

***Social Minorities in Latin America in the Age of Globalization*, Adalberto Santana and Tae Hwan Ahn (coords.), Mexico, CIALC-UNAM, 2014.**

Various authors have contributed to this book with their perspectives on social minorities in Latin America. The book is divided into three chapters. The first provides some reflections about minorities, underscoring the fact that they do not necessarily constitute an absolute number (a group of unhappy or marginalized people), because in a "democratic system, we are what we are, neither minority nor majority, and we have the right to occupy public spaces and exercise freedom of expression" (p. 35). An example of this is the Occupy Wall Street movement, or the public bicycle systems in cities such as Paris, London, or New York.

The collective rights of national groups and of peoples do not negate the capacity of self-determination, and the book recognizes that individual members may be part of more than one minority group. However, we must not forget that an intercultural political perspective that fosters dialogue and acknowledges cultural asymmetries will pave the way to universal intercultural rights.

The book also addresses the issue of undocumented immigrants, who are part of vulnerable minority group, as international workers in search of jobs. Because they do not have formal status in the international labor market, though, they are cheap labor. Although this phenomenon is very visible in Latin America, it is equally significant in other parts of the world, such as Southeast Asia, Eastern Europe, and Africa, constituting a major global challenge worthy of attention and solidarity.

The second chapter deals with some case studies. The first discusses discrimination against the Mapuche people in their urban exile in Chile, principally in the city of Santiago. This phenomenon is underscored by a challenging historical effort for urban Mapuches to reclaim their ethnicity and culture. However, all of this is "a problem and phenomenon that nation-States in Latin America have historically postponed: a relationship of respect and equality with the original peoples of the continent" (p. 102).

The book also shines a spotlight on the indigenous peoples of Paraguay, who are considered not only a numerical minority, but also a symbolic one. Special mind is paid to the development of agroindustry, which requires enormous quantities of fertile land to drive the intensive production of agriculture and livestock products for export, placing the indigenous and rural populations, for whom there is no space in the Paraguayan growth model, in precarious conditions.

Another topic addressed refers to the cooperative movements organized by unemployed Argentines, and how some companies have recovered, especially after the 2001 crisis, as an

alternative to unemployment and the proletarianization of workers. . The book then examines the Maras in Central America as an example of a violent minority. The Maras are groups of people who have emerged in the wake of decades of violence inflicted by Central American governments. Despite their contradictory origins, they have been persecuted and repressed without even a minimal effort to resolve the problem.

Finally, the third chapter looks at the topic of social minorities in science and religion, analyzing the cyber-transculturation of traditional indigenous communication media on the Internet, especially in television, digital press media, and indigenous radio networks, "which constitute a catalyst for the processes of identity construction and resistance of the indigenous minorities to the national identity" (p. 187), promoting the construction of a historical memory. It addresses the case of women in science in Venezuela, highlighting the struggle that has made it possible for women to transcend the realm of domestic activities, changing their duties and functions, "in reflection of shifting power structures and science as a space for knowledge" (p. 204).

The book also examines the case of religious minorities, with a focus on the phenomenon of the popular saints, pointing to the syncretism of popular religion in the colonial era, when the cult of the patron Catholic saints was inculcated in the people. That is why in the contemporary age there is no contradiction between being a practicing Christian and worshipping a saint. The end of the book analyzes the two faces of Buddhism in Latin America, which is used in many cases as a political and mercantile tool, in addition to recognizing that it is a religion of the persecuted or marginalized, or a symbol of resistance and civil solidarity.

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