

We should add that: «Migrants are sometimes stigmatised as disease carriers and it is important to make the point that migration does not in itself cause HIV infection, rather it depends on how migration happens and under what conditions.» (Overview Report on Gender and Migration by BRIDGE and the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) of the UK).

It is also essential to take into account that the globalisation of poverty and the gradual increase in numbers of people migrating are linked to the dismantling of local rural economies based in the agricultural sector, due to various factors such as natural disasters, armed conflicts or structural poverty. It is under these conditions alone that the relationship between poverty and migration has resulted in situations with a high level of violence in which sexual attacks, in addition to trafficking, prostitution and other activities relating to gender discrimination, promote the spread of HIV among people whose risky lifestyles –in the words of Judith Butler–, are presented as being not worth worrying about.

Sexual violence, therefore, increases the risk of contracting diseases like HIV

given that women are placed in a situation where they are no longer in charge of their sexual and reproductive health, and are regularly forced into risky situations with no opportunity to negotiate the terms of their sexual relationships and no choice in the use of condoms.

The lack of access to social and health services, to prevention programmes, counselling and protection from sexual violence, brings another aspect of vulnerability to migrant women who due to this «learned helplessness» we spoke about earlier, assume that they will inevitably be raped during their journey or that they will have to use their bodies as a passport with which they can reach their destination. Faced with this attitude, and in order to avoid falling pregnant as a result of rape, more women are deciding before they even begin their journey, to inject themselves with powerful contraceptive drugs such as Depo-Provera (also popularly known in Central America as the «anti-Mexico injection»), which remains effective for up to 3 months and has a success rate of 97%.

In the article by Carlos Salinas «The path of those who will be raped» published in the *El País* newspaper in November 2011, he describes the normality with which Depo-Provera is now used:

For Central American women, it is easy to access contraceptive drugs such as Depo-Provera, because this has been used for decades by health authorities as a family planning method. In Nicaragua, clinics such as Profamilia deliver 15,000 injections

per year to 4000 women, 80% of these based in rural areas. Its use has spread throughout Latin America and it is recognised by the US Food and Drug Administration, (FDA) [...]. However, some NGOs in Latin America affirm that this is a dangerous drug, due to possible damage it can cause to bones as well as hormonal problems, and that it has been introduced in the region by rich countries as a method of mass sterilisation, in order to avoid population growth in poor countries.

In spite of everything that has been discussed up to now in this booklet, and according to what Alejandrina García Rojas has stated, who is in charge of the Program for HIV and Women as part of the organisation Integral Health for Women (Sipam), migrant women are still willing to continue their journey, which could last weeks or even years, in search of a better life.

2.4. Migrant women and institutional abuse

For migrant women, security and justice are not guaranteed. This lack of guarantees has brought about a new form of institutional abuse which leaves migrant women defenceless as they undertake the long journey from Asia, Latin America or Africa, in search of a better quality of life for themselves and/ or their families in so-called first world countries, which often ignore them or treat them as invisible people, looking the other way.

As for the institutional response and the attention that migrant women who are victims of sexual violence receive,

this usually becomes yet another form of mistreatment, which results in a huge lack of trust on their part towards the ability of the authorities (social, health, political, and legal services...) to protect them or to resolve the situation. This lack of trust in turn results in a lower rate of reporting crimes and thus causes this type of violence to remain invisible.

Several studies have put the notion of institutional violence on the table, since when women do notify authorities of acts of violence against them, they often feel as if they are being violated all over again. This is because they are met with attitudes of indifference, discrimination and inactivity on the part of the authorities that should, in theory, bear the responsibility of preventing or

intervening in cases of any type of violence against women.

In practice, the legal systems of many countries where these attacks are carried out do not offer guarantees to women regarding the defence of their rights, or the preservation of their freedom of movement or physical and psychological integrity. This is why on too many occasions, the system itself does not encourage the reporting of such crimes and nor does it facilitate the arrest or punishment of the attackers.

The efforts launched so far by non-governmental organisations and civil bodies attempting to improve the violent situations encountered along these migration routes and to assist and guide the migrant women who see their rights violated, continue to remain insufficient.

3. GLOBAL SCOURGE, GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

«The place of origin, the migration route and the destination are all framed by the social construction of gender, in such a way that the experiences of women are very different than those of men, for both those who leave and those who are left behind. Specific issues such as sexual violence, the control over their sexuality and the limitation of their human rights are shared by migrant women, in spite of their different origins, social status and personal expectations.

As with any social phenomenon, migration has many different aspects and offers us stories that are marked by human determination to overcome obstacles. There are numerous traces of these silent travelers who are redefining rights, linking people and cultures, overcoming uncertainties, and passing on knowledge.»¹¹

As the list of the most dangerous border crossings of the planet put together in 2011 by the Foreign Policy magazine demonstrates, conflicts and violence do not just happen within countries, and on many occasions take place on the country's borders.

3.1. The Dominican-Haitian border

As we have already seen, borders are places with a tangled mix of characters and groups, and where different forms

of violence and discrimination against migrant women take place. On the border between the Dominican Republic and Haiti in particular, migrant women and those displaced by the earthquake of January 2010 and more recently, by the post-electoral violence unleashed in April 2011, move between a swarm of officials, police, customs officials, pimps, con artists, racketeers, potential employers, traffickers, etc., and find themselves exposed and subjected to various types of violence, whether that

be violence related to their gender, to their status as migrants, or to their social and ethnic class.

Haiti is a failed State marked by extreme poverty and institutional violence. Haitian women that abandon their country and try to cross the border mainly find work in the following areas: as sellers in the Comendador market (in the province of Elías Piña, on the Dominican side); as domestic workers in houses; or in prostitution, both in the city of Comendador and in Belladère (on the Haitian side).

These are the major hotspots of the border between the two countries and this is also the area with the highest and most normalised levels of male violence in all its forms (physical, sexual, economic, institutional, verbal, psychological...). The border area also brings with it high risks of illegal human trafficking, as well as trafficking with the aim of sexual exploitation.

More specifically, the Comendador market is an important work and business space for many Haitian women, who find themselves exposed to corruption and to the «bribery» of the authorities that extort money from them and have been known to threaten them with deportation if they do not agree to have sexual relations with them.

While sexual violence against Haitian women refugees in the tent cities –in the camps of Port-au-Prince and its surrounds–, has received much media attention in recent years due to the increase in studies and investigations related to violence against women in Haitian camps, the same level or depth of attention has not been afforded

to the complex border situation (which is far removed from capital cities and centres of power) and its consequences on the life of migrant women.

Adding yet more risk to the situation, the investigator Bridget Wooding explains that «the outbreaks of cholera (2010–2011) led authorities to close the border on several occasions and to separate the Haitian sellers from the Dominican ones in a provisional market in El Carrizal, all of this in the name of public health. This action caused the number of women crossing the border through unofficial points to rise, where they found themselves exposed to robbery, sexual violence and in extreme cases, homicide»¹².

In spite of everything, the percentage of reported cases of violence against Haitian women in border regions continues to remain very low for different reasons:

- In the first place, ignorance of their rights.
- Secondly, poorly operating and inadequate care services on both sides of the border.
- Lastly, the high cost of these services and resources on the Haitian border.

3.2. Sub-Saharan Africa-Morocco-Europe

Morocco is also a transit country for many migrants and asylum seekers who are coming from sub-Saharan Africa and trying to reach Europe, although they often find themselves having to remain trapped indefinitely in Morocco

without being able to make progress on their migratory path and without being able to return to their country of origin.

Many of these people are fleeing from extreme poverty or bloody armed conflicts, and living conditions in Rabat, Casablanca or Oujda (the border with Algeria), are extremely difficult. This is discussed in the 2010 report on sexual violence in the region by the organization Doctors Without Borders (MSF):

The great majority of women interviewed by MSF (70% of cases) explained that they had fled their countries of origin due to armed conflict, political persecution and other types of violence or abuse, such as forced marriages, domestic violence and abuse in the home. In the rest of their testimonies, particularly in the case of women coming from Nigeria, the reasons given were economic ones, such as poverty.

In the same year, MSF attended to some 145 victims of sexual violence. According to the organisation, between May 2009 and January 2010, «one out of every three women attended to by MSF in Rabat and Casablanca admitted to having suffered single or multiple episodes of sexual violence, whether in their home country, during the migratory process and/or once they had reached Moroccan territory. This figure could be even higher, given that some women refuse to talk or do not realise what their own testimony gives evidence for. The use of sexual violence thus becomes one of the most common violent practices against women in the context of migration».

The border journey between Algeria and Morocco (travelling from the Algerian city of Maghnia to the city of Oujda, in Morocco) demonstrates the extreme danger of the crossing and the particular vulnerability of the women who make it. As the aforementioned report by the MSF points out, the journey towards Maghnia (an area where migrant groups wishing to enter Morocco are concentrated) is usually made under harsh physical conditions:

In general they are travelling for several days huddled in the back of pick-ups that cross the desert, without stopping to sleep or eat and with hardly any water. In some places, they are forced to walk to avoid checkpoints. According to several testimonies, there are cases of men, women and children who die en route because of the conditions of the journey or due to violence. Women also run a higher risk of falling victim to sexual violence.

According to statistics compiled by MSF, 59% of the 63 women interviewed who passed through Maghnia on their way to Oujda suffered sexual violence. This figure could be even greater if you take into account the total number of migrants that pass through this point, given that this is the most commonly used route by migrants –the trafficking networks drive migrants through this route– and the main players that operate in this area between the two border posts are particularly violent.

As noted earlier in this section, many migrants and asylum seekers find themselves «stranded» in Morocco,

abandoned to their fate and unable to resume their journey to nowhere. This situation of limbo and irregularity prevents women who have suffered attacks from reporting them out of fear and due to a lack of trust of the authorities, reinforcing once again the impunity protecting their attackers. Some of these women also find themselves under the control of traffickers or trafficking networks and suffer daily attacks and sexual exploitation.

There is no better testimony than that of the migrants themselves, some of which are gathered in the following extract from the collection «Diez barcas varadas en la playa. Diez relatos sobre la migración africana subsahariana»¹³, compiled by the Service Accueil Migrants in Casablanca in 2010:

In two weeks I arrived in Maghnia, on the border between Algeria and Morocco, and I had to wait another 3 months there. On the outskirts of Maghnia there was a large migrant camp: it was a huge place at that time (November 2004). It was not a good place to be. I regretted leaving Gao: this was even worse! We were in hell! Many people died at that camp in Maghnia. Men were the only ones who were allowed to go out looking for food and water. Women had to wait inside, under lock and key.

We slept and we ate, that was all. [...] As a woman, I have to say that this was a difficult time for me. I learned how to pretend I was sick in order to keep myself away from the men. My pregnancy was not enough to protect me. Some girls were beaten and wounded with knives when they tried

to avoid having sex with the men in the camp. I used to hide and... well, I have to admit that I did not go for a shower too often, if you know what I mean?

It was not the first time that I found myself in this type of situation as I was already used to this, but Maghnia was different. [...] There was no way out: it was a prison for migrants on the Moroccan border.

[...] At the start of 2005 I was ready to overcome the last obstacle that was blocking my entrance into Europe. But there was something that didn't fit: after this long journey towards Europe, I realised that the people who were paying for me wanted me to go into prostitution, but this was not what I had in mind. I made up my mind: once I reached Europe I would escape once more and choose my own life. I had already tried prostitution and it was not an option for me. The people in Europe organised the last stage of my journey: I was to go to Tangiers, live in the wild with my baby and from there, catch the boat to Spain.

[...] Mali was the first long stop: the city of Gao. Three months of wasted time. There were many girls from different countries. We were in a small house, waiting. They told me they were going to Europe like me. I was surprised to meet so many girls who were travelling to Europe to go to school. I can still remember the way they began to laugh at me when I asked them what kind of studies they would like to do in Europe. It was then that I understood that prostitution

would be my future. Depressing, very depressing.

I called my «contact lady» in Europe and asked her what was going on. Then she told me I would get the education promised me, but that I would have to work for it. She told me that if I didn't want to carry on the journey I could go home and that is what I decided to do immediately.

But that was when all my problems started: she did not send me any more money and all my papers were taken off me, so I could not move freely, I could not return home. I was alone, stranded in Gao.

I didn't even have the address of my family and I also knew well that I couldn't ask them for help, because they too had no money.

3.3. Central America-Mexico-U.S.A.

3,185 kilometres long. This is the length of the border that separates the United States and Mexico. A border that in recent decades has become one of the most troubled and dangerous areas in Latin America.

In spite of this, the northern border of Mexico receives a high number of migrants, mostly Central Americans and people from other Mexican States who are trying to secretly travel into the United States looking for an opportunity to improve their quality of life and that of their families. When they fail, many of them are forced to remain at the border and look for work in Mexican cities like Tijuana, Juárez, Matamoros or Nuevo Laredo in order to survive or

in order to get enough money to continue their journey at a later stage, (80% of Mexican factories are found in the border area). In many of these cities, there are «tolerance zones» in which violence, capitalism, (exacerbated by the factory industry), prostitution and drug trafficking¹⁴ are the order of the day.

Since 2006, the violence has been concentrated on the Mexican side of the border, as a consequence of the so called «war on drugs» undertaken by the ex-President Felipe Calderón who militarised the country by deploying some 25,000 army troops and federal police throughout the territory. The increase in violence was immediate and 7 years later, the statistics are harrowing.

According to the organisation Mexico United Against Crime, between 2007 and 2011 80,745 people died in this conflict (47,453 according to government figures).

Although at first the violence was concentrated in the northern states, it has progressively spread across the rest of the country and it is today considered by the UN as being one of the five countries with the highest level of organised crime in the world.¹⁵

In the particular case of the northern border, this is characterised by its triple function: as that of a social border that separates two very different levels of economic life;¹⁶ as a cultural border separating the Anglo Saxon and the Latin American world; and as a natural frontier since the Bravo River (or Río Grande as the Americans call it), across which thousands of migrants try to cross each year, covers a large part of the

border between both countries, approximately from El Paso (Texas) to the mouth of the Gulf of Mexico in the State of Tamaulipas.

However, if we take this context into account, why then is there such a high number of migrants crossing this border? While it is true that globalisation has contributed to the rise in the number of migrants in general, in the case of migration from the southern States of Mexico and from Central and South America towards the «American dream», many other factors come into play such as political, historic, economic and cultural ones, for example, the post-war context of countries such as Nicaragua, Guatemala, El Salvador or Honduras which have serious structural issues since the eighties and nineties.

Without support networks and faced with a total lack of information on their rights, the migrants coming from Central America that travel through Mexico on their way to the United States suffer countless humiliations, as has been reported on several occasions by various human rights organisations like Amnesty International and other media outlets that have tried to draw attention to this situation.

Within this context, groups that would typically find themselves oppressed are placed in a situation of even greater vulnerability in relation to the violation of their human rights, as in the case of women migrants who abandon their communities in these countries in order to go in search of a better life:

In the past, people migrated to find a better quality of life. Today people migrate never to return again, and

crossing the border becomes a life or death decision. On the border, no man's land, the right to life is worth almost nothing, becoming instead like a great void where people search for the «American dream», sometimes dying in their search and leaving the hopes of a better life for thousands of people in the desert or in the river.¹⁷

As the words of a popular song by José Alfredo Jiménez say, in some parts of the world «life is worth nothing». This phrase certainly describes the journey undertaken every day by hundreds of Central American immigrants in order to cross Mexico, riding what is known as *La Bestia*, a freight train which crosses the entire country from south to north (a journey of some 5,000 km) and in which many migrants travel, in spite of the dangers involved.

The undocumented migrants, having paid around 1200 dollars to the Mafia (about 880 Euro), get on the train while it is moving and travel either on the roof or between the wagons of the train, facing threats and attacks from different criminal elements during their journey such as *Los Zetas*¹⁸, a criminal syndicate that split from the Gulf Cartel in 2010. The priest Alejandro Solalinde, who some years ago founded the hostel Hermanos del Camino de Ixtepec, a welcome centre for travellers offering comprehensive care and support to those who have chosen this route to reach the United States, has drawn attention to this on numerous occasions:

The migrant is a commodity subjected to extortion, robbery and kidnappings¹⁹ on their journey. Now a new practice has emerged: demand one hundred

dollars for every leg of the journey in the train, and if they don't have it, shoot them. Some are killed, others are lucky enough to jump off and are only injured, while others are mutilated [...] These are people who have been forced out of their homes and their countries because there is no work for them and no quality of life. We are trying to warn them that what there is in the north (of Mexico) is worse. We tell them about the kidnappings, we explain to them that they are putting their lives in danger, but they say to us that, rather than die in their place of origin, they would prefer to die trying to reach the north. And they continue travelling and looking for new ways to get there.²⁰

Father Solalinde has been assaulted and arrested on many occasions for highlighting criminal organisations and for denouncing the indifference and complicity of the government and authorities. He also works towards obtaining fairer laws that would protect migrants on their journey through Mexico and allow them to travel along safer routes. For the moment however, none of the initiatives have become a reality.

We should point out that the majority of Central Americans who try to cross into the United States are women. According to the National Bureau for Migration in Guatemala, women represent 57% of Guatemalan migrants and make up 54% of migrants from El Salvador and Honduras. In this context of injustices and wrongs, it is the women who endure the worst: it is estimated that between 6 and 8 out of every 10 Central American women are

raped on their way through Mexico. Others, as we previously pointed out, find themselves obliged to offer sexual favours in return for protection or in order to cross borders and checkpoints.

Unfortunately, gender-based suffering, discrimination and violence do not cease on reaching the northern border.

3.4. Displaced women in other parts of the world

Another form of migration is forced displacement within a country (as in the case of Colombia), or out of a country (as is happening in Somalia, for example). In these circumstances, migrants do not have a concrete migratory plan, but instead find themselves forced to abandon their places of origin against their will, fleeing war, food crises or natural disasters among other examples.

On the subject of the forced displacement of women due to armed conflicts, paragraph 136 of the Beijing Platform for Action (UN 1995) notes the following:

Women and children constitute some 80 per cent of the world's millions of refugees and other displaced persons, including internally displaced persons. They are threatened by deprivation of property, goods and services and deprivation of their right to return to their homes of origin, as well as by violence and insecurity. Particular attention should be paid to sexual violence against uprooted women and girls employed as a method of persecution in systematic campaigns of terror and intimidation and forcing members of a particular ethnic, cul-

tural or religious group to flee their home. Women may also be forced to flee as a result of a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons enumerated in the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol, including persecution through sexual violence or other gender-related persecution, and they continue to be vulnerable to violence and exploitation while in flight, in countries of asylum and resettlement and during and after repatriation. Women often experience difficulty in some countries of asylum in being recognised as refugees when the claim is based on such persecution.

The Beijing Platform for Action urges countries to intervene in order to reduce the number of human rights violations against women in situations of conflict and more specifically to «provide protection, assistance and training to refugee women, to other displaced women in need of international protection and internally displaced women».

Just as with «voluntary» migratory movements, the vulnerability of women following displacement due to conflict, natural disasters, drought, etc. is particularly high, especially on the way to refugee camps. Most of these women leave their country of origin with few belongings or resources, often with children in their care and with little information on how to get to a safe place.

For this reason, displaced women are particularly vulnerable to sexual violence on their journey, and even in the refugee camps –which are supposed

to be safe–, as much as from the military and armed forces as from other men who take advantage of their circumstances. These women not only have to deal with the threats and abuse they suffer personally, but also have to take care of the wellbeing and physical security of their families.

Approximately half of all displaced people are adult women and children who face the harsh conditions of long days on the road on their journey into exile, often encountering harassment and sexual violence, having lost the shelter of their homes, the protection of their family units and the support of their governments who subject them to complete indifference.

In recent years however, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has launched a series of programs aimed at guaranteeing access for women to legal protection and more importantly, to emergency humanitarian aid as they try to put their lives together, although these measures have not been enough to alleviate the generalised abuse of women.

The following are some examples of current situations of displacement where women have found themselves facing extreme violence, of which they are both the main victims and the main survivors.

3.4.1. Somalia-Kenya

After more than 20 years of armed conflict and in a country where 43% of the 9.8 million inhabitants live in extreme poverty, Somalian women are the perfect example of the macabre

alliance between capitalism and patriarchy in the world, and of the apathy of the international community towards their suffering. In Somalia, women systematically suffer a whole series of injustices, shortages and violence on a daily basis among which are (to name but a few) famine, extreme poverty, sexual attacks, genital mutilation (particularly infibulation²¹), forced marriages and no health system, which has a substantial effect on their sexual and reproductive health, (in Somalia a pregnant woman has a 50% chance of dying during childbirth).

The displacement from Somalia to reach Dadaab, the largest refugee camp in the world on the Kenyan side of the border, is long and dangerous. During the journey, women and children are victims of rape committed by armed men, usually members of the military and robbers, and once they arrive in Dadaab, their prospects of reaching a safe haven are often overshadowed by new obstacles, such as the constant threat of sexual violence.

This was highlighted in August 2013 by Donatella Rovera, Amnesty International's Senior Crisis Response Advisor:

Women and children, already forced to flee their homes due to armed conflicts and droughts, now face the additional trauma of living under the threat of sexual attack. [...] Many of the women we have spoken to live in shelters made out of rags and plastic, which offer no safety at all. In the context of the current disarray within the country, and due to the lack of safety in these camps, it is not surprising that such terrible abuse goes on.

According to data from the United Nations, in 2012 there were 1700 cases of rape in settlements for internally displaced people in Somalia, and at least 70% of these were carried out by armed men wearing government uniforms. Almost a third of the survivors were under 18 years of age.

Most victims of sexual violence explained that they had not reported the attack to the authorities because they were afraid of the stigma that went with it, and also because they did not believe that the police authorities had the ability or the willingness to find out what had happened, given that criminal proceedings and sentences for rape and other forms of sexual violence are rare in Somalia. On this subject, Rovera affirms that:

The inability and unwillingness of the Somalian authorities to investigate these crimes and make those responsible face justice makes the survivors of sexual violence even more isolated and contributes to creating a climate of impunity in which the attackers know that they do not have to pay for their crimes. [...] They need to take specific measures in order to guarantee justice for the victims and convey a strong and unequivocal message that sexual violence cannot and will not be tolerated.

3.4.2. Colombia

Internal displacement in Colombia due to the pressure created by the armed conflict which is developing in the East and North-East of the country since the sixties between the Colombian government, the guerrilla groups and

paramilitaries, has left this region practically uninhabited.

In 2009, Oxfam ratified in one of its reports that «sexual violence is one of the main causes of forced displacement in Colombia» and asserted that, as in many other parts of the world, impunity coupled with the indifference of the authorities mean that cases of sexual violence are not investigated, prosecuted or punished, and that there is no redress system. Against this backdrop, migrants do not report such crimes and justice never comes...

In the case of Colombia, there are credible reports from national and international research on attacks perpetrated against the sexual and reproductive rights of women by various armed groups involved in the conflict. These include a wide range of crimes: sexual abuse and rapes, forced contraception and sterilisation, forced prostitution, sexual slavery as well as other forms of sexual violence and even death.²²

Moreover, given that sexual violence is one of the primary causes of internal displacement in Colombia, the UN Committee for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women noted on 23rd October 2013 that women should be included in the negotiations for peace that the Colombian government has begun with FARC since November 2012.

3.4.3. Somalia and Colombia are not isolated cases

In other areas of the world such as Southeast Asia, the Democratic Republic

of Congo, Chad or Sudan, thousands of women fall victim to sexual violence each year.

For example, the Congolese women and children who are deported from Angola are often sexually assaulted by the Angolan and Congolese security forces along the border between the countries, where sexual violence has become a pandemic.

Similarly, armed rebel groups systematically attack hundreds of thousands of refugees in Darfur. The peace treaties made with the leaders of some armed groups and the joining of forces to monitor the border have not improved the situation. According to reports from the Women's Refugee Commission, in the majority of refugee camps visited in 2005 in Chad and Sudan, there were reported cases of physical attacks and rapes of women carried out by members of the Janjaweed militia. As a result of these attacks, many women became pregnant but did not report the crimes out of fear and because of the social stigma that still accompanies victims of sexual violence in many societies.

In many Asian countries like Thailand and Myanmar (Burma) many poor women fall victim to sexual violence. In these countries, where the flux of internally displaced women migrants is constant (intensive labour industries of products destined for export give work to thousands of women), forced labour, sexual exploitation and trafficking are common human rights abuses. In Myanmar, the army of the State Council for the Restoration of Law and Order (CERLO) forces poor people to work

while soldiers submit the young women to all sorts of harassment.

In order to fight against discrimination and violence against displaced women in post-war areas, Resolution 1325 (2000) of the Security Council of the United Nations asks that countries and their armed forces incorporate a gender-based perspective into their actions and receive training on defending

women's rights. It also invites those responsible for designing refugee camps, who are charged with the protection, repatriation and resettlement of refugees to take into account the specific needs of women and children. Unfortunately, the failure to implement this Resolution has not been addressed and there are only a few countries that have put the UN recommendations into practice.

4. ACCOUNTABILITY AND REDRESS

Misogynistic behaviour (hatred of women), corruption, social impunity²³ (the passivity and the lack of punishment from society) and state impunity (the lack of criminal prosecution by the authorities), form a macabre pact against migrant women who become the main victims of male violence which is getting increasingly worse in many border areas and migration routes around the world.

In this situation, the lack of a redress system for migrant victims of sexual violence continues to be one of the greatest unresolved issues. The profound consequences that abuse has on women, including on the perception they have of themselves, far transcends the migratory process and becomes a traumatic episode that accompanies them and stigmatises them for life if they do not receive the appropriate support through programs, qualified personnel and support systems in possession of all the necessary knowledge and resources on the migratory process in order to adequately respond to the needs of women who have been attacked.

Up to now international mechanisms in place in relation to migration lack

specific provisions on gender and are not widely implemented. Even so, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) considers that:

The duty to act with the necessary due diligence requires a real commitment from the States to adopt measures aimed at preventing, investigating, punishing and redressing sexual violence; measures calculated to ensure women's full enjoyment of their rights and their right to live free from discrimination. As part of this obligation, by ratifying international instruments like the Convention of Belém do Pará, which is even today the most ratified instrument within the inter-American human rights system, the States have acknowledged

that the problem of sexual violence against women is a priority.²⁴

The seriousness of such attacks is such that only compliance with international standards of truth, justice and reparation can repair the moral damage caused. But for this to happen transformative measures need to be implemented in contexts of discrimination where sexual violence occurs, and which need to work from an intercultural, gender-aware perspective aimed at restoring the rights of victims who have been violated. In order to achieve a comprehensive redress system, therefore, and taking into account the recommendations made by the IAHR, the following process needs to take place:

- Restitution: try to restore the former situation and rights of the person.
- Compensation: in recognition of the damage caused.
- Rehabilitation: it is necessary to offer full medical and psycho-social assistance to help the victim continue their daily life.
- Guarantees that it will not happen again: governments should be able to guarantee women a life free from violence, which prevents these types of incidents from happening again.
- Measures of satisfaction: these are measures principally aimed at achieving justice, recovering details from a victim's memory of the attack and offering assistance to those who wish to investigate the attacks.

The State should in any case offer guarantees to victims through an impartial and competent justice system that is capable of specifically tackling violence against women, particularly sexual violence, in a resolute and serious way so as to directly punish those responsible for the crime.

Beyond the guarantees offered by the judicial and administrative system, or the redress system offered by governments and the compensation system that needs to be set up, there is another essential element that needs to be part of the redress system: the fact that not enough attention is being given to prevent this from happening again in the future. In this regard, sex education based on gender equality in childhood and adolescence plays a fundamental role, by providing students with the tools to achieve co-existence between men and women based on respect, emotional autonomy, and the ethics of consent and equal rights, among other values. This would ultimately be teaching them to live a life free from gender stereotypes, power imbalances and male-dominated values that are today grounded in control, strength and violence.

In relation to sexual violence, prevention, accountability and a comprehensive redress system are needed. These should have as their aim bringing to an end the inequalities that are at the root of this violence and restoring human rights, in such a way that women can migrate safely and in fair conditions in relation to their male counterparts, thus benefiting from the opportunities that migration can offer

them. According to the Institute of Development Studies of the United Kingdom, it is necessary that countries follow some basic measures so that this can take place:

- To promote public policies aimed at ensuring adequate access to approved migration routes for the safe passage of women, so they can avoid going by irregular and riskier routes.
- To achieve bilateral agreements between countries from which migrants leave and their host countries in order to protect the rights of migrants.
- To support and endorse the framework of International Law which provides protection for women migrants, such as the Convention on

the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Resolution 1325 of the Security Council of the United Nations and the Beijing Platform for Action, among others.

- To support migrants throughout the migration process, providing them with information on their legal rights before they leave, and ensuring they have access to basic services such as housing, education and health.
- To give support to migrant organisations and bring about solidarity between different migrant groups in order to gather and analyse issues related to the exclusion and isolation that migrants suffer.

5. FOR REFLECTION

This booklet has taken a modest approach to a phenomenon whose complexity and magnitude is enough for several books. Be that as it may, reading this and looking at the questions that may arise from it, can represent a first step towards individual and collective resistance to sexual violence.

For further reflection on the links between gender, the migratory process, border crossings and the violation of the human rights of women, here is some information and ideas you may find interesting:

- The empowerment of migrant women and the knowledge that these have of their rights is key in the face of sexual attacks, so that they can correct the gender-based power imbalances that they suffer in comparison to their male counterparts.
- Countries need to be able to guarantee public safety along the migratory routes.
- There is no doubt that women migrants in border areas find them-

selves in a very vulnerable situation, but statistics for women all over the world are no less alarming and we need to look at them:²⁵

- One in every three women has experienced or will experience some type of violence during their lifetime.
- One in every five women has been or will be a victim of a sexual assault or an attempted assault.
- 19% of women's health problems between the ages of 15 and 44 in developed countries are due to domestic violence or rape.
- Many women suffer sexual harassment at different times of

their life. Between 40% and 50% of women in the European Union reported sexual harassment in the workplace.

- More than 80% of victims of human trafficking are women forced into prostitution, forced labour or servitude.

- Women make up 70% of the world's poorest people.

- Each year in the world, ablation is carried out on 2,000,000 girls and this is in addition to the 100 million women who suffer genital mutilation.

- In Spain alone since 1999 to the present (November 2013), some 950 women were murdered by their partners or ex-partners.

- 35% of women in the world older than 15 have suffered physical violence at some point in their lives by their partner, or have suffered a sexual attack by someone else. This gives a total of some 920 million women throughout the whole world.

– The general population needs to be made aware of these types of attacks and realise that domestic violence, and sexual violence in particular, are not simply isolated incidents but rather form part of a sociocultural manifestation that demonstrates the different levels of tolerance of the society in question.

– According to Melissa Alvarado and Benny Paul, in order for preventative measures to be successful it is indispensable to actively involve

men: «Given that the majority of perpetrators are men, it is important that they reflect on their attitude towards this type of violence, which disproportionately affects women and children».

Taking these facts and ideas into account, we can reveal a lot about our own attitudes to this subject by posing ourselves some questions:

– Why does sexual violence against migrant women not receive the media attention it deserves?

– Why are women who migrate in high risk situations treated as invisible people as regards their safety?

– What role does their social status or the colour of their skin play in the fact that they are ostracised by society?

– What socio-cultural reasons make migrant women accept violence as part of their daily life or as payment to achieve a better life?

– It is necessary to break the silence and act against indifference given that the invisibility of sexual violence is even worse than the abuse itself. For this reason, it is necessary to involve survivors of sexual violence in helping other women who have experienced similar circumstances. How can these women act as agents of change?

– The sociologist Pilar Aguilar says that «in order to understand the reasons for violent behaviour against women –and more specifically sexual violence– we must scrutinise

and examine the symbolic structure and the imaginary universe of our societies, since they sustain and feed our behaviour and actions». In what way do different social agents (family, school, media, etc.) teach us to tolerate, justify and even minimise violence against women, specifically in cases of sexual violence? Why do women who suffer rape still worry about the social stigma of it?

– Physical and sexual violence and the murder of women are the most extreme forms of gender inequality, but there are other more subtle types of gender-based violence that are present in our own lives –often they are laughed at and applauded– and this makes the perfect breeding ground for chauvinist behaviour: the use of sexist language by men, jokes about women with sexual content, defending jealousy as being an integral part of love, exercising control over the partner (their timetable, activities, social relationships, appointments...), the lack of responsibility taken for domestic work, a scornful silence used as a means of manipulation, intimidation, insults, taking away a partner's sense of self worth, emotional blackmail, economic control, paternalism... Do we recognise these as forms of violence? Have we suffered them or inflicted them on someone else at some point

in our lives? Do we remain silent before such depreciative behaviour towards women?

– The journalist Soledad Gallego-Díaz says that «in order to fight against anti-semitism you do not have to be Jewish, just as in order to fight against racism you do not have to be black. Unfortunately, sometimes it seems that in order to fight against discrimination against women, you need to be a woman». What role do men play in the struggle for gender equality and in the fight against violence against women? What image of masculinity is being passed on in families, in school and in the media? And how does it influence the tolerance of and justification for sexual violence? Have we as a society really understood that violence against women is a matter that concerns us all?

– The culture of rape is very much present in our society. Even in the middle of the twenty-first century, society continues to reverse the blame, pointing at the victim instead of the attacker. We still hear phrases like «she deserved it», «she was looking for it», «she provoked it»... Yet violence has no excuse. Are we teaching our girls to take care of themselves or are we teaching our boys to treat women as equals and respect their wishes and their body?

6. INFORMATION CENTRES AND FURTHER RESOURCES

- Human Rights Office of la Casa del Migrante in Tecún Umán (Guatemala)
- Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) (Morocco)
- Jano Siksè Border Network (Haiti-Dominican Republic)
- International Rescue Committee (IRC) in Mae Hong Son (Thailand)
- Coordinator of Non-Governmental Organisations for Women in Juárez (Mexico)
- Casa Amiga in Juárez (Mexico)
- Medicos Sin Fronteras (Spain)
- Salud Integral para la Mujer, SIPAM (Integral Health for Women), (Mexico)
- UN Women: <http://www.unwomen.org/>
- Sexual Violence against Women and Children – Amnesty International: <http://www.es.amnesty.org/temas/mujeres/violencia-sexual-contra-mujeres-y-ninas/>
- Migrant Shelter Hermanos del Camino in Ixtepec: <http://www.hermanosenelcamino.org/index.html>

7. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- BOTERO, Ángela y LOZANO, Inmaculada, *Tras el espejo del capitalismo global. Violencia sexual al otro lado: el cuerpo visible. Jaque a la reina negra*, Madrid: ACSUR-Las Segovias, 2011.
- CIDH, «Acceso a la Justicia para mujeres víctimas de violencia sexual en Mesoamérica», UNFPA and AECID, 2011.
- ECOSOC, «Informe del representante del Secretario General de Naciones Unidas sobre los desplazados internos: misión de seguimiento a Colombia», E/CN. 4/2000/83/Add.1, 2000.
- ECOSOC, «Informe sobre la violencia contra la mujer perpetrada y/o condonada por el Estado en tiempos de conflicto armado (1997-2000)», E/CN. 4/2001/73, 2001.
- GIRÓ, Xavier, *et al.*, *Los documentales del feminicidio en Ciudad Juárez*. Barcelona: Oficina de Promoció de la Pau i dels Drets Humans IV. Colección: Materials de pau i drets humans, n. 18, 2010.
- MAGALLÓN, Carmen, *Mujeres en pie de paz: pensamientos y prácticas*, Madrid: Siglo XXI, 2006.
- MAISTERRA, Olivia Alejandra, «Experiencias transmigratorias de mujeres centroamericanas: viajeras invisibles, un caleidoscopio de emociones», Guadalajara: CUCSH-UdeG, 2012.
- MÉDICOS SIN FRONTERAS, «Violencia sexual y migración. La realidad oculta de las mujeres subsaharianas atrapadas en Marruecos de camino a Europa», MSF-E, 2010.
- MONZÓN, Ana Silvia, *Las Viajeras Invisibles: Mujeres Migrantes en la Región Centroamericana y el Sur de México*, Guatemala: PCS-CAMEX, 2006.
- RUIZ, Olivia, «Violencia sexual: el caso de las migrantes Centroamericanas en la frontera sur», in Teresa FERNÁNDEZ DE JUAN (coord.), *Violencia contra la mujer en México*, México DF: Comisión Nacional de los Derechos Humanos, 2004.
- SÁNCHEZ HERNÁNDEZ, Gabriela, «Del riesgo a la vulnerabilidad. Bases metodológicas para comprender la relación entre violencia sexual e infección por VIH/ITS en migrantes clandestinos», in *Salud mental*, vol. 28, n. 5 (2005).
- SPENER, David, «El apartheid global, el coyotaje y el discurso de la migración clandestina: distinciones entre violencia personal, estructural y cultural», in *Migración y Desarrollo*, n. 10 (2008), p. 127-156.
- WOODING, Bridget, «La lucha de las mujeres migrantes haitianas por la seguridad ciudadana», in *Migración y desarrollo*, vol. 10, n. 18 (2012), p. 41-65.

1. Olivia Alejandra MAISTERRA, «Experiencias transmigratorias de mujeres centroamericanas: viajeras invisibles, un caleidoscopio de emociones», tr. «Transmigratory experiences of Central American women: invisible travellers, a kaleidoscope of emotions», in *Vínculos*, Guadalajara, CUCSH-UdeG, 2012, pg. 81.
2. Statistics from the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations and the International Migration Organisation.
3. The concept of gender refers to the differences between women and men that are established and constructed by conventions and by other social, economic, political and cultural factors. By gender discrimination, we are referring to the systematic, unfavourable treatment of women based on their sex, which denies them rights, opportunities and resources.
4. Violence towards women takes on many forms: murder, selective infanticide, sexual violence, genital mutilation, rape and sex work, abuse, psychological abuse, harassment, discrimination, segregation, forced marriages, institutional violence towards women following an assault or rape...
5. From the nineties onwards, gender-based physical, sexual and emotional violence experienced by many women was identified as a violation of their Human Rights.
6. Carmen MAGALLÓN, *Mujeres en pie de paz: pensamientos y prácticas*, Madrid, Siglo XXI, 2006, pg. 38.
7. Olivia RUIZ, «Violencia sexual: el caso de las migrantes Centroamericanas en la frontera sur», In Teresa FERNÁNDEZ DE JUAN (coord.), *Violencia contra la mujer en México*, México DF, Comisión Nacional de los Derechos Humanos, 2004, pg. 90.
8. Idea worked on by Laia FARRERA, Marta MUIXI, Dolors SIERRA, Xavier GIRÓ and Sonia HERRERA in *Los documentales del feminicidio en Ciudad Juárez*, Barcelona: Oficina de Promoció de la Pau i dels Drets Humans IV. Colecció: Materials de pau i drets humans, no. 18, 2010, pg. 8.
9. The notion of women as the property of the man or men she is with brings with it the total inability to identify or empathise with the woman.
10. Inmaculada LOZANO, Ángela BOTERO, *Tras el espejo del capitalismo global. Violencia sexual al otro lado: el cuerpo visible. Jaque a la reina negra*, Madrid, ACSUR-Las Segovias, 2011, pg. 85.
11. Ana Silvia MONZÓN, *Las Viajeras Invisibles: Mujeres Migrantes en la Región Centroamericana y el Sur de México* (Tr. Invisible travelers: Migrant women in the Central American Region and the south of Mexico), Guatemala, PCS-CAMEX, 2006, pg. 42.
12. Bridget WOODING, «La lucha de las mujeres migrantes haitianas por la seguridad ciudadana», in *Migración y desarrollo*, vol. 10, no. 18, 2012, pg. 48.
13. José Luis IRIBERRI, *Ten boats stranded on the beach. Ten stories of sub-Saharan African migration*, Barcelona, Cristianisme i Justícia, Virtual Collection 1 (http://www.cristianismeijusticia.net/sites/www.cristianismeijusticia.net/files/col_v_en_7.pdf).
14. The drug business in Mexico moves around 25,000 million dollars of which only 6,000 million remain in the country. The rest is moved into the American economy to be laundered. Therefore, we cannot talk about drug trafficking in Mexico without talking about its economic links to the United States, the world's foremost consumer of drugs. (S. HERRERA, «El secuestro de la libertad de expresión en México», tr. «The kidnapping of freedom of expression in Mexico», in *Panorámica Social*, march 2011).
15. S. HERRERA, «El secuestro de...».
16. The main economic difference between the two sides of the border is that, in Mexico, a worker can earn 4 dollars (2.98 euro) a day, while the

minimum legal wage in the United States up to 2006 was 5.15 dollars (3.83 euro) an hour. This is the main reason why many immigrants risk their lives to cross the border illegally. The imbalance between the two economies generates constant tensions around the border. As the immigration officials from both side of the border know, the area is a magnet for people coming from many different places. (GIRÓ, *et al.*, *Los documentales...*, pg. 15).

17. MAISTERRA, «Experiencias transmigratorias...», pg. 81.
18. In 2010, 72 Central American immigrants who were trying to cross into the United States were murdered by *los Zetas* in the northern state of Tamaulipas.
19. According to the National Commission for Human Rights in México, between April and September 2010, 11,000 migrants were kidnapped in the country.
20. *Eldiario.es* – 28/8/2013.
21. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), infibulation is the practice of the excision of the external part of the genitalia (clitoris, labia minora and labia majora) and the stitching and/or the fastening of the vaginal opening with plant fibres, wire or fishing line.
22. «Report by the representative for the Secretary General of the United Nations on internally displaced people: follow-up mission to Colombia».
23. Impunity is one of the main instigators of violence and the reason for repeat assaults against women.
24. «Acceso a la Justicia para mujeres víctimas de violencia sexual en Mesoamérica», tr. «Access to Justice for Women Victims of Sexual Violence in Mesoamerica».
25. In-depth study by the United Nations on Violence Against Women.

Cristianisme i Justícia (Lluís Espinal Foundation) is a Study Centre under the initiative of the Society of Jesus in Catalonia. It consists of a team of university professors and experts in theology and different social and human sciences, who are concerned with the increasingly important cultural interrelations between faith and justice.

The collection *Cristianisme i Justícia* introduces some of the findings of the seminars held by the Centre as well as some of the essays of its staff and contributors. The Foundation sends its booklets free of charge to those who ask for them.

124. T. FORCADES, MD OSB. Crimes and Abuses of the Pharmaceutical Industry - 125. X. ALEGRE. Jesus, Judas, Da Vinci... - 126. CRISTIANISME I JUSTÍCIA. Comentary on the "Notification" regarding Jon Sobrino - 127. J. CARRERA. Identities for the 21st Century - 128. J. FLAQUER. Itinerant Lives - 129. X. ALEGRE, J. GIMÉNEZ, J. I. GONZÁLEZ FAUS, J. M. RAMBLA. What is happening in the Church? - 130. D. VELASCO. Is private property theft? - 131. M. D. OLLER. Building a sense of community - 132. J. MARTÍNEZ GORDO. The Christology of J. Ratzinger - Benedict - 133. FOUR TESTIMONIES. Why I came back to the faith - 134. J. GIMÉNEZ. The questions we carry within us - 135. D. IZUZQUIZA. Kenotic revolution, revolutionary descent - 136. J. I. GONZÁLEZ FAUS. Fear to Jesus: a diagnosis - 137. X. ALEGRE. Christian Resistance and Hope in an Unjust World - 138. J. I. GONZÁLEZ FAUS. Nothingness dressed up: fraternity stripped bare - 139. P. ARROJO. Global water crisis: values and rights at stake - 140. D. IZUZQUIZA. Breaking bread. Notes for a political theology of migration - 141. J. CARRERA. A Difficult Relationship - 142. G. DUCH, F. FERNÁNDEZ SUCH. Agro-industry Under Suspicion - 143. J. LAGUNA. Taking Stock of Reality, Taking Responsibility for Reality, and Taking Charge of Reality - 144. J. I. GONZÁLEZ FAUS. «I'm coming, Lord» Contemplatives in Relation - 145. L. RAMÓN. Women of Care, Justice, Care and Transformation - 146. F. J. VITORIA. Winds of Change - 147. J. I. GONZÁLEZ FAUS. Unicity of God, Multiplicity of Mysticisms - 148. J. LAGUNA. Evangelical Dystopias - 149. J. F. MÀRIA, E. DEVUYST. King Leopold's Mines - 150. V. CODINA. Fifty years ago there was a council... - 151. A. BLANCH. Leo Tolstoy, Political Prophet and Evangelical Anarchist - 152. J. I. GONZÁLEZ FAUS. A New Church for a New World - 153. A. CALDERÓN, L. SOLS. Europe at the Crossroads - 154. S. HERRERA. Trapped in Limbo, Women, migration and sexual violence

All booklets can be downloaded from internet, www.cristianismeijusticia.net/en/cj-booklets

N. 154, November 2014

Cristianisme i Justícia Booklets

Roger de Llúria, 13 - 08010 Barcelona

Tel: 93 317 23 38 - info@fespinal.com

www.cristianismeijusticia.net



cristianismeijusticia



cijusticia



fespinal89

www.cristianismeijusticia.net