

Integration and exclusion of recent Colombian immigrants in Santiago de Chile: socioeconomic stratum and “race” in the geo-culture of the world-system*

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Resumen

Integración y exclusión de inmigrantes colombianos recientes en Santiago de Chile: estrato socioeconómico y “raza” en la geocultura del sistema-mundo

El artículo explora el proceso de integración de los inmigrantes colombianos en Santiago de Chile. La conclusión es que hay importantes diferencias en la integración de los diferentes grupos socioeconómicos y “raciales” de inmigrantes, particularmente los inmigrantes afrodescendientes se ven expuestos a situaciones de discriminación racial. Dado que en Chile la población afrodescendiente es de reciente llegada, el racismo hacia ellos debe explicarse contextualizando la “cultura nacional” en la geocultura del sistema-mundo, que contiene una jerarquización racial conformada en la época colonial para dar fundamento a su división racial del trabajo. En este marco son recibidos los inmigrantes en Chile, país imbuido en esta geocultura colonialista y eurocéntrica que explica el trato diferenciado dado a los distintos colectivos de inmigrantes.

Palabras clave: Inmigrante, integración, racismo, sistema-mundo, geocultura.

Abstract

The article explores the process of integration of Colombian immigrants in Santiago of Chile. The conclusion is that there are important differences in the integration of the different socioeconomic and “racial” groups of immigrants, in particular afrodescendant immigrants are exposed to situations of racial discrimination. Given that the afrodescendant population in Chile is newly arrived, racism against them must be explained contextualizing the “national culture” in the geoculture of the world-system, that contains a racial hierarchy shaped in the colonial era to support its racial division of labor. In this context, immigrants are received in Chile, a country imbued in this colonialist and eurocentric geoculture that explains the differential treatment given to the different immigrant groups.

Key words: Immigrant, integration, racism, world-system, geoculture.

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INTRODUCTION

The ways the various immigrant collectives are treated support on cultural patterns previously instilled in the population of the recipient country. Xenophobia or xenophilia toward migrants is typically associated to prejudices based on the colonial and neo-colonial history. Two decades ago, Chile started receiving significant migratory flows, and as of 2010 in these flows migrant collectives with Afro-descendant characteristics from Latin American countries started to have a noticeable presence. In the Chilean society there has not been a significant presence of Afro-descendant population,¹ and the country's racist stereotypes have mainly addressed people from indigenous peoples and mestizo with phenotypical characteristics of such peoples. Owing to these reasons, a discriminatory treatment toward Afro-descendent immigrants would not be understood merely from a "national culture" disregarding the link with the racist patterns that circulate in the world-system.

The present article proposes, by means of the analysis of integration and exclusion of Colombian immigrants in Santiago, it can be noticed how the Chilean discriminatory ways correspond to the racist modalities of the world-system geo-culture described from the De-colonial perspective, thus showing that the world-system contains a general geo-culture that manifests in each country and regions by means of the "internal colonialism" (González Casanova, 2006), in which "white" population with European and American origin is hyper-valued, while "black" and indigenous population is undervalued (as expressed in the classic works by Palacios, *Raza Chilena*, in 1904, and Bonfil Batalla, *México Profundo*, in 1987, this last from a critical perspective). This way, Colombian Afro-decedents escape from the intra-Colombian racism (where they hold the lowest population stratum) to look for new opportunities in a Chilean Society which they also experience as racist.

From the increase in immigration Chile has received over the last two decades and mainly in recent years, integration, discrimination and public security have been publicly retaken regarding immigrants.² Even at present,

¹ The exception is Arica and Parinacota Regions, where there would be 4.7 percent of population that self-recognizes as Afro-decedents (INE, 2014).

² For instance, last August 30th, 2016, "El Mercurio", probably the most influential newspaper in the country, of neoliberal-conservative orientation, published as a headline "Fifty-two percent of the accused of crimes in the north are foreigners". In the item published in the sixth page, section C, it is verified that "in the north" the newspaper referred to Arica and Parinacota, and that most

there has been an unseen politization of immigration, as in the context of the presidential campaign, from the election by the end of this year, a number of candidates have proposed the topic of immigration as a problem, linking it to alleged risks to public security.³ Immigrants' social exclusion is a factor that affects social coexistence between local and foreign collectives. This way, we set off from the premise that the inclusion of immigrant subjects is a social and cultural good, with positive incidences on the quality of coexistence in the various social spaces.

This article describes the ways and dynamics of integration of Colombian immigrants in the Metropolitan region of Chile, analyzing their patterns of integration, exclusion and discrimination, taking the De-colonial Perspective of the world-system geo-culture as an explanatory framework of the ways acquired by the Chilean racist treatment against some immigrant groups. The interest in the Colombian collective comes from its heterogeneity, which is not noticed in other immigrant communities, in terms of "racial" and socioeconomic plurality, as it allows analyzing how the racist culture affects in a differenced manner people from the same country, but with dissimilar socioeconomic conditions or "racial" or phenotypical appearance.

The methodology used starts from making a general characterization of the Colombian collective by means of the information delivered by the databases of the Department of Immigration Policy and Migration of the Ministry of the Interior and Public Security (henceforward DEM). Then, the process of integration and their difficulties are analyzed from a database with more than fifty interviews with more Colombian immigrants living in the Metropolitan Region. From the fieldwork performed between 2014 and 2015 years in the communes of Santiago-Centro, Recoleta and Quilicura, Santiago, in-depth interviews were carried out with Colombian men and women, who at the moment of the interview had been living in the country for between three and ten years⁴. These communes were selected

of the crimes accounted for were "transnational crimes", which include acts only performable by foreigners such as the clandestine crossing of the border through non-allowed points, not having legal documents, etc. or crimes which due to their transnational nature are very likely to be committed by Chileans and people from other countries, namely, people smuggling, human or drug trafficking.

³ Mainly pre-candidates of the right-wing coalition "Chile Vamos". See, for instance: <http://www.elmostrador.cl/noticias/pais/2016/11/28/ossandon-endurece-su-discurso-hacia-los-extranjeros-las-puertas-del-pais-como-las-de-la-casa-se-abren-pero-no-a-todos/> y <http://www.elmostrador.cl/noticias/pais/2016/11/29/inmigrantes-pinera-le-quita-el-tema-a-ossandon-y-logra-sacar-bancard-de-la-agenda/>.

⁴ In order to perform this qualitative analysis the participants narrated their experience to prepare the travel, their arrival and life in Chilean society, the things that dislodged them, the positive, negative or strange in their individual experience, as well as their perception on the country before and after migrating and their participation in social activities in Chile. The content of the inter-

to ethnographically give an account of the social and urban heterogeneity of the capital, respectively center, peri-center and periphery, spaces in which new ways of segregation and social mix are underway owing to the modification of the scale of social segregation over the last decade. In the analysis of the interviews, it was intended to distinguish the characteristics of the integration process on the basis of the various socioeconomic strata and the various immigration “races”.

As a general conclusion it can be stated that indeed there are important differences in the integration processes according to socioeconomic strata, and in particular according to the immigrants’ skin color or “races”. In the interviews it is verified that in most of the cases Colombian residents integrate into the various spheres of Chilean society. This general positive situation must be differentiated by socioeconomic strata, as in the middle and middle-high strata a better integration process than in the middle-low low strata is noticed. However, the main distinction must be made on the Afro-descendent immigrants, who on various places such as at work, public spaces, urban transport and services are exposed to discrimination and even harassing, which necessarily affect their integration process, for example, avoiding the use of public transport to move within the city or restricting the jobs they can access. This manifestation, or enactment, in the Chilean cultural patterns of racism against Afro-descendants (Tijoux, 2016) accounts for the strength posed by the world-system geo-culture in a country with little afro-descendent population and which traditionally has been considered “isolated”. In Chile, this situation opens a problems beyond Colombian immigration, due the growing arrivals of afro-descendent people from countries such as Haiti, Dominican Republic, Cuba, Brazil, Ecuador, among others.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

As of the last decade of the XX century to the present, a sizeable increment in the global and intraregional migratory flows has been noticed (OIM, 2015). Despite that migrants account for only 3.2 percent of the total world population, their political and economic relevance has increased over the last decades, particularly in the central regions of the world-system such as Europe and the US, where migrants and refugees have become a central topic of political campaigns in recent years and have influenced the elections

views was analyzed by means of a thematic mesh build from the pattern of the interview. The codification was carried in parallel with categorization, including emerging categories. Finally, software Atlas-ti 7.0 that allows visualizing patterns and disseminate results was used.

such as Trump's in the United States and Brexit in the United Kingdom. This has propitiated changes in the migratory legislation of historically recipient countries such as the US and Spain, prone to greater migratory control (Sassen, 2015; Portes, 2012). This way, not only have migratory flows increased regarding their size and diversity, but have become the focus of political debates, in terms of their effects on employment and the development of the countries, human rights, the process of social and cultural inclusion, among other topics. Even though, the discussion so far has taken place mainly in the recipient countries of the center of the world-system, it has already extended to the southern countries (GMG, 2013). Latin America has not been alien to these tendencies, increasing the displacements inside a region in a noticeable manner in recent years (Martínez, 2011), producing a number of challenges for multicultural coexistence and social development, attracting the interest of scientific interests from social sciences.

This south-south migratory flow is produced by both internal and external factors. The recent international economic crisis (started in 2007-2008 and whose consequences are still felt at present) has as a background the neoliberal structural reform that deepens the capitalist exploitation in a historical postcolonial context of international and sexual division of labor (Wallerstein, 2007; Falquet, 2009). These macro phenomena, product of an extractivist development model oriented to exportation, have increased the asymmetries between countries and inequalities within societies, tending to increase social exclusion and poverty, which has lead to large flows toward Nation-States with better conditions (Solimano, 2008).

Historically and up to the present, in South America, Colombia has been the country that has ejected the largest migration flows (Martínez and Orrego, 2016). The main recipient countries of Colombian population have been the United States, Spain, Venezuela and Ecuador, however over the last decade, migratory flows from Colombia have diversified toward destinations infrequent in the past, among them Chile (Mejía, 2012).⁵ Important economic and political challenges have to be faced in Colombia overt the last three decades owing to the collapse in the international prices of coffee, oil crisis and the escalation of the armed conflict, in the context of the expansion of drug trafficking for six decades now, forcing a lot of people to internally displace and/or leave their native country; there being at present a total of 4 700 000 Colombians living abroad (Cárdenas and

⁵ The diversification of destinations of Colombian emigration go beyond Chile. In Argentina, for instance, in recent years a similar increment that of Chile has been noticed (OIM, 2016).

Mejía, 2006). Well now, not only the most vulnerable groups move from Colombia toward other southern countries, but also these migrations are composed of middle and high strata individuals, some with technical or university studies. This way, class diversity and “race” distinguishes the recent south-south flows, among them, the Colombian one, which also affects the patterns of socioeconomic and sociocultural integration.

For its part, for some years now, Chile has become one of the countries of the region chosen as destination for south-south migrants. According to data from DEM (2016), alien residents in the country changed from 212 935 in 2005, 1.3 percent of the population that year, to 410 988 immigrants in 2014, accounting for 2.3 percent of the national population, this is say the immigrant population, has increased in 93 percent in the nine years comprehended in such study.⁶ In this context, Colombians have become the fourth most important immigrant collective in the country. According to DEM (2016), up to 2014 only migrants from the three neighboring countries —Peruvian (130 329), Argentines (66 899) and Bolivian (36 036) — surpassed the number of Colombians, which were 25 038 individuals, 6.1 percent of alien residents in the country. Albeit, the Colombian collective showed a far superior increase to the other countries above, 394 percent between 2005, when there were only 5 066 residents in Chile, and 2014, while Peruvians, Argentine and Bolivians grew 198, 25 and 188 percent, respectively, over the same period (DEM, 2016). This way, the importance of this community not only come from its numbers, but especially from its tendency to grow. In terms of territorial distribution, Colombian immigrants mainly concentrate in the Metropolitan Region, 61 percent, and the Antofagasta Region, 12.4 percent (DEM, 2016).⁷

In the medium term, the migratory flows may change unpredictably. Factors such as the peace process between the Colombian State and FARC can decrease the migratory flow from Colombians toward Chile, particularly refugees. The contrary can occur if the economic and political crisis in Venezuela continues, one of the countries that traditionally has been the destination of choice for Colombian emigration, which can make Colombian immigrants opt for other destinations, among them Chile. However, even

⁶ El fenómeno de la inmigración en Chile resalta la importancia de contar con información estadística rigurosa. Lamentablemente en estos momentos Chile no cuenta con datos estadísticos oficiales sobre la población inmigrante ni sobre el saldo migratorio (inmigrantes menos emigrantes), ya que a la falla del Censo 2012 se le suma la carencia de registros administrativos y de encuestas específicas sobre el tema. Se deberá esperar los resultados del Censo 2017 para contar con información estadística oficial sobre inmigración, pero una más importante producción de información estadística continua a través de registros no se avizora en el corto ni mediano plazo.

⁷ Sobre afro-colombianos en la Región de Antofagasta, ver Echeverri (2016).

if in the middle term the migratory tendency may vary with no certainty, it is also very likely that in the short term it continues growing. This because with the increase the migratory flow produces a strengthening of the transnational networks, which conveys the increase in the capacity of the migrants to call relatives and acquaintances. Moreover, the difference between Colombia and Chile has remained in economic indicators such as per capita income, which may act as a catalyzing element for migration. In the short term, these factors make it foreseeable that the increase in this migratory maintains, which makes it necessary to study this collective of immigrants and its integration and exclusion processes.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The world-system geo-culture

As emphasized by the Frankfurt School (for example, Adorno, 2001), it is of the utmost importance to establish the framework of the totality that a social study has as a referent, regardless of its degree of empiricism. To study migration and its integration and exclusion processes in a certain society, the reference to the traditional totality of centered in “society” does not seem fit —“methodological nationalism” — but we consider it should be reoriented to the sphere of the capitalist world-system. This not only because international migration is a phenomenon that necessarily crosses the borders of any society, also because the phenomena that occur both in the ejecting and recipient societies express their social, economic and cultural insertion into the world-system. As stated by Cardoso and Faletto (1979), when studying social classes in the dependent situation of Latin American countries, the “internal” socioeconomic structure characteristics of are an expression of the “external” factors — the ways of the peripheral insertion of Latin American societies into the capitalist system—, being incorrect to separate the “external” from “internal” factors in the analysis of the socioeconomic characteristics of a country. The same proposal may be extended to the sociocultural phenomena such as racism, which directly affects the integration/exclusion dynamic of the various immigrant communities, which can be better understood considering that “internal” facts are an expression of the “external” factors, in this case, the world-system geo-culture.

In the central proposal of the world-system, special interest is paid to the economic dimension, especially in the international division of labor, to define the systemic nature of the capitalist world-economy. According to

Wallerstein (2003), in the context of the world-system a labor division that surpasses State borders takes place; it comprehends the set of intercontinental geography, which makes that various system parts, from its inception in the XV century, not only maintain an economic link with the rest of the system, but which structure their economies in function of their position —central, peripheral or semi-peripheral— in the system. Taking these statements as a basis, from the De-colonial perspective it is stated that the “modern/colonial” also has a geo culture that appears with the conquest of America (for instance, Castro-Gómez, 2000; Lander, 2000 and Mignolo, 2000). As of the conquest of America there would be a cultural interpretation of the role of Europe and the rest of the peoples that were part of the global system. The dominant role of Europe and the submission of all the other peoples is interpreted on the basis of culturalist and racist conceptions, with which a culture of the world-system set, from which the intersubjective relations between dominant and dominated, corresponding the economic and military domination of Europe with its cultural domain. By the XVII and XVIII, and particularly with the Enlightenment, this cultural interpretation embodies a Eurocentric discourse on the modernity that puts forward Europe as the summit of sociocultural development of humanity, positioning the other peoples, cultures and “races” as evolutionary phases previous to Europe, thereby inferior to it (Castro-Gómez, 2000; Lander, 2000 and Mignolo, 2000). In this context the political independences of the Latin American countries. With these, the European paradigm of the cultural interpretation does not change. The classes that retained their domination in Latin America identified themselves culturally with Europe and appropriated the Eurocentric perspective, imposing that cultural visions in Latin America, with which the cultural colonialness in the new sociopolitical and geopolitical situation rearticulated and remained. This way, with their independence there was no cultural decolonization, the end of colonialism did not mean the end of colonialness (Restrepo and Rojas, 2010).

In this context, “race” is used as a pattern for social classification, hierarchization, supported on the distinction based on phenotypes justified in biological terms (Restrepo and Rojas, 2010). This distinction is used in the division of labor imposed in the colonies of the American continent when they were incorporated into the capitalist world system, referring to slave work for African “blacks”, enforced servile labor for the American “indigenous” and remunerated labor for European “whites”, this way, “race” is used as an instrument of social domination and economic exploitation.

The racial division of labor articulates with the production of global inter-subjectivity, one of such interrelated “geo-cultural” inter-subjectivities—indigenous, blacks, whites, among others—that defines the relations between Europe and the European with the rest of the world and its inhabitants in hierarchical terms. The culmination of the use of race for the hierarchical classification of the populations is reached in the XIX centuries and in the first half of the XX century, when racism consolidates as a set of ideas and theories around the principle of racial hierarchy, such as social Darwinism. It is necessary to point out that the idea of race not only produces subjectivities among the dominating colonizers, it also colonizes the imaginary of those colonized, who begin to see themselves from the vision of the racist colonizer. This way, ever since the colonization of the American continent and the ensuing establishment of the racial division of labor, the ideas associated to a biological-cultural hierarchization utilized to justify and naturalize the relations of domination have endured (Restrepo and Rojas, 2010).

Multicultural societies: the foreigner / immigrant, neither here nor there

The migratory flows have as a consequence that the recipient Nation-States become ethnically multiple collectives and / or increase their cultural plurality. To characterize, in general terms, recipient societies, the statements by Kymlicka (1996) are important, the author presented a proposal for the challenges of multicultural societies. This author distinguishes between multinational and poly-ethnic States. The former are those in which one or more minority cultures territorially concentrated have been incorporated, which had previously self-governed themselves; whereas, poly-ethnic States are the result of immigration. In Chile there are features of both characteristics, minority cultures with a degree of territorial concentration, which were incorporated into the Chilean Nation-State, before or after its independence. This incorporation was performed with varying degrees of violence, intending until up to recent years to turn them into Chileans. Moreover, at various historical moments diverse migratory flows have incorporated into the Chilean State, mainly from Europe and bordering countries, without grouping in differenced ethnical groups. This way, the “Chileanization” of the indigenous peoples and the incorporation of different migratory flows have produced a largely “mixed” population. However, this heterogeneous miscegenation, with varying degrees of “European” or “indigenous” population depending on the socioeconomic

strata, with more “European” phenotypes in the upper strata, and more “indigenous” in the lower ones. In the racist framing of the capitalist world-system, this has produced the crossing of racism and classism, a culture in which phenotypical European features are overvalued and linked to economic success, while the phenotypical characteristics of the indigenous are undervalued and linked to poverty. In this general context live the migrant collectives in the current Chilean society.

Furthermore, the immigrants’ ethnic and racial characteristics may have various relations with the recipient society. Guibernau (2009) distinguishes three sorts of situations: i) immigrants that socio-culturally resemble the most of recipient society; ii) those discriminated at the beginning and that tend to group in ethnic communities, but which have fully integrated to the recipient society and have become citizens; iii) finally, immigrants with phenotypical traits that distinguish them from the most of the population, living in relatively closed ethnic communities and which are usually object of racial discrimination and economic marginalization. The various types/profiles of Colombian immigrants in Chile may, owing to their plurality, correspond to the three types described by Guibernau (2009). The way they inserted in a society as the Chilean, following Kymlicka (1996), with multinational and poly-ethnic, would be mediated by the way acquired by the world-system geo-culture in Chile and how from this intersubjective relations are established with the various immigrant collectives.

ANALYSIS

General characterization of Colombian immigrants in Chile

In order to characterize the collective of Colombian immigrants, we use the databases available through DEM, which deliver information on several variables such as sex, age, schooling level, activity, profession, residence commune at the moment of asking for the documents, sort of visa, year of visa and permanent residence permit, among others we will intend to characterize the recent migratory dynamic and approach the immigrants’ socioeconomic characteristics and social strata.

As stated, according to DEM (2016), in 2014 there were 25 038 Colombians living in the country, becoming the fourth most numerous immigrant collective after Argentineans, Bolivians and Peruvians. In addition to the stock of migrants, it is also important to have an idea of the evolution of the migratory flow to approach the migratory dynamic. To so, we resort to

available data on the issuing of permanent residence permits and temporary visas in DEM.⁸

Observing the tendency shown in recent years both the granting of permanent residence permits and temporary visas (table 1),⁹ noticeable is a sustained increase in both indicators. Over the period from 2005 to 2015, the count ranges from 403 permanent permits and 1737 temporary visas to 9093 permits and 35445 visas. A similar situation occurs in Metropolitan Region, from 302 permits and 1216 visas in 2005 to 4588 permits and 19032 visas in 2015.

In table 2 the percentage of inter-annual growth of permanent residence permit and temporary visas for Chile and Metropolitan Region is displayed. It is noticed that year after year there has been an increment in the granting of both documents. The only exception is the period between 2009 and 2010 for permanent residence permits, when there is a decrease in the delivery of such documents at both country and region levels.¹⁰

The average of percentage inter-annual growths shown in table 2 is 42.5 percent in the case of permanent residence permits, 36.4 percent for temporary visas at country level and 36 and 32.7 percent respectively for Metropolitan Region. However, if the period is divided in two quinquennia, in table 3 it is noticed that the growth of the migratory dynamic is increasing. Table 3 shows that in all cases the second quinquennium has a higher growth percentage than the first, begin greater the difference of the permits at country level, which changed from an increase of 260.5 percent in the first quinquennium to 525.8 in the second. This way, the migratory flow would be increasing not only in absolute terms, there is also an increase in relative terms, the growth pace of the migratory flow.

⁸ It is worth mentioning that the available statistics refer the documents delivered, not people, this is to say, figures indicate the amount of documents issued over a year, not the number of people who received them. This means, that one same person over time can receive more than one document, and multiple visas over the years. In the case permanent residence permits more than one can be delivered to one same person, even though this is relatively exceptional and the delivery must occur at different years.

⁹ All table have been produced from our processing of the databases published by the Departamento de Extranjería y Migración of the Ministry of the Interior and Public Security at <http://www.extranjeria.gob.cl/estadisticas-migratorias/>

¹⁰ This diminution is probably related to the great increase in the number of permanent residence permits over 2009, with more than 100 percent growth in relation to 2009 for the country, by far the most significant inter-annual increase in the period. In this regard Rojas and Silva (2016: 17) point out: "It is necessary to mention that the peak visualized in 2009 in the granting of permanent residence to various collectives is explained by the mass regularization process carried out in 2007, since people who obtained a visa that year were able to obtain a permanent residence permit in 2009".

Table 1: Permanent residence permits and temporary visas granted to Colombians for each year

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
<i>Country</i>											
PRP	403	575	889	1 069	2 237	1 453	1 694	3 037	3 510	5 842	9 093
TV	1 737	2 555	3 851	4 456	5 426	7 469	12 666	17 840	26 630	28 098	35 445
<i>Metropolitan region</i>											
PRP	302	397	621	712	1 350	918	988	1 733	2 093	3 156	4 588
TV	1 216	1 560	2 192	2 555	2 973	3 980	6 558	10 308	13 922	15 419	19 032

Source: own elaboration based on processing of DEM databases.

Table 2: percentage of inter-annual growth of permanent residence permits and temporary visas granted to Colombians

	2005-6	2006-7	2007-8	2008-9	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
<i>Country</i>										
PRO	42.7	54.6	20.2	109.3	-35.0	16.6	79.3	15.6	66.4	55.6
TV	47.1	50.7	15.7	21.8	37.7	69.6	40.8	49.3	5.5	26.1
<i>Metropolitan region</i>										
PRP	31.5	56.4	14.7	89.6	-32.0	7.6	75.4	20.8	50.8	45.4
TV	28.3	40.5	16.6	16.4	33.9	64.8	57.2	35.1	10.8	23.4

Source: own elaboration based on processing of DEM databases.

Table 3: percentage of growth by quinquennia of permanent residence permits and temporary visas granted Colombians

	Country			Metropolitan region		
	2005-10	2010-15	2005-2015	2005-10	2010-15	2005-2015
PRP	260.5	525.8	2156.3	204.0	399.8	1419.2
TV	330.0	374.6	1940.6	227.3	378.2	1465.1

Source: own elaboration based on the processing of DEM databases.

To close this section, it is worth underscoring that the percentage of annual increase in the study period surpasses by large a thousand percent in any of the four analyzed levels, surpassing two thousand percent for the issuing of permanent residence at country level.

Regarding the socioeconomic heterogeneity of the Colombian Community, through the “Profession” variable in the database of Permanent Residence Permits by DEM, we have approached the socioeconomic stratification of this immigrant collective. Occupations are one of the proxy variables most used to produce the socioeconomic stratification of a population and “profession” in DEM can be used to approach the subjects’ occupation. The information of this variable must be taken cautiously, among other reasons because it is obtained from the immigrants’ self-declaration without further verification, as in many cases there were unclear “professions” (such as “Helper”) and because the declared profession did not necessarily may be effectively exercised in the immigrant’s daily life. Albeit, considering these cautions, we consider such information can be used for performing a general socioeconomic characterization of the Colombian immigrant collective.

To be safer, of the total of 29802 permanent residence permits to consider, 419 cases of professions with frequencies equal or under five and 5984 cases of professions we considered “undetermined” which could not be assigned to a social stratum as further information was required (for instance 3384 “employees”, 435 “helpers” and 305 “managers”). Additionally, in the database there were 5562 students and 2737 inactive people (home owners, retirees and religious trades) which cannot be assigned to a socioeconomic strata without references to the rest of their home, which does not exists. This way, 14702 cases of the original 29802.

Of the remaining 15100 cases we consider may be distributed in socioeconomic groups, taking into account the new consideration of utilizing very broad groups, this way we distributed between “upper”, “middle” and “lower” strata. For the upper strata we considered professions linked to the

sphere of medicine (doctors and dentists), engineering and finance, which produced 3474 cases.

In the middle stratum we assigned a broad range of professionals and technicians such as nurses, professors, electricians, psychologists or lawyers. Moreover, we consider trades that do not necessarily require formal training but with certain specialization degrees that make their remunerations relatively high, namely, models, furniture makers or confectioners. We also incorporated some categories that, in spite of being undetermined professions, we consider in the middle strata such as “technician”, “political scientist” or “researcher”. This way, we totaled 4150 cases.

For the lower strata we considered low qualification and poor valuing in the labor market, such as waiters, janitors, cooks, workers, home maids, among others. The total of cases assigned in the lower socioeconomic stratum was 7116.

Even if the assignation of “professions” to the three socioeconomic strata is complex and the addition of some of them to this or that category is debatable, we deem that the final result of this approximation verifies the perception that the community of Colombian immigrants has a considerable socioeconomic variability, with a distribution over the upper, middle and lower socioeconomic strata. Hence, this approximation delivers a figure of 23 percent cases in the upper stratum, 29.9 in the middle and 47.1 percent in the lower.

This socioeconomic variability is noticed in the analyzed interviews, as in the interlocutors one notices people with various professions, labor activities, schooling levels and who live in dissimilar urban spaces—such as La Dehesa in the commune Lo Barnechea, a residential zone of high incomes or the population of Pablo de Rokha in the commune La Pintana, one of the poorest zones in Greater Santiago—.

Integration/exclusion of Colombian immigrants

Following we analyze the characteristics acquired by the integration/exclusion of Colombian immigrants in Metropolitan regions, the ways they enter into various social spheres, as well as the difficulties they face, among other reasons owing to the prejudices linked to this collective such as the association of Colombia with drug trafficking. In the analysis we will distinguish the differences between immigrants from different socioeconomic strata and “races”, in view of learning whether the integration ways change between groups. The study is supported on more than fifty in-depth interviews and four life stories carried out between 2014 and 2016. The analysis

is made from the very experience of the interviewed migrants regarding the dimensions linked to their integration/exclusion.

The respondents' dominant discourse points at a good integration in the Chilean society. Virtually all the respondents tell positive experiences in Chile, their appreciation for the country and its inhabitants. By and large, the discourse refers to a harmonious integration, in which good experiences prevail, as Claudia states (mixed race / "white", middle-upper)¹¹: (Has it been easy to integrate in Chile?) Yes, it has been nice, and I have met nice, kind people... erm good".¹² Stressing this vision, some respondents point out that this is general good experience managed to break the initial negative dispositions they had, as owing to their project with a definite return they did not want to establish close relationships in Chile. This was the case of Diana B. (mixed race/"white", upper):

"I was super closed, don't know, like a barrier I myself put to prevent bonds here, because... my plan was to return. (However) I had good friends in university, very good, not a complaint... truth is my group is Chilean, my people is more Chilean than Colombian".

This general vision makes that a number of respondents states that Chileans like Colombians, they like their personality, happiness, the way they are and how they talk. In this line Francisco (mixed race/"white", lower) points out:

"...so far ok, everyone treats me well, in the restaurant I worked the same, here in the factory, on the street, everyone, Chileans have been good to me, and with many Colombians as well, I've been told that it is not that Chileans are too different from Colombians, in fact, most of the people here like Colombians a lot, because they are nice."

This good integration experience that appears in the dominant discourse does not bypasses a process to adapt the cultural differences they feel with Chileans, therefore the efforts necessary to adapt and understand the cultural codes of the recipient society. A cultural characteristic repeatedly referred, and that at first is difficult to understand, would be a certain "coldness" or "distance" Chileans display in their relationships, not with the migrants in particular but in general. For instance Aristarco (mixed race/"white", middle-upper) states:

¹¹ For each quotation of a respondent it will be specified if they are Afro-Colombian mixed race/"white" and their socioeconomic stratum: upper, middle-upper, middle, middle-lower or lower.

¹² In the quotations the respondents' expressions are preserved, this way there may be grammar issues and expression proper to Chile and Colombia.

How the Chileans have treated you? Generally well, I have no complaint actually. At first the impact is heavy because they are too cold when making acquaintances and are much more hermetic, *y son mucho* when a new person enters their groups”.

The general positive situation is referred to in the immigrants’ dominant discourse should be differentiated by two factors. On the one side, virtually all the respondents, even those comfortable in Chile, can tell about some discrimination experience they lived. We refer to discrimination ways, that on one side, are weak in intensity and on the other, relatively exceptional, which in the case of Afro-Colombians of lower socioeconomic strata are different. In the dominant discourse of collective of Colombian immigrants it is stated that discriminations they have lived do not severely affect the integration process.

On the other side, the dominant discourse also refers to complex situations in a specific space where it is emphasized they experience bad treatments, discrimination and arbitrariness, this space is that of the institutions related to immigration procedures, either at the border and in the offices of *Policía de Investigaciones (PDI)*, Civil Registration and DEM.

Together with this dominant discourse, there appears the narrative of those who state they experienced discrimination, a discourse that directly relates with the problem of racism, which on its own crosses with socioeconomic stratification, not only because most of the interviewed Afro-Colombian migrants belong to the lowest and middle-lower socioeconomic strata, but also because as we will show below, acts of discrimination and racism are more frequent in the environments in which the immigrants of the lowest socioeconomic strata live.

In the interviews it is noticed that immigrants who insert into middle-upper and upper strata tend to have a good insertion in the Chilean environment, in general they have Chilean friends and in a number of cases they have Chilean partners or refer acquaintances who have them. Virtually there are no Afro-descendants among these immigrants in middle-upper strata. For its part, in the middle-lower and lower strata graver integration problems are noticed, greater dependence of the Colombian community or immigrants in general and among the integration problems distinguishable are the discrimination that affects Afro-Colombian immigrants, which largely insert into this strata. We will see first the socioeconomic side of discrimination to later focus on the racial.

Immigrants in the lower and middle-lower strata face greater challenges and difficulties to enter and adapt than immigrants in upper and middle-

upper strata. Some of the non-Afro-descendant immigrants from the lower and middle-lower strata give an account of discriminatory experiences and problems they have lived, which in spite of being light in intensity, as we will see in the case of Afro-Colombians, are experienced with relative, quotidian, frequency, this way they may become a problem for their integration. Lucy (mixed race/“white”, lower) points out:

“actually, I’ve found a lot, because I’ve found very kind people, nice, very nice, but also people who, don’t know, discriminates harshly” and in the same line, Francisco (mixed race/ “white”, lower) states: “yeah, sometimes I have (been discriminated), but well... I’m not paying attention to it to embitter myself, I don’t have the time”.

Moreover, immigrants from lower and middle-lower strata are exposed to situations in which it is more likely that they receive mistreatment, just as the native population in such strata, however in their case offences are uttered in discriminatory and xenophobic terms. For instance, in public health care services, patients can receive offences which, very probably, do not take place in private health care services. This points out Vanessa (mixed race/ “white”, middle-low): “in a doctor’s practice... the midwives were like mean to me... ah she told me ‘these foreigners come and think that you have to look after them just like that’, something like that”. Likewise, when applying for jobs they are also exposed to mistreatment situations which those looking for employment in upper and middle-upper strata are not like to experience. For example, Andrés (mixed race/ “white”, middle-lower) looking for a job as a waiter experienced such kind of situations: “well obvious, sure as you arrive it’s like ‘you can’t work here, we don’t hire foreigners’, well right see you. It is a way of discrimination, (it happened to me) looking for bars, in Bellavista... yeah in various parts: ‘no foreigners’”.

This contrasts with the experiences of immigrants from upper and middle-upper strata. As already pointed out, some do not consider they experienced discrimination and those who have lived consider it exceptional, isolated cases, which do not affect their daily lives. For example, Alejandro (mixed race/ “white”, middle-upper) “(Have you ever felt discriminated?) Yes, I have a couple of times, yes... isolated cases, which is normal... I get it, but generally I don’t feel like that, discriminated”.

This difference in the treatment according to recognized and made explicit by the immigrants themselves. Diana (ixed race / “white”, middle) points out:

“There is one thing about xenophobia that manifests with increasing force... as I worked in Providencia and I live with people who studies Letters, they are journalists, people who went to university... I haven’t experienced that. But on Sundays I like going to fairs, for example and there you find the real xenophobia, curiously it’s the lower classes the ones allergic to the foreigners, but the middle and upper classes are marvelous... there is a sort of xenophobia that is ever growing, but among the poor people, which is sad... yeah and they fight over jobs, you see? As Colombians fight over jobs with Peruvians and there you see the real xenophobia, which is sad, because the poor are poor everywhere... and instead being aware of the actual oppressor, they are attentive to the Colombian, Peruvian...”

Bearing this difference between the considered strata in mind, when introducing racism, it can be verified that Afro-Colombians experience a worse discrimination than their peers of the same social stratum. Virtually, all the Afro-Colombian respondents declare having experienced racial discrimination in various occasions. Harassment on the street, being served poorly in shopping places or in services, buses and taxis that do not stop, arbitrary treatment at the border or in migration services, insults and even physical aggressions; all these situations are mentioned by Afro-descendants. Marta states so (Afro-Colombian, middle-lower): “here there is much discrimination... far too much! That’s because one is Colombian, because one is black”. And directly states the problem of the color of skin as the reason for discrimination: “... there are lot of people here who don’t like you ‘cause you’re black”. This is also stated by Diego H. (Afro-Colombian, lower):

“...they address you with racist words and that... that gets you very angry... they call you nigger, when they’re not even whites, you know what I mean? [...] I think it is lack of manners, that gets on me, nigger this-or-that, they’re not even whites [...] come on... why they discriminate? They try to discriminate you because of your color...”

Racist acts of exclusion which the Afro-Colombian responders refer to are clearly of a significantly heavier intensity than those lived by non-Afro-descendants. As it is noticed in the following quotations, these discrimination acts can have important loads of violence, even physical: Marta (Afro-Colombian, middle-lower): have you bee treated badly? Yes I have. (Like what, for example?) Colombian nigger, pusher, don’t know what else... sonofabitch, those things (and out of the blue?) Yeah like that. Diego H. (Afro-Colombian, lower):

“...once I was at a videogame machine when this guy arrived and started telling me ‘it’s getting dark, don’t’ know what, I see only black, nigger don’t know what’... ant this and that, that he had hit everyone there, and then started to shout at me, snapping his fingers... and I was quiet, until I got upset and hit him with my head and broke his nose and that was it... then they started telling me... they would fill me with bullets, this and that, one thing and another... at first I got scared, ‘cause in Colombia if someone tells you that it’s true...”.

Public spaces are particularly delicate places regarding racial discrimination, since racism and xenophobia may manifest particularly harshly owing to the sensation of impunity of the discriminator, as they are sheltered by anonymity and the crowd, and because it is more that a reaction of the discriminated may turn into acts of violence.

In these spaces differences in the experiences between Afro-Colombian and non-afro-descendants immigrants are noticeable, probably because the phenotype of the “white” and mixed-race Colombian is not very different from that of the Chilean, so their foreigner status may go unnoticed. For example Claudia (mixed-race / “white”, middle upper) points out: “it happens that they don’t believe I’m Colombian for my physiognomy. Because they have the idea that we’re all black”. In the case of Afro-Colombians, “the street” and particularly transport are pointed out as places where the experience racist discriminations on a regular basis. Leonardo (Afro-Colombian, middle-lower) indicates: “and on the street I’m always discriminated... ay!”, while Maricela (Afro-Colombian, lower) points out:

“And here it is somewhat hard, some people, I’m not telling that everyone, don’t receive you well... others, at least in the subway have pinched their noses, as we smell bad... you get what I mean? Those black women... what they do here? Ah and I almost forget, when we had to work in Ñuble, we had to go by bus, the bus didn’t stop”.

A similar experience is told by Yennifer (Afro-Colombian, middle-lower):

“When you walk by and a woman says something about you, or in the bus and they look at you like in a bad way, or like you’re at the bus stop and if there are some blacks it doesn’t stop... sometimes when there are some brown-skinned people they don’t pick you up”.

Public spaces such as squares or shopping malls are also places where Afro-Colombians have experienced discrimination, thus is stated by Marta (Afro-Colombian, middle-lower)

“...about a year ago, there was a kid who was about to fall from the escalators in a shopping center and I caught him. A nice boy, right? White, green eyes... I caught him to save him and the mother ‘don’t touch him, don’t touch him’ and cleaned him... ‘ma’am I was saving him’ and everyone ‘yeah she was saving him, ingrate’ everyone with me and the lady was also blond and tall... then she cleaned his hand, ‘cause I’ve touched him, she cleaned him like that ‘ay don’t touch him, don’t touch him’, ‘no, ma’am it was not to caress him, no, but because he was about to fall and if he falls he will die’”.

Avoiding public spaces and public transport is virtually impossible in a city such as Santiago. However, the hostility that some Afro-Colombians encounter make them value not to be exposed in these places, as stated by Maricela (Afro-Colombian, lower): “... thank God (to work) here I don’t need locomotion”. This may have consequences on their social life in general, and on the labor options they look for, since avoiding public spaces and collective transport in a city as big as Santiago will severely limit their labor, cultural and social development options.

In the face of these highly violent situations of discrimination, Afro-Colombian immigrants develop, in general terms, two strategies. On the one side, they try to be indifferent, “not to fall”, “not pay attention” to the discriminators. This is pointed out by Leonardo (Afro-Colombian, middle lower):

“I don’t answer anyone about a thing... in Colombia I was aggressive and was bold, and no, here not, here they talk to me and ‘ahh I play the fool’, I just keep walking, that’s it... I couldn’t care less...”; Marta (Afro-Colombian, middle-lower) follows the same strategy: “but I don’t pay attention, I take my bag and leave, I take my bag and leave. And so, I’m alone fighting”.

Another strategy is reaction, answering the discriminator back, even reaching physical violence. Thus states Maricela (Afro-Colombian, lower):

“They discriminate. We cook for them, we serve them, put a nice face and they sour the day like that. They go on, at least a man here, ‘give me a black coke’, ‘hey, you get it on with your racism?’, ‘ah, you’re getting rough!’ go... off with you!’ he told me, and I said: ‘show some respect, you’re so mean’, ‘ah, I’m letting your boss know’. I said: ‘come on, you insult me and you’re accusing me and what are you gonna tell her?, some day we’ll meet on the street and you’ll see...’ hahaha! See I insulted him and he insulted me back, but I got even”.

There is also this strategy, Diego (Afro-Colombian, lower): “sadly sometimes it ends in a fight, but... if someone here calls me ‘nigger don’t-know-what’, I have no problem to lay my hand son them, sop that they respect me”.

This way, Afro-descendant immigrants must face on several occasions discrimination based on racism. The color of skin thus becomes “racialization” (Stefoni, 2016), which deeply marks the immigrants’ experiences. Albeit, we have to bear in mind that, together with it, socioeconomic differentiations also act establishing dissimilar dynamics according to socioeconomic strata. Regarding this point the statement of the only one Afro-descendant woman who belong to a high socioeconomic status is revealing, as in her case the Afro-descending condition is not a problem in their everyday relationships, as racial discrimination would not take place as in the cases of other Afro-descendants in the other social strata. Yamilec (Afro-Colombian, upper):

“I know many Colombians that tell me about discrimination, complex situations, I don’t know whether it is I move in an environment where people is more cultured that I don’t experience those things. Do you know what I mean? Then, to the extent you are more cultured and educated, less discrimination... it is not the same to walk on a street in Ñuñoa as go to a population and that they see you and when they see you everyone wants to touch you everyone murmurs, they tell you things, becauase they have not been somewhere else, they haven’t left the place, do I make my self clear? Then, that happens”.

This way, there is intersectionality in the discrimination that includes the racial and socioeconomic variables. Mistreatment, discrimination, xenophobia and stereotypes concentrate and take place more frequently on the Afro-descending group of lower and middle-lower socioeconomic strata.

Conclusions

The collective of Colombians is one of the most numerous immigrant communities and fastest growth in Chile (DEM, 2016), showing a great growth between 2005 and 2015, both in permanent residence permits (more than 2 thousand percent over the period) and temporary visas (1940 percent). Moreover, the Colombian population living in Chile possesses diversities not common in other immigrant collectives, specifically socioeconomic and “racial” heterogeneity. By means of the processing of the variable “profession” from Dem databases, it is verified that Colombian immigrants distribute over various socioeconomic strata, even if they largely do it over the lower income strata (slightly less than 50 percent accor-

ding to the approximation) —working as waiters, workers, home maids, among others—, as well a significant percentage of the Colombian collective belongs to middle (about 30 percent) and upper strata (about 20 percent) —many of them with professions such as doctors, engineers and lawyers—. About racial heterogeneity there are no data in records, surveys or censuses, so we cannot approach the composition of the population on this variable, however, by means of the interviews it can be verified there is a significant number of Afro-descending Colombians, who largely belong to the lower socioeconomic stratus.

The internal heterogeneity of this collective makes it particularly interesting to study its integration process and the difficulties it faces, owing to the different forms of discrimination according to socioeconomic strata and “races”. The general conclusion is that there are indeed important differences between the various socioeconomic and “racial” groups in their process of integration/inclusion and in the discriminations they suffer, particularly in the labor sphere. As regards the various groups, the interviews show that immigrants in the middle-upper and upper strata have better integration processes, better relationships with Chileans and the discriminations they receive are lower in intensity and frequency than the other groups. Immigrants of middle-lower and lower socioeconomic strata face bigger problems in their integrations processes and more frequent discriminations, even though in general low in intensity. However, there are important differences according to “races”; while “white” or mixed-race immigrants have relatively successful stories —despite that immigrants in lower and middle-lower strata face more difficulties than those in upper and middle-upper strata— Afro-Colombians tell of daily situations of discrimination and of great intensity that reach verbal violence and on occasions physical, sometimes seriously affecting their integration process into society; for instance, fear of using urban public transport or public spaces, with the consequential problems to access labor opportunities, etc. This way, there is a radical difference in the treatment received by the different “races” of Colombians, as Afro-Colombians are victims of forms of discrimination of much greater intensity than those who are not Afro-descendants.

It is necessary to wonder about the causes of these conclusions. As pointed out at the beginning, Chile is a country with very little Afro-population and only in recent years it has received immigration from countries such as Colombia, Haiti and Dominican Republic with a significant presence of Afro-descendants. Owing to this, neither in the “national” culture, social “national” dynamics, “national” history nor “national” racism, historically

aimed at the indigenous, can be used to explain that the Chilean population has racist prejudices and treats in a discriminatory way Afro-descendants, with which it has had scant relationships. The explanation we put forward is that the Chilean culture expresses its participation in the colonialist and Eurocentric geo-culture of the capitalist world-system, from which it has received a hierarchal classification to value "races", in which the "black race" holds one of the last steps in this racist global hierarchy.

In the last decades the De-colonial Perspective has proposed that it is the framework of the intercontinental expression of the capitalist world-system that produces, from its European center, a geo-culture that organizes the intersubjective relations between the different people, cultures and "races" the system comprehends. It is in the frame of this geo-culture that has traversed the more than five hundred years of the capitalist world-system that the production of "national cultures" such as the Chilean must be inserted into. It is not surprising, from this perspective that the integration, exclusion and discrimination patterns that affect the collective of immigrants express the colonialist-Eurocentric way of the capitalist world-system geo-culture, as they concentrate the racist and xenophobic behavior toward the Afro-descending population. This pattern is the one expressing in Chile today, it is the one reproduced by the Chileans in its intersubjective relations with immigrants, even with those collective of migrants, i.e., the Afro-descendants, which are unknown from the national experience but known from the geo-cultural experience but known from the geo-cultural experience of the world-system, which places them at the lowest ranks of the Eurocentric-racist hierarchy defined by colonialism.

The possibility that Chile becomes a multicultural society, which can make room for quality coexistence between the multiple collectives it holds and that is increasing with the arrival of migrants, where there are no close ethnic communities object of racial discrimination and socioeconomic marginalization, will depend on a decisive action from public policies based on rights that intend to lessen the effects of the racist-colonialist geo-culture in which the country is inserted. In order to be successful this intercultural action must start from becoming a clear awareness of the challenge that implies facing, not only determine "prejudices" and which a "racist" part of the population has, but a geo-culture of more than five hundred years and that has been produced and maintained as it corresponds to an exploitation and domination system at a global scale.

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