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The essays chosen for this book analyze and compare the characteristics of recent anti-immigration movements that have developed in North America and the European Union, resulting from the ever-growing flow of illegal migrants. Said movements, according to these authors, have spurred restrictive, xenophobe, racist or anti-immigrant migration policies, depending on each country or state. These essays deal with recent topics such as the creation of anti-immigrant laws in Arizona and Georgia, as well as the strengthening of border control in Spain and Poland or the same xenophobe and discriminatory feeling in Mexico and Canada, among other topics. This book is also essential to understand contemporary anti-immigrant feelings, actions and policies.

The first essay, part of the introductory section, was written by Mónica Verea, it deals with restrictive measures and anti-immigrant feelings of the 21st century. Said movements, have spurred restrictive, xenophobe, racist or anti-immigrant migration policies, depending on the case. The editor establishes the theoretical basis, using Peter Schuck’s concepts—a very important migration specialist—, which allows her to present the reader with an overview of concepts such as racism, discrimination, nativism and ethnocentrism, assimilation and xenophobia.

Ariadna Estévez, in the second essay, states that criminalization of migration and discrimination results in the violation of human rights. She
uses Coutin’s and Honneth’s ideas which explain how migrants enter a situation with no social and legal protection, a human rights’ issue.

The second section on North America starts with Liette Gilbert’s and Kathy Kolnick’s essay which analyzes fundamental causes of local anti-immigrant movements and actions in the US, which are born from the federal government’s incapacity to protect borders and control adequately the entrance of illegal aliens. These essay states that illegal aliens are considered as “public nuisance” and this contributes to the criminalization of migration. Thus, local authorities are able to legitimize their actions, usually anti-immigrant ones, even though migration is a federal topic. This essay also analyzes a series of contradictions in local and federal anti-immigrant measures. The idea of public nuisance is now of public interests and causes a feeling of discrimination that criminalizes illegal aliens.

The fourth essay, written by Frederic I. Solop and Nancy A. Wonders, focuses on diverse data taken from migration surveys so as to explain actions, public attitudes and the creation of migration policies in the US. Americans’ public opinion on migration is an essential matter in this study; it analyzes specific opinions given by the population of Arizona and California. This study shows that opinions given by Americans in regards to migration are very diverse, especially by border population.

Robert Donnelly’s essay studies different legislations on migration in different states of the US, including the SB1070 Law in Arizona. Donnelly states that between 2006 and 2010, 570 legislations regarding illegal immigration were created; their presence grew due to the incapacity of migration regulations carried out by the federal government of the US. The author emphasizes that the creation of anti-immigrant measures is a result of the growing political participation of the Tea Party, the expansion of mass media influence on the criminalization of illegal immigrants and the recent demographic results of Hispanic or Latin populations.

Michael Kahout presents the “Inland Empire” case of California, where the continuous migration flow and conservatism of the inhabitants of this region have generated violent clashes and confrontations because of the threat posed by illegal aliens. The population’s fear has been translated into the implementation of federal migration policies such as E-Verify, its goal is to identify illegal immigrants to eventually
deport them. This case exemplifies the combination of federal, state and local migration policies in the US.

The essay written by Ana Ochoa O’Leary and Azucena Sánchez talks about the families of mixed immigration status concept. To explain this concept, the bi-national study on reproductive health is taken into account. This essay concludes that illegal immigrants are excluded from health related public policies, which generates not only social disparities, but family ones too. Arizona is important to explain this concept because of its anti-immigrant context.

The essay by Elaine Levine talks about the growing immigrant population in the State of Georgia, from 173,000 in 1990 to 929,000 in 2008; half of these are Latin American and one-third of them are Mexicans. More than half of these immigrants are illegal. Illegal aliens were an important workforce to build the 1996 Olympic venues and an important part of the workforce in chicken processing companies in Gainsville and carpet manufacturers in Dalton. Despite this, Levine states that four counties in Georgia have implemented agreements such as the 287g of the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), its goal is to deport thousands of people.

Julie Dufort analyzes the activities of the civil group called Minutemen Project in charge of patrolling the Mexico-US border. Jim Gilchrist’s and Chris Simcox’s cases, presidents of this project, are studied; their political actions regarding the migration arena are analyzed. The ideas promoted by this group are based on the strict implementation of US migration laws and total commitment to border security to prevent uninspected migration.

Anna Kaganiec-Kamienska’s essay studies the “English-Only” movement, which aims to establish English as the official language of the US. This movement has increased anti-immigrant feelings in the US, especially Spanish speaking migrants.

The last essay of the second part written by Manuel Ángel Castillo and Germán G. Guerra examines Mexico’s case, its perception and attitude on immigration. It takes into account two elements: the Mexican government’s opinion on immigration and the creation of regulations and legislative initiatives implemented by Mexican migration authorities and the opinion on this subject of Mexican society. These authors analyze Mexicans’ perception through the results of the First National Survey on Discrimination in Mexico 2005. The attitude of
Mexican authorities in regards to immigrants is put under scrutiny as well as the contradiction generated by the Mexican government’s demands to achieve respect for our fellow citizens abroad. Authors propose a migration policy based on respect for human rights that decreases xenophobe attitudes towards Central American immigrants.

In regards to the Canadian issue, Yolande Pottie-Sherman and Rima Wilkes review the history of Canadian migration policies which were based, since 1962, on the selection of “white” immigrants or racist principles. This is confirmed by the Canadian policy of restricting the entrance of Chinese to Canadian territory and the subsequent denial of entry to Canada of Holocaust victims and Japanese citizens during WWII. The authors say that Canada later on decided to have a positive migration policy because of migrants’ economic contributions and to national identity.

Jeffrey G. Reitz, studies Canadians’ acceptance rates towards migration, as well as the perception that migration means trouble. However, the authors analyze the study made by Euronics for Survey Research in November 2010, stating two important points: firstly, migration is an opportunity for regional economic growth and secondly, compliance and recognition of a progressive posture of acceptance and respect for the rights of homosexuals. It is important to note that Canadian migration policy recognizes couple of the same sex. The author also includes information on the Conservative Party, which proposes an assimilation and acceptance policy to include immigrants into the Canadian society.

Graciela Martínez-Zalce’s essay on the expansion of mass media influence on the topic of illegal immigrants in Canada and the impact it could generate on the Canadian society; if TV programs such as Border Wars or Human Cargo which are supposed to be serious, generate a negative image and racial profile that could translate into an anti-immigration feeling.

The third part of this book is dedicated to the European Union; it starts with an essay by Xavier Escandell, which makes an interpretation of the Eurobarometer –2009 data source- which the author uses to measure the perception of Europeans on immigrants at a time of economic deceleration and crisis in the European region. The results of this analysis are based on the relationship of the competitiveness and cultural assimilation model of immigrants and its possible impact on public opinion.
Anthony M. Messina deals with topics of the European Union and its liberal position regarding immigration since 9/11 and if Europeans fell more vulnerable in economic, social and physical terms. To carry out this analysis, Messina studies the United Kingdom’s, Spain’s, France’s and other Western countries’ public opinion which do not consider immigration as a priority subject.

Cristopher Bertossi’s essay analyzes the situation of countries such as the Netherlands, France and Great Britain, which had policies of integration of immigrants and now have created new anti-immigrant policies. The author states that “national integration models” prevent the politicization and understanding of policies related to the integration of immigration in Western countries. The author also states that Europe never established multicultural models to allow greater assimilation of immigrants.

Monika Banas studies the impact of the enforcement of the Schegen agreement and its relation to immigration and its problems. According to this author, developed countries such as France, Germany, Great Britain and Scandinavian ones are creating migration policies based on each country’s economic, social and political interests. The author points out that the negative perception of these migration policies has made conservative parties propose the strengthening of the latter to reduce the entry of immigrants. Banas also analyzes the speeches given by politicians of Denmark, Finland and Sweden on immigration between 2005 and 2010.

Guillermo Alonso and Michael Weres analyze migration flows and routes in Spain, Poland and the US. The most emblematic case in this essay is Poland, the geographical entrance to Eastern Europe, which had to tighten up border surveillance. These authors also develop a comparative analysis on the construction of border surveillance in Spain, Poland and the US.

The last essay written by Pablo Nicolás Biderbost Moyano studies Spain’s situation and the position of political parties, especially the People’s Party and the Socialists Workers’ Party, in regards to the idea of integration of immigrants to the Spanish society. The author also points out that small parties –such as the National Democracy and Platform for Catalonia- openly express anti-immigrant ideas. The essay also analyzes the legislative impact of said parties in the creation of public policies.