

Haitian migration: the subject facing the (re)encounter with the excess

Alexandra Garcia Grigorieff Nüske ^{a*}
Mônica Medeiros Kother Macedo ^b

^aPontifical Catholic University of Rio Grande do Sul, Porto Alegre, RS, Brazil

^bFederal University of Rio Grande do Sul, Porto Alegre, RS, Brazil

Abstract: This article is a qualitative study about the migration of Haitian subjects. This study approaches the existence and/or frailty of the migrant's coping resources, considering that the conditions of the destination country sometimes reiterate the helplessness experienced in the country of origin. Three Haitian migrants participated in this study; they came to Brazil after the Haiti earthquake and provided interviews. The data obtained were analyzed through Interpretative Analysis, proposed by Erickson, and explored with theoretical collaborations of Psychoanalysis. As contributions, this study provided access to the subjects' narrative about their unique and complex experiences, as well as the emphasis given to social, psychic and subjective aspects so that interventions on the migration phenomena recognize the importance of considering the migrant subject in his/her complexity.

Keywords: Haitian migration, migrant subject, migratory movements, psychoanalysis.

Introduction

The complexity in the migratory movement calls for reflection on elements that denounce the coping modalities of the subject in a condition that goes far beyond body displacement. Migrants, leaving their homeland, leave a place where social and cultural elements were accessible and arrive in a land where everything is unknown (Daure, Reyverand-Coulon, & Forzan, 2014). Therefore, the condition of foreignness may place subjects before the awareness of no longer having guarantees about their certainties, evidencing an experience of helplessness through the encounter with what is not recognized as familiar (Mallard, Cremasco, & Metraux, 2015).

According to Hornstein (2009), the encounter with the new causes a necessary psychic work of management in the field of investments, demanding coping with the loss of some objects and the experience of choice by others. In this sense, the migratory experience requires these subjects to deal not only with real and clearly identified losses, but also with the experience of facing the complexity in their psychic investments. This aspect acquires singular shapes in the specific migratory phenomenon of Haitian subjects.

Haiti's current situation, as well as the entire development of its history, is marked by frequent excesses, which constantly place the subjects in a situation of helplessness. Haitians' everyday life is permeated by situations of violence, countless political conflicts and frequent natural disasters, which sets the Caribbean

country as one of the poorest in the world (Silva, 2015). The earthquake that struck Haiti in 2010 further compromised the situation of the Haitian people, so that hunger, precarious education, health risks and violence are present in the everyday life of the country (Moraes, Andrade, & Mattos, 2013; Tisatto, 2016). Thus, Haiti's dramatic scenario motivates a mass migration to several countries of the world, one of them being Brazil (Durans & Santos, 2016).

When leaving the country of origin and searching for a new home, the migrant faces the need to manage affective, linguistic, cultural and professional disruptions that may arise from the migratory experience, which requires a confrontation with the unknown. Moreover, upon arriving in the new country, the subject will face the challenge of finding a job to secure his/her support and that of his/her family. In addition, minimum housing, school and health conditions will result in the confrontation with bureaucratic aspects of a country about which they know little or nothing. Therefore, besides trying to remedy the basic conditions of survival, it will also be up to the migrants to have psychic conditions to manage the unique effects in themselves arising from leaving their homeland and arriving in the new country.

In this sense, the objective of this study – which considers essential to look at the *migrant subject* – was to investigate the divestment processes and psychic investments inherent in the migratory experience of subjects who came to Brazil after the Haiti earthquake in 2010. This study aimed to explore the psychic effects associated with coping with various demands arising from the migratory experience, from narratives about the experienced situations. The aspects related to the migratory

* Corresponding address: alexandra.grigorieff@hotmail.com



phenomenon observed in the national territory must be studied because this experience strongly interferes in the living conditions of a subject who has left a lot behind and will need to create new possibilities of social bonds.

Method

Participants

Three Haitians, two women and one man, participated in the study. They came to Brazil after

the 2010 earthquake in Haiti. The three Haitians are adults and have lived in Brazil for over a year. To guarantee the anonymity of their identities, they were given fictitious names. Considering the Haitian history, as well as the data obtained in this study, the names chosen are of French origin and have close meanings with the characteristics present in the participants' history. In this sense, these names are: Eloi, which means "the chosen one"; Mirela, meaning "the one who admires"; and Charlotte, meaning "woman of the people" (Dictionary of Proper Names, 2019).

Chart 1. List of participants' interview data

Participant	Age	Length of stay in Brazil	Countries you passed before arrival in Brazil/length of stay	Currently working	Who do you live with
Eloi	25 years	2 years	Ecuador / 8 months	Yes	1 Haitian friend
Mirela	22 years	2 years	-	No	Husband and son
Charlotte	40 years	1 year and 4 months	Dominican Republic / 10 years; Ecuador / 9 months	No	6 Haitian friends

Data collection instruments

Two semi-directed interviews were conducted with each participant; they were audio-recorded and explored the following themes: participant's life history with emphasis on migratory experience; meanings attributed to the migratory experience; experience of separation from the country and the culture of origin; welcome experience in the new country; feelings arising from this experience; difficulties experienced in the migratory process; elements that helped in the migratory process; and resources used to deal with the difficulties of experience. All interviews were later transcribed to ensure data reliability. Subsequently, the Personal and Sociodemographic Data Sheet prepared for this study was completed to access information that had not emerged during the interview.

Procedures for data analysis

The interviews were analyzed through the Interpretative Analysis proposed by Erickson (1997), in which it is up to the researcher to discover different strata of particularities and universality present in the obtained data. Two *Assertions* were formulated from the participants narratives (Erickson, 1997). Then, a *corpus* review was performed to test and retest the assertions to find evidence that confirmed or denied the assertion presented. Finally, the *analysis was written* and consisted of interview topics plus *interpretative comments* (Erickson, 1997).

In this sense, the challenge of this analysis is to alternate what is specific to a vignette with what is general of an interpretive commentary (Kude, 1997). In this study, the data were interpreted from the theoretical contributions of Psychoanalysis. Interpretative Analysis meets the psychoanalytical proposition of seeking not the apparent explanation of a phenomenon, but rather the in-depth investigation and interpretation of its uniqueness.

Results and discussion

Presentation of Assertions

After the analysis of the collected data, two Assertions were formulated, contemplating an in-depth reflection on the divestment processes and psychic investments inherent to the migratory experience. The first Assertion, entitled "the singular uneasiness in facing intrapsychic and intersubjective demands", resulted from the need to question the coping modalities of the subject in the migratory experience, in a condition that goes beyond mere geographical displacement. The second Assertion, entitled "the sum of excesses in the different times of (dis)illusion", explores the psychic impacts on the migrant subject resulting from experiences of violence and helplessness, experienced both in Haiti and in Brazil. The two Assertions formulated from the data obtained from the participants of this study are presented below, as well as the interpretative comments that these themes aroused.

First Assertion: the singular uneasiness in facing intrapsychic and intersubjective demands

The first Assertion results from problematizations narrated by research participants about migration as a search for a place of their own. The complexity in the migratory movement makes it necessary to explore elements that denounce the coping modalities with the subject in a condition that goes far beyond territorial displacement. Studies found that, often, in the migratory movement, the subject seeks solutions to the difficulties experienced in the country of origin. These are difficulties that allude to poor working conditions, prevalence of violence, few opportunities for study and qualification, and, most of the time, to significant risks to survival (Fernandes & Castro, 2014).

In this study, these elements were identified as motivating factors for migration of the three participants. This precarious condition can be identified through Eloi's narrative, who saw Brazil as a country of new opportunities:

I had been living in Haiti [for] a long time, and Haiti is a country that doesn't give much opportunity to Haitian. Because the Haitian can finish study[ing]... can't find a service... can't find anything because there isn't. Little service. The governments aren't giving opportunity to the Haitian too. Then there are Haitian that leave Haiti, so they want to come to Brazil to find a better life. (Eloi)

In Eloi's speech, Brazil emerges as a way out of the precarious living conditions available in Haiti. Thus, the unique confrontation to be performed by this participant in her migratory movement alludes to finding in a distant land what she does not find in his homeland. From the decision made by the migration, it will be up to the migrant subject to cope psychically with the need to divest expectations about his/her country of origin, as well as to seek financial resources in his/her meager reality in order to make possible the displacement, in this case, to Brazil.

This denounces both the value actually paid and the enormous expectation attributed to coming to the new country. According to Da Silva and Lima (2016), elements such as poverty, war and natural disasters make the Haitian, hoping to rescue his/her condition as a subject, migrate in search for a better quality of life. These elements are also identified in the narratives of Mirela and Charlotte, who hope to find in Brazil better living conditions and better opportunities for study and employment.

According to the participants' narratives, after arriving to the Brazilian context, an intense frustration becomes present, as their expectations are not met by reality. In addition to the difficulties inherent in the

migration process, such as the imposition of a new culture, a new territory, a new language and new customs, migrants still face difficulties that increase the impossibility of achieving the singular goal of migration. This situation can be illustrated by Mirela's speech about Brazil:

There is no university. I came here to go to school, then go to university. Now I couldn't because I couldn't find a day care for my son, that's all. (Mirela)

Faced with the frustration of not accomplishing her plans, since she could not enter the university, find a job, or a day care center for her son, Mirela reacts with sadness, being very upset about her idleness. This participant's narrative shows how the migratory change associated with the subsequent experience of disappointment has important effects on the psyche, constituting a specificity in her condition of discontent. The uniqueness of the discontent and its relation to the expectations that provoked the migratory movement can be observed in the narrative of the three research participants:

My service offers no food stamps, they don't offer much, only commuter benefits and that's it. And that's it. Then it got very difficult for me. But there's nothing I can do, nothing. It's not easy to find another service, it's not easy. So it's very hard for me, I'm not liking my service, so. (Eloi)

Oh, I have sadness because I feel... Every day in my house doing nothing, studying nothing, just my sadness, that's all. (Mirela)

This is my problem, I always with headache. Sometimes I [am] baking food and then I don't want to eat, thinking, thinking. (Charlotte)

From the different nuances in the enunciation of the discontent presented in these narratives, the uniqueness of the intrapsychic effects resulting from experiences in the intersubjective field is evident. These differences will have, in the case of migration, important consequences regarding the identity elements of the migrant subject, as well as their possibilities of new insertion in the social bond. According to Bleichmar (2005), the production of subjectivity implies the way in which human uniqueness is constituted at the intersection of universal and particular demands, as well as the historical and political aspects that produce the social subject. Specifically in relation to the Haitian migrant subjects, studies also state that coming to Brazil, contrary to their expectations, starts to foster the continuity of the social helplessness experienced in Haiti.

Da Silva and Lima (2016) indicate that when Haitian migrants arrive in Brazil, they face hunger, unemployment and sometimes a hostile and discriminatory environment. The expectation of arriving and finding "saving" life conditions are

losing space as the risk to psychic vulnerability increases. In other words, an important axis of reflection on migrant subjects is installed regarding their vulnerability in relation to the theme of identity. Identity, according to Bleichmar (2009), refers to a structure consisting of invariants that are repeated and enable psychic functioning. It is the feeling of the Self, which corresponds to a notion of permanence and continuity, so that the modifications in its identifying references are strangely felt (Rother Hornstein, 2006). The feeling of Self, according to Hornstein (2009), requires a continuous investment from the other, assuming “a compromise between what remains and what changes, between a core of object identifications and representations and the recompositions that the encounters require.” (p. 54). Thus, even though the identity theme essentially concerns the subject, the importance of the investments received from the other is essential. Regarding the migrant subject’s need for psychic reorganization, studies must also consider, together with intrapsychic demands, the experiences of the intersubjective field, which are clearly influenced by cultural demands. It is worth mentioning that the arrival in the Brazilian territory, by establishing the reproduction of precarious conditions regarding the attention and care to migrants’ physical and mental integrity, fails considerably in their possibilities of help regarding the human encounter experience, in which effective opportunities of recomposition are offered before the subjects’ vulnerability.

One of the main challenges for migrants upon arrival in Brazil is to obtain employment. The migrant subject currently finds, in the Brazilian context, an economic scenario that does not favor even the local population, much less the foreigner one (Da Silva & Lima, 2016). Such difficulty seems to be related to the moment of crisis in the country; however, it also alludes to the migrant subjects’ own issues, such as language acquisition and, in the case of the Haitian migrant, ethnic characteristics. Mirela narrates her search for work from the following reflection:

Here there are five people [who] are looking for work, there are a lot of Brazilian. The manager said [that] here, now [in] Brazil there’s a crisis, and only Brazilian goes to work, no vacancy for Haitian, that’s all. (Mirela)

The advantage attributed to hiring Brazilians to the detriment of Haitian foreigners raises important questions about their own value and life expectancy. In this sense, the investments and projects related to what was experienced in Haiti are also questioned, as illustrated by Eloí:

I’m not very satisfied because I have complete high school, I’m working on buildings, uh, uh, like, I’m

working on cleaning, taking out the rubbish on the street, but I spent a lot of time studying there in Haiti. I spent a lot of money there in Haiti. . . to be educated there in Haiti. (Eloí)

From the migrant’s narrative, one can see his intense dissatisfaction regarding the work performed in Brazil, as he considers that he has invested financially in his education to be better recognized. Da Silva and Lima (2016) state that migrants come to Brazil, most of the time, with few economies, and end up living in unhealthy places and becoming the target of proposals for degrading jobs. Therefore, although they have some degree of professional qualification and speak Portuguese, they are often exploited by the Brazilian labor market, subjecting themselves to cheap labor and few labor rights (Moraes et al., 2013).

It is worth mentioning that obtaining work is essential to the lives of Haitian migrants. Besides earning a minimum wage as a basic guarantee of survival, the search for work and its consequent financial remuneration is linked not only to self-support but also to the family’s support. Thus, as much as migration may be considered a private action, the migrant may have been pressured by relatives to migrate in search of better job opportunities and thus send remittances to assist his/her family (Diehl, 2017). It is about ensuring a minimum survival for both family members who accompanied them in the migratory condition and those who remained in Haiti under precarious living conditions.

These considerations are illustrated by the story of Charlotte, who left Haiti to “get a better life for my family because there is no job in Haiti.” Thus, the migrant seeks a better life both for her family in Brazil (husband and daughter) and for the family she left in her home country (her mother and her five other children, left in her care). Charlotte tells her work experience in a Brazilian hotel:

When I was working on hotel cleaning, I work 3 months. I was a little happy, because every month I send to my mother, okay. I know that [if] I send [money], she will eat. (Charlotte)

It is evident from Charlotte’s narrative the central place of the financial resources resulting from her work sent to Haiti, since the already precarious conditions experienced in Haiti remain there, despite her migration to Brazil. Participants in this study report the condition in which they are required to meet two fundamental conditions: to secure their own livelihood and to secure the livelihood of those family members who remain in Haiti. Eloí also needs to send his salary gain to ensure his family’s survival conditions.

Then I have to stay there working and when I get money I have to send her and pay the rent and then I end up with nothing, that’s life for me. (Eloí)

Eloi is very frustrated with this condition, and oscillates between moments in which he complains about sending money to Haiti and others in which he shows complete agreement with the maternal and fraternal dependence on his earnings. The migrants' narratives illustrate the maintenance of a certain retrenchment of the subject's autonomy, since the very act of migrating already includes the assumption for the survival of those who stay, and those who financed their condition to leave. Therefore, the family is a factor that causes migration and also directly influences the way the migrant starts to live in the new country, as well as the possibilities of plans and wishes for the future. About her life project, Mirela states that:

If I'm working I'll do everything, make my dream come true. . . . My dream is big. . . . To have a comfortable home to help my son too. To help him at school, in day care. (Mirela)

From this perspective, family relationships have a crucial influence on the subject's investments, and its effects are clear on the migrant's own desire condition. It is worth highlighting the fine line between the desire to help the family and the indiscriminate boundaries between the Self and the object, when it seems impossible to bring the notion of difference into the intersubjective field.

Participants in this survey often report this sense of "having to" help, and along with it the inability to enjoy any sense of content given the recognition of the precariousness in which their family members live. Thus, they experience a discontent that prevents them from enjoying more favorable conditions in the new country, as illustrated by Eloi's narrative:

I was going out with them [Brazilian friends], now I stopped going out a bit. I'm thinking, because my mother is sick, so I can't leave. My mother is sad there in Haiti and I'm happy here in Brazil? No. No. Then I stopped going out a little. I stopped a little and I'm not happy either, I'm not happy. (Eloi)

The precarious condition of the other family member who remains in the abandoned homeland continually confronts them with the ability to psychically manage both their divestments (what is left behind in Haiti) and their investments (projects and achievements in the new condition). Thus, there is the possibility of damage to the *energy balance* (Freud, 1915/2006), since the subject is demanded to establish a delicate balance between investments in the self and those destined for objects. In the condition of migration, by intensely taking care of the demands of the other, who remained in the place from which the subject wished to leave, there may be impossibilities to invest in projects and desires related to the self,

making it difficult to enjoy new possibilities and experiences in the altering field.

The commitment to help others is a predominant Haitian characteristic and extends to the conception of a community spirit of caring for others, besides family members. According to Alexis (1970), the intentions related to helping others and thinking about the collective arise as a characteristic of the Haitian people, which can be observed since their conquest for independence, creating an identity model governed by the feeling of fraternity. Charlotte's narrative can illustrate such a value; she takes care of her friends' children, accompanies friends at medical appointments and job interviews:

I help the other person. I've been here for a year and four months and there are other people who have been here for one month, two months, six months, that don't speak, don't understand anything. I help, if this person goes to the hospital I go together, I help. . . . I help with my effort. Sometimes I have another stepdaughter looking for a job, I go with her. (Charlotte)

Solidarity is evident as a value of Haitian culture. Barbosa (2015) states that helping others can be observed among migrants when they share their assets, physical space and food, or even with poor Brazilians. Mirela narrates an experience she had at the bus stop in a Brazilian capital:

Haitian saw in a bus a woman with a child of three years. She calls the Brazilian: "Hi, please help me with 5 reais", [Brazilian says] "I have no money". I'm going to bring her 20 reais, because she said [that] the girl has a problem, she goes to the hospital that is very far away with her daughter. . . I'll take 20 reais for her. Because all Haitians have a very good heart, they have sensitivity too. (Mirela)

This report shows the concern with the care of the other and the empathy existing in the migrants' narratives. These characteristics are so assertively present that they can be shown through the Haitian proverb "*manje kwit paguem mèt*" (prepared food has no owner), that is, it is for everyone (Barbosa, 2015). Thus, the reference in the literature on the Haitian commitment to inclusion and caring for the other is evident.

It is worth noting, however, the thin line between what can be defined as solidarity and what sometimes alludes to a condition of obedience and submission that even undermines the subject in the struggle for his/her rights. In this sense, there is an urgency for a reflection that addresses both aspects of subjectivity and the impacts of reality on the subject. Therefore, in the next Assertion, the psychic effects that affect the migrant subject arising from the violence experienced

in Haiti, as well as from the Brazilian context, are problematized.

Second Assertion: the sum of excesses in the different times of (dis)illusion

Haitian history is marked by a political crisis that, according to Lucenna (2014), consists of 34 coups d'état, a historical feature as important as the achievement of its independence. In this sense, throughout the development of Haiti, the intense effects of the sequence of dictatorship and authoritarianism, recurring power struggles, and frequent natural disasters are evident, setting Haiti as the poorest country in the Americas (Silva, 2015).

Currently, according to a study developed by Tisatto (2016), the population of the former French colony suffers from malnutrition and lives below the poverty line stipulated by the United Nations, being considered one of the poorest countries in the world. During the recovery process against three hurricanes that hit the country in 2009, Haiti suffered a huge earthquake in 2010, aggravating the condition of misery of the Haitian people, so that hunger, precarious education and violence are present in the everyday life of Haiti (Moraes et al., 2013; Tisatto, 2016). In addition, Haitian lands are used by trafficking as a transit route to the United States, the political system is disorganized, and there is an epidemic of various types of diseases, such as AIDS and cholera (Moraes et al., 2013; Tisatto, 2016). In this sense, the Haitian population currently faces important difficulties in the struggle for survival and guarantee of human rights, as the country is in a serious state of misery (Tisatto, 2016).

The Haitians interviewed in this study denounce the precarious conditions of the country, as well as the absence of minimum living conditions and survival, which make it impossible to foster projects and expectations about continuing to live in Haiti. Charlotte accurately describes how the precarious living conditions enter Haitian everyday life and make Haiti a country from which its citizens seek to leave.

There is no, no security. I couldn't walk on, couldn't walk as someone walks here, any street at night, I couldn't walk by day either. There isn't like here, there's not, I say that I don't have, there is nothing good. Everything, everything is hard there. I always live worried, worried. . . . It's always like a, it's like a war... Everything is hard there, everything, everything is difficult. . . . There is no, no electricity, no light, no hospital, nothing good. And the government does nothing for anyone. (Charlotte)

From the migrant's narrative, one perceives the condition of helplessness experienced in the country of origin, so that leaving Haiti becomes the possible way out to find a sense of safety and content. Eloi and Mirela, as well as Charlotte, also refer to the disconcerting effects of

the intense difficulties experienced in their home country with regard to social inequality, political hopelessness, precarious education and employment opportunities.

In addition to economic and political difficulties, Haiti often faces major natural disasters that increase the already existing misery in the country. Bleichmar (2003) states that even a natural catastrophe, as well as its impacts, can be due to government carelessness and neglect when a country is devastated. The author illustrates this finding through the earthquake in Mexico, where most of the destroyed buildings had been built at the corruption period and therefore did not meet building standards. Da Silva and Lima (2016) state, in relation to the earthquake in Haiti that, although the country is located in a geographically vulnerable region, this does not justify the scale of the disaster. This allows to perceive how social and political factors are necessarily involved at the time of a natural disaster. These factors are evident both in the fragility of areas devastated by the natural phenomenon and in the scarce resources destined to meet the needs of the population.

In this sense, the earthquake in Haiti seems to have made the precarious living conditions of the population even more evident. The way the institutions managed the tragedy that occurred illustrates new faces of violence. Charlotte reacts with sadness when talking about the earthquake that devastated her homeland in 2010, denouncing the persistent maintenance of poor and deficient living and survival conditions of the Haitian population. In addition, Charlotte says that after the earthquake the difficulties increased:

Before it was a little better. . . . The people who plant rice, beans, make food, how are they called? Farmer, before there was a lot and now there is not because there is no water, there is nothing to help make food. Everything has to be imported. . . . After the earthquake, everything was gone. (Charlotte)

The devastating natural catastrophe has, therefore, aggravated the chaos in the Caribbean country, which in fact has, in its history, no periods marked by political stability and by the establishment of care and attention to its population. Faced with the intense impacts of violence from natural disasters and from the compromise of the guarantee of basic human rights, the subject undergoes a painful process of disillusion about the possibilities of finding in his/her country minimum possibilities for housing, physical survival and psychic survival. In this sense, from 2010, Haitians found in migration an attempt to escape the misery of their home country and seek better living conditions (Durans & Santos, 2016).

Brazil emerged as a potential destination country, as it had already established a link with Haiti through the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), facilitating the arrival of Haitians in the country (Moraes et al., 2013; Rosa, 2015). It is noteworthy that Brazil did not receive Haitians as "refugees", since

Brazilian Law 9474/97 and the Geneva Convention do not consider the motivations of Haitian migration as a source of refuge, as they are not included in the categories of persecution, wars or life threats.

In this sense, as Moraes et al. (2013), the entry of Haitian migrants in Brazil was through a humanitarian visa, issued in limited numbers, for the purpose of working and study conditions. In 2013, after suffering criticism and legal actions regarding the way migrants were welcomed, Brazil began issuing unlimited visas to Haitians (Moraes et al., 2013). Besides facilitating access to Brazilian lands, Diehl (2017) notes that the country has become one of the favorite destinations, due to the construction of a positive imagination about Brazil, which is seen as “a country open to receive immigrants, where there no is racism and prejudice and where everyone is welcome” (p. 45). From this, the migratory flow of Haitians to the Brazilian lands increased.

The participants of this study narrated the experience of living in Brazil, pointing to an improvement in relation to Haiti. Mirela, despite the important difficulties in her every day life on Brazilian soil, shows hope that her life will improve in the future:

Everyone that arrives here and didn't know the country is calm, it will get better later. (Mirela)

Faced with the chaos experienced in the country of origin, the arrival to Brazil seems to offer some contenance for a few moments. About life in Brazil, Eloi tells:

I was liking Brazil, because we are saying that in Brazil there are opportunity, a lot of opportunity, so I came here. But. . . . But no, it doesn't change anything. I like Brazil more just because, no, just because, in Brazil the service is safer, it's safer in Brazil. . . . If I go back to Haiti there will be nothing better for me. Same thing. . . . But I, I like Brazil, so I'll stay, I'll stay here, but if it doesn't improve then I'll move to another country, because like this we can't help anything. We can't do anything. (Eloi)

The narratives of Mirela and Eloi show that staying in the new country is not primarily linked to the initial objective of finding new life possibilities, but rather to avoid returning to the country of origin, which presents worse conditions than those found in Brazil. In this sense, their reports also show the predominance and maintenance of a certain illusion in the choice of Brazil as a country where they could cope with the intense helplessness experienced in Haiti and find opportunities for a better future.

Over time, Haitian migrants have come across different ways of being welcomed by Brazilians, ranging from careful reception to racist and xenophobic speeches. Charlotte says she feels better treated in the foreign country than in her home country:

I was there at [supermarket name], when I was working at [supermarket name], everybody treats me well. When I go to hospital, when I'm here at the course, on the bus, every one treats me well. (Charlotte)

On the other hand, Mirela and Eloi report frequent situations of prejudice and racism on the part of Brazilians. According to Almeida and Brandão (2015), migrants often face sociability difficulties, due to prejudice and racism, as well as to news reports about a significant number of Haitians entering Brazil. About a racist situation she experienced in the destination country, Mirela narrates as follows:

When I came here, there is a girl who is only eleven. . . she's laughing “you're very ugly, you don't have cute hair”. . . . I said nothing because I was in her country, I said nothing. (Mirela)

The narrative of Mirela shows the silence in the face of explicit offenses directed at her. Rosa (2010) points out that the silence of Haitians indicates a political action focused on guaranteeing their permanence in foreign soil. In this sense, the migrant's speech evidences the sense of non-belonging to the new country, and a consequent posture marked by submission. Eloi also shows intense discomfort regarding the situations of xenophobia and racism that he experienced in Brazil.

Oh, I don't know how to say this because, oh, like, something kind of racist. So, like racist, only I'm Haitian, every Haitian, every Haitian looks alike, if a Haitian shows up, then everyone gets like, everyone knows you're a Haitian because Haitian is black, has hair. . . . Then they bad-mouth the Haitians, then they don't say nothing but I got very upset, sometimes I cried, I didn't like it. . . . Even on the bus, huh, huh. . . . Many, many places this happens. When you come in and everybody starts like, starts, like, holding. . . . purse, hold and, and, humiliate us. I don't like it very much. (Eloi)

Eloi's feeling of sadness denounces the precariousness of the alteritarian relations established in the new country, as well as the impact on the migrant of the difficulties of the manifestation of racist aspects of the Brazilian imagination that considers the black figure as “dangerous”. Regarding the Brazilian imaginary, Rocha (2014) states that the type of migrant welcomed in Brazil is one whose origin is European, and to whom contributions are attributed to the urbanization and modernization of the country, in the 19th and 20th centuries.

The narratives of the present study clearly show a comparison arising from an intense discomfort between European migrants and Haitian migrants. Respondents state that European migrants have their

rights recognized, whereas Haitians do not. Eloi, Charlotte and Mirela express their misunderstanding and indignation as follows:

And Haitians don't have all the rights. They don't have nothing. So, this... This is a problem that we are human too, like Brazilians, German, Italian, everything. We really are, and, the same thing. We are human. . . . You have to treat everyone as equals, equals. I'm not really enjoying this. . . . We are all human, everyone has to treat everyone the same. It's not because I'm Haitian that you have to treat me differently. No. Then the German, Italian, and. . . they too, too, too. (Eloi)

I don't know why. . . . because we're all human. (Charlotte)

Because everyone is the same, everyone has blood, there is no different. (Mirela)

The speeches of the Haitians stress the pain that arises from experiences of indifference in the new country, which portray xenophobic and racist reception of migrants by Brazilians. Diehl (2017) supports that such discourses happen because there was a “mass migration”, causing the population’s estrangement in relation to the presence of this progressively increasing migrant group. In this perspective, Freud (1930/2006), in the interwar period, already referred to how, sometimes, a group of equals may have as outlet for the aggressiveness of its members another group marked by the condition of foreignness. In choosing the foreigner as the target of hostility, the group seems to preserve its own members.

From the intense experiences of indifference regarding their condition of subject in the country of destination, it is noticed, in the migratory displacement, the occurrence of a (re)encounter with violence, thus denouncing the necessary confrontation with a situation of crisis overlap. In this sense, this study identified three different periods as inherent to the process of Haitian migration, as experienced by the participants. The first period concerns the *disillusion with the migrant's own country*. At this moment, the subject recognizes the impossibility of reversing the conditions of misery and extreme violence that permeated his/her daily life in Haiti. Disillusion with the homeland fosters the search for new directions, both to meet their needs and to promote welfare conditions to close ones. The second period alludes to *the illusion with the future*, that is, the expectation that a new country, in this case Brazil, when becoming a deposit of expectations for a future full of possibilities, offers conditions for projects to become reality. However, as migrants experience the Brazilian reality, whose consequences impose on them

the confrontation with prejudice, with employment difficulties, with required costs to settle in the new country and with impasses to conduct their projects, *the reencounter with disillusion reigns once again*. In this third period, the effect of hopelessness is evident, crudely exposing the helplessness and vulnerability of the migrant subject. The third period covers the difficulty of identifying in the future something that will provide migrants with conditions that will make it possible to endure the present. In this sense, the conflicts over disillusion with the migrants’ own country once again haunts and restricts the planning conditions of the future.

The difficulty of the migrant subject to metabolize the impacts of this third period on the displacement process was evident in the interviews conducted in this study. In the development of their narratives, an expression was often repeated. Either in the allusion to what had motivated the departure from Haiti or in the expectations related to the experience of being in Brazilian soil, the repetition of “that’s it” drew attention. Eloi, Charlotte and Mirela, when using the same expression in different narratives, stress how much the confrontation with the adversities of the migratory process constantly requires the subject to overcome barriers and denounces both the helplessness and the different ways of psychic vulnerability.

Then I want to start living my life, because I'm working here just to help my family, just for my family. Each month I receive I have to send money straight there to Haiti. The money won't be left for me. What will be left for me, just the rent money and food. That's it. (Eloi)

. . . . I always thought that leaving Haiti, getting another country to go, getting a job and [bringing] my family. That's it. (Charlotte)

I be here doing nothing now. That's it. (Mirela)

The recurring expression on migrants’ narratives stress a reduction that hides the complexity present in the impacts of the migratory experience. It is a complexity of which the extent they are not even aware of, and therefore seem to be trying to handle it by using the expression “that’s it”. Listening to Haitian migrants in this study allowed the researchers to approach the conflicts arising from a displacement of which the intensity should not be excluded from studies and reflections on the condition of migrant subjects.

In this sense, the listening offered in the investigative process shows the relevance of considering the singular condition of the subject present in the migratory experience. It is important to note that, in addition to the political, legal and social impacts involved in migration situations, it is essential to consider the

psychic effects on the migrant's subjectivity. This second Assertion allowed the study to explore the invaluable value of giving space, in a research process, to the subjects' own narrative about the uniqueness of what they experience. In this sense, inviting participants to participate in the study so that they can narrate their experience allows a production of knowledge, which includes and recognizes the contribution that comes from the way a subject experiences a given phenomenon.

Final considerations

Migratory movements carry a complexity that demands reflection on the coping resources of the subject in a living condition that goes far beyond a geographical transition. Therefore, the study on the migratory phenomenon of Haitian subjects showed singular implications in the approach to this theme.

The challenge of managing what is left behind, as well as what is posed as a new possibility of life, inevitably affects the identity aspects of the migrant subject. In this sense, this study aimed to investigate the problematic concerning these processes, which become inherent to the migratory experience. Through the narratives of the three participants, this study explored the psychic effects operating on them, associated with the confrontation of identity demands arising from the migratory experience.

After successfully arriving in a new country, migrants are required to cope with difficulties they had not imagined encountering. Therefore, these subjects are obliged to face the consequences of the decision made in view of the disparity, often found, between the expectations that moved the displacement and the actual conditions found in the country of arrival. The dramatic nature of this scenario denounces the precarious alteritarian relations established in the migratory process. These dynamics demands an undeniable impact resulting from the (re)encounter with the conditions of violence and helplessness already experienced every day in Haiti. Thus, the Haitian migratory experience calls the scholars of this phenomenon to consider both the uniqueness of migrant subjects as well as the effect they have on presenting themselves as a foreigner in Brazil.

The listening space offered to the participants allowed this study to shed light and rescue the condition of subject that can be narrated from the uniqueness of what he/she experiences. Through reflection on the motivations of migratory displacement, the impasses migrants face and the real welcoming conditions offered to Haitians, it becomes possible and urgent to articulate actions and interventions that can effectively account for the complexity of what motivates a migrant to leave everything behind and seek other forms of alteritarian life.

Migração haitiana: o sujeito frente ao (re)encontro com o excesso

Resumo: Este artigo retrata uma pesquisa qualitativa a respeito do movimento migratório de sujeitos haitianos. Aborda-se a existência e/ou a fragilidade dos recursos de enfrentamento por parte do migrante, considerando-se que as condições do país de destino acabam, por vezes, reeditando o desamparo experimentado no país de origem. Participaram deste estudo três migrantes haitianos, que vieram para o Brasil após o terremoto ocorrido no Haiti e com os quais foram realizadas entrevistas. Os dados obtidos foram analisados por meio da Análise Interpretativa, proposta por Erickson, e explorados com colaborações teóricas da Psicanálise. Como contribuições da pesquisa estão o acesso à narrativa dos sujeitos a respeito de experiências singulares nas quais a complexidade se faz presente, bem como o destaque atribuído aos aspectos sociais, psíquicos e subjetivos a fim de que as intervenções no campo de fenômenos migratórios reconheçam o caráter imprescindível de consideração do sujeito migrante em sua complexidade.

Palavras-chave: migração haitiana, sujeito migrante, movimentos migratórios, psicanálise.

La migration haïtienne: le sujet devant le (re)trouvaille avec le excès

Résumé: Cet article présente une recherche qualitative sur le mouvement migratoire des sujets haïtiens. L'existence et/ou la fragilité des ressources de confrontation du migrant est considérée, s'estimant que les conditions du pays de destination finissent parfois par rééditer l'impuissance expérimentée dans le pays d'origine. Trois migrants haïtiens, qui sont venus au Brésil après le tremblement de terre survenu au Haïti, ont participé de cette étude, avec lesquels ils ont été réalisée l'entretiens. Les informations obtenues ont analysées au moyen d'Analyse Interpretative, proposer par Erickson (1997), et exploités avec les contributions théoriques de la psychanalyse. Comme contribution de la recherche sont l'accès au récit des sujets concernant à propos des expériences singulières dans lesquelles la complexité se rend présente, ainsi que le clou attribué aux aspects sociaux, psychiques et subjectifs afin que les interventions dans les domaines des phénomènes migratoires reconnaissent le caractère indispensable pour la prise en compte du sujet migrant dans sa complexité.

Mots-clés: migration haïtienne, sujet migrante, mouvements migratoires, psychanalyse.

Migración haitiana: el sujeto frente al (re)encuentro con el exceso

Resumen: Este artículo retrata una investigación cualitativa sobre el movimiento migratorio de sujetos haitianos. Se aborda la existencia y/o la fragilidad de los recursos de enfrentamiento por parte del migrante, considerándose que las condiciones del país de destino acaban, por veces, reeditando el desamparo experimentado en el país de origen. Participaron de este estudio tres migrantes haitianos, que vinieron a Brasil después de que ocurriera el terremoto en Haití y con los cuales se realizaron entrevistas. Los datos obtenidos fueron analizados por medio del Análisis Interpretativo, propuesto por Erickson (1997), y explorados con contribuciones teóricas del Psicoanálisis. Como contribuciones de la investigación están el acceso a la narrativa de los sujetos sobre experiencias singulares en las cuales la complejidad de hace presente, así como el destaque atribuido a los aspectos sociales, psíquicos y subjetivos a fin de que las intervenciones en el campo de fenómenos migratorios reconozcan el carácter imprescindible de consideración del sujeto migrante en su complejidad.

Palabras clave: migración haitiana, sujeto migrante, movimientos migratorios, psicoanálisis.

References

- Alexis, J. (1970). *Do realismo maravilhoso dos haitianos*. Retrieved from <http://bit.ly/2kQyOIp>
- Almeida, C. D., & Brandão, B. M. (2015). Imigração, mídia e sociabilidade dos haitianos. *Revista Observatório*, 1(3), 62-79.
- Barbosa, L. (2015). *Imigrantes haitianos no Rio Grande do Sul: uma etnografia de sua inserção no contexto sociocultural brasileiro* (Master's Dissertation). Universidade Federal de Santa Maria, Porto Alegre.
- Bleichmar, S. (2003). *Dolor país*. Buenos Aires: Topía Editorial.
- Bleichmar, S. (2005). *La subjetividad em riesgo*. Buenos Aires: Topía Editorial.
- Bleichmar, S. (2009). *Estallido del yo, dismantelamiento de la subjetividad*. Buenos Aires: Topía Editorial.
- Da Silva, L. M. M., & Lima, S. S. (2016). Imigração haitiana no Brasil: os motivos da onda migratória, as propostas para a inclusão dos imigrantes e a sua proteção à dignidade humana. *Direito, Estado e Sociedade*, 48, 167-195.
- Daure, I., Reyverand-Coulon, O., & Forzan, S. (2014). Relações familiares e migração: um modelo teórico-clínico em Psicologia. *Psicologia Clínica*, 26(1), 91-108.
- Dicionário de Nomes Próprios. (2019). Retrieved from <http://bit.ly/2mkAWZt>
- Diehl, F. (2017). *Estrangeiro em uma terra estranha: racialização e estigmatização dos imigrantes haitianos em Lajeado, Rio Grande do Sul* (Master's Dissertation). Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul, Porto Alegre.
- Durans, C., & Santos, R. (2016). Haiti: significado histórico, realidade e perspectivas. *Revista de Políticas Públicas*, (special number), 127-133.
- Erickson, F. (1997). Métodos cualitativos de investigación sobre la enseñanza. In M. Wittrock (Org.), *La investigación de la enseñanza* (pp. 195-301). Barcelona: Paidós.
- Fernandes, D., & Castro, M. C. (2014). *Estudos sobre a migração haitiana ao Brasil e diálogo bilateral* (Reserach Project). Pontificia Universidade Católica de Minas Gerais, Belo Horizonte.
- Freud, S. (2006). Luto e melancolia. In *Edição standard brasileira das obras psicológicas completas de Sigmund Freud* (J. Strachey, Ed., transl., Vol. 14, pp. 249-263). Rio de Janeiro, RJ: Imago. (Original work published in 1915)
- Freud, S. (2006). O mal-estar na civilização. In *Edição standard brasileira das obras psicológicas completas de Sigmund Freud* (J. Strachey, Ed., trans., Vol. 21, pp. 67-151). Rio de Janeiro, RJ: Imago. (Original work published in 1930)
- Hornstein, L. (2009). *Narcisismo: autoestima, identidade, alteridade*. São Paulo: Via Lettera.
- Kude, V. (1997). Como se faz análise de dados na pesquisa qualitativa. *Revista Psico*, 28(2), 183-202.
- Lucenna, L. (2014). O Brasil e a Minustah, ou a busca de novos parâmetros para uma política externa brasileira "altiva" e "ativa" em operações de paz das Nações Unidas. *Século XXI*, 5(1), 129-149.
- Mallard, S., Cremasco, M., & Metraux, J. C. (2015). Estrangeiridade e vulnerabilidade psíquica: algumas contribuições psicanalíticas. *Psicologia: Teoria e Pesquisa*, 31(1), 125-132.
- Moraes, I. A., Andrade, C. A. A., & Mattos, B. R. B. (2013). A imigração haitiana para o Brasil: causas e desafios. *Revista Conjuntura Austral*, 4(20), 95-114.
- Rocha, E. P. (2014). Adivinhe quem vem para jantar? O imigrante negro na sociedade brasileira. *[Syn]thesis*, 7(2), 121-132.
- Rosa, R. M. (2010). Subjetividade e subversão do racismo: um estudo de caso sobre haitianos na República Dominicana. *Revista Interdisciplinar de Mobilidade Humana*, 18(34), 99-112.
- Rosa, R. M. (2015). As contradições da política migratória brasileira contemporânea: algumas reflexões a respeito das políticas públicas para os migrantes haitianos. In A. M. N. Vasconcelos, & T. Botega (Orgs.), *Política migratória e o paradoxo da globalização* (pp. 53-74). Porto Alegre: EDIPUCRS.

Rother Hornstein, M. C. (2006). *Adolescencias: trayectorias turbulentas*. Buenos Aires: Paidós.
Silva, J. C. J. (2015). As três fases das migrações internacionais portuguesas no pós-guerra. *ACTA Geográfica*, 9(20), 141-151.

Tisatto, C. (2016). A fome e a educação no Haiti: uma ausência de direitos? *Licencia & Acturas*, 4(1), 52-59.

Received: 04/18/2018

Approved: 09/06/2019