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Latin-american inmigrants in the Spanish Armed Forces: Discourses on nationality and citizenship

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This paper aims to study the transformation of an immigrant group into a "national" one. Although we are aware that the analysis of this process requires the study of both public policies, directed at immigrants, and the strategies of immigrants, our work will focus on the latter by now. We'll analyze, therefore, the discourse on nationality and citizenship in the Latin American group, as well as its possibilities and facilities of adaptation to a new culture and a new country. The initial idea of this work comes from Roger Waldinger (2007). The empirical material comes from a qualitative research carried out with the support of the General Gutierrez Mellado University Institute through discussion groups, whom the signifier "Spain" was proposed as a topic for debate. The aim was to produce a discourse on their status as an immigrant and on the meaning of nationality. The fact that the immigrants were rolled up in the Spanish Armed Forces contributed to give a greater relief to the phenomenon, because they are people who participate in peace missions and armed conflicts, in which they risk their own lives to defend the interests of a nation that initially is not theirs. The axial question of our investigation is: when and in what way the immigrants begin to consider themselves Spaniards? The relevance of studying the Latin American collective is also remarkable if we consider that, at the beginning of the 21st century, Spain has become the primary destination of Latin American migrants, having become an alternative to the United States.

Working group: Recruitment and retention