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FROM SOCIAL EXCLUSION TO DISCOURAGEMENT: A DECOLONIAL LOOK

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ABSTRACT: From social exclusion to discouragement: a "decolonial" look. The central object of this article, based on psychoanalysis, is the issue of social exclusion. It is about showing the importance of this knowledge in a reflection dedicated to situations of social precariousness. One of its main axes concerns the dimension of belonging, specific to the social bond, taking into account, in particular, subjective experiences marked by significant flaws in this dimension. The issue of coloniality is a relevant operator in this work, aiming to deepen the relationship of exclusion/belonging. The notion of helplessness and its extreme modality, discouragement, has great relevance in this study, which is anchored in the articulation between subjectivity and the socio-cultural universe.

Keywords:. social exclusion; coloniality; discouragement; subjectivity; social bond.

RESUMO: Da exclusão social ao desalento: um olhar decolonial. O objeto central deste artigo, fundamentado na psicanálise, é a problemática da exclusão social. Trata-se de mostrar a importância desse saber numa reflexão dedicada a situações de precariedade social. Um de seus eixos principais concerne à dimensão de pertencimento, própria ao laço social, tendo em vista, em particular, vividos subjetivos marcados por significativas falhas quanto a essa dimensão. A questão da colonialidade é um operador de relevo neste trabalho, visando ao aprofundamento da relação exclusão/ pertencimento. A noção de desamparo e, sua modalidade extrema, o desalento, tem grande relevância neste estudo, o qual se ancora na articulação entre subjetividade e universo sócio-cultural.

Palavras-chave: exclusão social; colonialidade; desalento; subjetividade; laço social.

INTRODUCTION

In this article, we will explore the issue of social exclusion, highlighting the potential of psychoanalytic knowledge to listen to it, considering the inseparable intertwining of this set of issues with a historical/political dimension. In our reflection, we will seek to demonstrate that these situations of social precarity are paradigmatic of a certain type of social organization while also prompting us to question a specific psychic dynamic that may be at play in the individuals exposed to them. These are social formations in which human lives are not effectively considered, as they are placed in situations of marginalization and non-belonging. This constitutes an important source of discouragement in the lived experience of these individuals, who are positioned on the fringes of citizenship and humanity, continuously "invisible" and silenced in the social scene, as the political, legal, and psychic architecture does not grant them a place.

We will investigate the role of the dimension of social belonging in subjective and psychic experience, considering what it means for each individual to inhabit a place in the world. There is a critical need for an approach on social exclusion processes that does not tend to isolate the margins as a problem, treating it as an issue of the "outside" that can be supposedly solved by referencing an "inside." Our attempt is precisely to extract elements from the "margin" that prompt a reevaluation of the underlying dynamics in the phenomenon of exclusion/inclusion, where the axes of exclusion/inclusion and inside/outside are inextricably intertwined.

What tends to be excluded, hidden from view, socially denied, arises from a particular mode of producing subjectivities and not from a specific disposition inherent to the excluded individuals themselves. In this regard, Curiel (2014) proposes an "anthropology of hegemony and domination" in which the subject-object relationship is centered on processes of hegemony and domination. It involves an analysis of relationships of violence and oppression with a focus on issues related to identities, positions, and hegemonic places of power. Thus, we move away from a perspective of "pathologizing" psychic suffering resulting from social exclusion, with our goal being to contribute to a theory within the field of psychoanalysis capable of a meaningful understanding of the processes of subjectivation within minority groups in the context of social formation. This theory takes into account, with necessary self-criticism, the ethnic, cultural, and class positions implicated in these processes (AYOUCH, 2019).

The notion of exclusion is polysemic, widely used in the human and social sciences, but without unanimity regarding its meaning. One of our attempts will be to outline some coordinates of this notion, guiding its use based on psychoanalytic knowledge. It is important to alert in advance to the risks of directly translating elements from the psychic realm into the social reality. Such a direct transposition would certainly oversimplify the complexity of the constituent elements of the social scene, disregarding the historical materiality that is not timeless in its genesis. There is no psychic reality outside of the interconnection established with political reality; the unique contours of social exclusion dynamics are mutable and not static or essential. We understand the phenomenon of exclusion as a social fact, just as we view the category of "excluded" individuals. A psychoanalytic approach to these issues presupposes their interplay with the conformations of the social fabric in a given socio-historical context.

BELONGING AND EXCLUSION: FREUDIAN CONTRIBUTIONS

An important avenue of analysis regarding the theme of exclusion and belonging is found in "Totem and Taboo" (1913/2012), a work in which Freud situates the mythical moment of the advent of culture, addressing the transition from a primordial time to it. Prior to this, relations of force and uncontrolled sexual relations prevailed, which were subsequently subjected to a symbolic ordering of the pulsional force through the establishment of a social contract (ENRIQUEZ, 1990). Freud's text starts from "a social state in which force ruled" (KOLTAI, 2010, p.47), a mythical time of a primitive horde dominated by a male who enjoyed an absolute sexual monopoly, subjecting everyone to his rule through force. The advent of culture is marked by the murder of the horde's chief, an omnipotent being against whom no prohibition was imposed. In this founding act, those who were previously submissive come together in their shared powerlessness and hatred directed towards the tyrannical leader, collectively accomplishing what none of them would have been capable of doing individually.

Enriquez (1990) argues that the birth of the group is correlated with a crime committed collectively. According to him, neither fathers nor brothers existed in the primitive horde, so it is only through the act of parricide that the submissive beings, excluded from sexuality and language, identify with each other, recognizing the libidinal bond that unites them in their hatred against the father, thus becoming brothers. The totemic feast marks this transformation, and the enduring existence of the group is sealed in this way: "by eating together from the same flesh, the brothers definitively recognize themselves as such, that is, as equals, sharing the spoils, united by the same blood" (ENRIQUEZ, 1990, p.33).

By devouring their father's body, they embody the strength and virtue they attributed to him, inaugurating, at the same time, the community of brothers, making the desire to occupy his father's dethroned place: "the blood of the omnipotent runs in everyone's veins" (ENRIQUEZ, 1990, p.32). These brothers realize doubly that what each one secretly desired was to occupy this omnipotent place, thus refusing any relationship of alterity. However, without renouncing incestuous satisfaction and violence as a means of achieving it, the result would be mutual extermination. The taboo reveals the ambivalence between the attractive and fearful, between the desire for transgression and its renunciation through moral conscience, which, in the words of Enriquez (1990, p. 38), shows that "it is not enough to resign once, it is I need to go deeper into renunciation."

The social pact is only established with the institution of the death of the chief of the horde, the mythical father emerging as the representative of the Law of culture (ENRIQUEZ, 1990). It is around an empty place of power that the social pact is established, through which the brothers come to relate to each other horizontally. However, it is necessary for everyone to renounce the narcissistic place of omnipotence, where the subject would remain as the source of the law, the permissible, and the ideals, guided only by what would bring them pleasure (BIRMAN, 1996). As pointed out in "Totem and Taboo" and later revisited in "Civilization and Its Discontents," this time under the auspices of the conflict between Eros and Thanatos, civilization presents itself as the regulator of pleasure, fundamentally replacing individual power with the power of the community, which comes to be called "Law" (FREUD, 1930/2010).

If the coordinates of "Civilization and Its Discontents" had already been described by Freud and subsequently revisited by various other authors, we should question, from this point forward, the forms of discomfort experienced by non-brothers, by those individuals who, in more subtle or radical ways, find themselves excluded from the social pact. It is in the "discomfort" related to situations of social exclusion that we will focus next, in an attempt to highlight some elements capable of contributing to its elucidation.

A LOGIC OF EXCLUSION: "KILLABLE" LIVES?

Regarding the question of belonging in Freudian discourse, two elements seem essential to us, to which we will pay attention by revisiting them. Firstly, as emphasized by Birman (1996), the subjective alternation between alterity and narcissism is what allows us to assert that there is no possibility of a strict separation between the individual and society. Therefore, psychoanalysis offers an interpretation of the dimension of belonging from which society cannot be simply considered as a sphere with which the subject relates, but as a sphere that constitutes the subject, with the subject's emergence depending on the internalization and appropriation of relational processes.

According to Castanho (2012), the advent of culture is concomitant with the advent of the subject, as the taboos of incest and parricide, which are collective creations, have fundamental implications in the psychic structuring of each member of the group. Secondly, from the reading of the mentioned myth of the advent of culture, according to Freudian discourse, belonging to civilization is intimately related to the renunciation of the unlimited exercise of brute force over others. The counterpart of this is the "protection" guaranteed through a shared law, enabling openness to alterity and mutual recognition. Therefore, it is a form of belonging whose fundamental mold is the condition of equality, a condition that would not be sustained in a logic associated with the omnipotence of the One.

In this sense, we emphasize Birman's (2016) assertion that Freud's reading of culture, situated in modernity, is directly related to the advent of modern democracies and their challenges. It represents the transition from a mode of society centered on the figure of the sovereign as the "One" to a society founded on fraternal bonds. Birman (2016) shows that this occurs in an ethical register, founding the subject, and in a political register, constituting the figure of the citizen. The main hallmark of modernity, therefore, operates through the shift from the pole of absolute power to relative power, from which the fraternity emerges on a level of equality.

However, this does not imply the disappearance of the register of the primal father in the psychic economy but rather the maintenance of this register in a new form, described by Lefort (1999, as cited in D'ALLONNES, 2010) in terms of a "disincorporation." According to him, modern democracy arises from the rejection of monarchical domination, emerging from the collective discovery that power belongs to no one and that those who exercise it do not embody it, as they are temporary custodians of public authority. Those who, in the new stage, hold positions of power do so as representatives of the public and not as natural or spiritual holders of the order of the world and social order, thus not being in a position to decide what each individual is entitled to do, think, say, and understand.

Considering a social model where horizontal and equal relations are advocated as an essential pillar of the social pact process, it is also worth questioning the coordinates implied in this pact, as we see a scenario of increasing inequality and the proliferation of expendable lives, particularly in the present day. These exclusions, which continue to spread in the social fabric, are not exceptions to the rule but part of the structure that underpins the dimension of belonging. Taking into account the political and historical aspects involved in the production of this social pact and its patterns of belonging and exclusion, we seek to break free from a certain vicious circle. It tends to trap the debate on social exclusion in a dead-end by assuming a kind of "universal" of a psychic superstructure, in which every society tends to lead to an inevitable movement of exclusion.

To continue our argument, we emphasize the existence of a certain hierarchical vertical structure where human lives are discriminated against and classified in terms of greater or lesser worth, with some receiving markedly inhumane treatment. Regarding this aspect, Butler (2018) argues that the unequal distribution of public mourning is directly related to normative frameworks through which domains of intelligibility of life are established, with the human condition being recognized as an eminently social experience.

In "Frames of War," the author presents some essays in response to contemporary wars, indicating that there is now a division of the world into lives that are grievable and lives that are not. Shifting from mourning as a theme of private life to mourning as a situation of rights, the author points out that mourning is coextensive with the recognition of political life, as a prerequisite for any life that matters. Based on this logic, Butler (2018) puts forth the idea of what she calls "killable

lives" to situate those lives without the right to mourning, public outrage, or any protective mechanisms, revealing them to be lives that were never considered livable. To better understand this unequal distribution of public mourning, the author refers to the concept of framing, referenced by Goffman (2012, as cited in BUTLER, 2018), to demonstrate that the recognition of a life as livable is intimately related to how that life is socially framed. Therefore, it is a concept that allows for the articulation of loss and intelligibility, as:

> This interpretative framing operates by tacitly differentiating populations upon which my life and existence depend from populations that represent a direct threat to my life and existence. When a population appears to pose a direct threat to my life, its members do not appear as "lives" but as a threat to life (a living representation representing the threat to life). (p. 69).

The framing is normative, meaning it depends on a set of norms that, based on certain markers such as gender, class, race, determine the standard of what would be recognizable as human, relegating to what lies "outside" of this frame the realm of surplus, the unintelligible, and therefore, lives that do not matter, the "killable lives." We are all part of a circuit of social commotion where framing appears as what "seeks to contain, convey, and determine what is seen" (BUTLER, 2018, p.25), acting in the differentiation between lives that can or cannot be apprehended. Rodrigues and Gruman (2021) complement these ideas by showing that the unintelligible and intelligible mutually constitute each other; the element that participates in the formation of the frame depends on those that will be left out, meaning that by framing a life as intelligible, the figure of the unintelligible life is also generated.

Butler (2018) argues that this framing is not fixed or eternal; it is necessary to frame the framing itself, ensuring its conditions of reproducibility. In this regard, Rodrigues and Gruman (2021) point out that "framing the framing" would be another way of saying that the task is to think, not only about the precariousness of each of these forms of life but also about what would sustain the condition of possibility to keep these precarious lives framed as human or inhuman (p. 80-81). It is important to note that the condition of unintelligible life, according to Butler, is directly related to the allocation of the precarious condition, a political notion that, however, distinguishes itself from a more existential precarity. Butler's developments (2004, 2018) expose how social markers work to render certain human lives unrecognizable. This unintelligibility calls into question the very status of being human, authorizing its precarization and exposure to violence and death.

The idea of framing the framing itself, or suggesting that there is something that sustains the possibility of keeping certain lives under the frame of the inhuman, will be the subject of our elaboration below, as we attempt to articulate these issues with the field of "decolonial" studies, aiming to continue and deepen our reflection.

COLONIAL FRAMEWORKS OF THE HUMAN

According to Quintero, Figueira, and Elizalde (2019), decolonial studies refer to a heterogeneous set of theoretical and investigative contributions on structures of domination and exploitation shaped by colonial power. These studies have also been called subaltern, post-colonial, and counter-colonial. The authors state: "Coloniality names the underlying logic of the foundation and unfolding of Western civilization from the Renaissance to the present day, of which historical colonialisms have been a constitutive dimension, albeit downplayed" (MIGNOLO, 2017, p.2). Bringing the issue of coloniality to the center of the debate allows us to expose the logics of domination involved in sustaining the edifice of modernity, aiming for a better understanding of the selection of certain markers of difference that produce inferiorization and dehumanization even today. There are many social markers by which the value of human life is measured, such as gender, class, race, and nationality, markers that intertwine in the social scene under various arrangements.

Quijano (2005) highlights that one of the fundamental axes of the new colonial power pattern refers to the "codification of differences between conquerors and conquered in the idea of race, that is, a supposedly distinct biological structure that placed some in a natural situation of inferiority in relation to others" (p. 117). According to the author, the idea of race has no known history before the Americas, having been constructed in reference to alleged structures of differentiation between groups as a way to legitimize the domination imposed by conquest. It is through colonization that the idea of race comes to impose itself as the "first fundamental criterion for the distribution of the world population in the levels, places, and roles in the power structure of the new society" (p. 118).

The colonial power pattern is based on this systematic hierarchization, relentlessly pursued, in which not everyone has the same "level" of humanity. Racialization undertaken by colonialism leads to, on one hand, the prohibition of recognizing racialized identities as part of humanity, and on the other hand, the affirmation, albeit concealed, of what is supposed to be truly human. These are two sides of the same coin, with humanity being somehow linked to the privilege of whiteness.

Fanon (2022) discusses this point through the arbitrary distinction between man and black man, stating that the black man is not considered a man - relegated to the zone of non-being, "an extraordinarily sterile and arid region" (p. 22). Correlated with this non-being, or situated in a zone of unintelligibility, is the human being to which the black man is compared and measured, as an intelligible and understandable being according to the cultural norms perpetuated by this logic of coloniality. Black and white, according to Fanon (2022), are confined by colonial power in their respective blackness and whiteness, with no possibility of recognition of similarity between them.

It's important to consider a few points here: firstly, the condition of humanity is not equally distributed. Secondly, the logic of equality is established within a certain framework, one that not only gives rise to a human "self" but also a "we" as a community that recognizes itself as a sphere of equals (BUTLER, 2018). However, Butler questions: "What implicit political order produces and regulates similarity in these cases?" (p. 61). Decolonial studies help to show that this model is white, with whiteness being understood as a "political system in which race, class, and gender provide an intertwined experience of privilege" (AKOTIRENE, 2019, p. 47). Only the similar can be recognized as equals, while many can only be seen in their difference, as Fanon (2022) adds.

Belonging, under the colonial logic, takes on identity-related contours, which, according to Mbembe (2014), does not occur "in terms of mutual belonging (co-belonging) to the same world but rather in the relationship of the same to the same" (p. 10). The civilizing ideal has an important role in this violent system as an imaginary construction. It not only authorizes the distinction between the human and what is not "sufficiently" human, but also hierarchizes them, advocating a single direction for everyone to follow in order to achieve the framework necessary for recognition of their humanity.

Important historical elements of modern civilization are indicated by Dussel (1993) as he argues that modernity only asserted itself as a European phenomenon through a dialectical relationship with the non-European: "Modernity appears when Europe affirms itself as the 'center' of World History that it inaugurates, and for this reason, the 'periphery' is part of its own definition" (p. 7). The author begins with the origin of this "myth of modernity," denouncing its irrational core, as modernity was only born when "Europe could confront its 'Other' and control it, overcome it, violate it: when it could define itself as a discovering, conquering, colonizing 'ego' of the Alterity that constitutes Modernity itself" (p.8). Eurocentrism is a crucial pillar of modernity; for it to assert itself, it needs to forget the role of the "periphery" in its constitution, which is achieved by concealing the "other."

The Eurocentric perspective claims that Europe is at the center of world history and represents the final destination of all civilized formations. According to Amin (1989), Eurocentrism is marked by a universalist character, proposing that everyone should imitate this Western model, which is assumed to be the only solution to the challenges of our time. However, the author emphasizes that the history of European centrality and prominence is an invention that disregards all cultural, ideological, and economic borrowing from Asian and African systems (China, Persia, Mesopotamia, Egypt) that Europe took to structure its modernity and later assert the role of non-Europeans in sustaining this hegemony.

Decolonial thought questions the understanding of modernity as a project gestated within Europe, stemming from the Reformation, the Enlightenment, and the Industrial Revolution, to which colonialism was just an addition. This Eurocentric structure of colonizing time and space participates in imposing its own model of production, rationality, and existence worldwide, as a supposed final destination for all of humanity. Decolonial theory exposes coloniality as not only political, military, and economic but also epistemological, stemming from an idea that historically became associated with reason.

We have observed how coloniality plays a role in upholding a normative framework for what is considered "human," and how the emergence of Western modern civilization as the center is accompanied by the marginalization of anything that does not fit into this reference point. Given this process and the inseparable connection between modernity and coloniality, it becomes evident that the condition of exclusion is a structural part of this logic within a particular conception of social belonging. Therefore, we are not facing an equality among siblings, but rather a model constructed at the expense of the exclusion of those who are not considered "siblings."

The Freudian perspective will be revisited next, emphasizing that if culture is seen as a space for containing human impulses and desires, with the idea that everyone should adhere to externally and internally imposed limits on instinctual satisfaction, it should still allow access to some form of pleasure. However, this is not the reality for everyone, and you will explore how social exclusion, especially in situations of social precariousness and exclusion, affects individuals' subjective experiences.

EXCLUSION, SOCIAL PRECARITY, AND DISCOURAGEMENT

In the logic of exclusion, there is an incitement toward an omnipotent condition, in contrast to the discarding of individuals, which is characteristic of modes of social relations marked by increasingly profound inequalities, with zones of exception everywhere. This leads us to the subjective experiences of discouragement, a topic of special relevance in a reflection dedicated to radical forms of discomfort, associated with non-belonging, social exclusion, in short, extreme conditions of social precariousness.

In Freud's work, especially in "Civilization and Its Discontents," it is revealed to what extent life in society generates discomfort, with the pursuit of happiness becoming an unattainable project, at least limited in its possibilities. In Freud's discourse, this arises both from renunciations to aggression and sexuality, which are conditions for the establishment of community, and from helplessness, which emerges from dependence on relationships with other human beings. The feeling of helplessness, even though it can be attenuated by the protection offered by belonging to a community against the threat of brute force, the vicissitudes of nature, and the limitations of the body, remains present, as suffering experienced with greater pain by the individual is the one Freud (1930/2010) supposes to come from the "social source." This concerns not only the fear of losing the love of others - which makes us precarious throughout our lives - but also what results from the inadequacy of the regulatory norms of human bonds, the social bond.

However, while Freud (1930/2010) provides some insights to think about malaise in culture, situations of radical social exclusion invite us to consider another form of malaise discussed here, schematically, as a malaise "outside" of culture. With regard to malaise in culture, let's revisit the impasse posed in Schopenhauer's parable of the porcupines, cited by Freud (1921/2011) in "Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego," in which the individual is placed, as Reino and Endo (2011) point out, between two opposites: cold and spines. On one hand, cold as the first evil, confronting us with the impossibility of surviving alone, and on the other hand, spines as a second evil, involving the impossibility of living together.

Therefore, faced with the impossibility of dispensing with the other and also of being with the other, the subject needs to constitute itself on a seesaw of advances and retreats, from which some mode of connection, amid social restrictions and demands, becomes possible. It is on a ground of ambivalence that the malaise in culture is based, a suffering marked by a precarity that is inherent to helplessness, in this case with a constitutive character. This imposes a self-construction without guarantees, guided by certain references from which the subject ensures, not without difficulties, their "self-preservation." However, when we refer to a malaise "outside" of culture, we are situated at another level of precarity, without assured refuge, not even among thorns, in this case, a confrontation with endless cold. In this case, the renunciation of instincts is not accompanied by prerogatives, even if they are flawed and limited in terms of forms of protection and belonging to a community where the substitution of brute force by the rule of law could effectively take place.

We emphasize at this point the didactic nature of this distinction since, as indicated above, the space of inside and outside are not isolated realities from each other; although one seeks to create fixed and distinct boundaries between these territories, their character is contingent and intersectional. However, it is necessary to establish distinctions between these forms of malaise to the extent that we are facing modalities of social contract where only a portion of the population is encompassed, and its "rest" is placed in a situation of impossibility to participate in the social pact and, therefore, in a system of recognition of the subject as a member of a community. This form of malaise refers not only to the multiple forms of violence to which these subjects are exposed and to the deprivations imposed on them in the material field but also refers, with even greater force, to identificatory emblems and symbolic resources that should be made available by the collective.

In this regard, Furtos (2011) presents a relevant position exploring forms of malaise that would result from social exclusion. He proposes that even though there is a so-called "normal" psychic precariousness - which everyone is inevitably exposed to, originating from the condition of helplessness - it is necessary to conceive another form of precariousness, exacerbated, which does not concern a constitutive or insurmountable order but gives us news about the quality of social bonds and how they materialize according to each one's place in the social bond. The author argues that normal psychic precariousness concerns the fundamental dependence on the other, which establishes the psychic apparatus through the bond and its ambivalence, the subject never getting rid of their condition of powerlessness and incompleteness.

It is only through the recognition of a reciprocal relationship that an individual can be considered worthy of existence by their group of belonging. Regarding exacerbated psychic precariousness, however, of a circumstantial nature, this relates to a configuration of the social bond in which recognition is blocked, marked by an extreme condition, at the edge of ejection from the human community. Social exclusion has diminishing effects, causing the individual to be socially recognized in the position of "remainder" and "reject" within the social structure, with their place in the human collective being disauthorized.

By making the distinction between these two modalities of psychic precariousness, Furtos (2012) shows how helplessness, an insurmountable condition, becomes updated in these social situations, impacting not only the quality of the subjects' psychic life but also their material conditions of existence. This intersection between material and subjective dimensions in the phenomenon of social exclusion is well elaborated by the author through the notion of social objects. These are important mediators of the subject's insertion into the social bond because they play a role in security, status, and connection. They are social mediation objects of various types, ranging from the most concrete, such as goods and money, to access to services and productive functions such as health, work, and education.

However, the social object goes beyond its concreteness, although it does not do away with it, representing a form of security because it organizes resources of social life and allows for the occupation of a place in the ideal of a particular social group. Ultimately, it functions as a social bond from which the subject has their existence recognized by the collective, authorizing or prohibiting relationships. When losing them or being threatened with their loss, the subject finds themselves deprived of the ability to exchange what is human with other humans. Their acquisition is not limited to the realm of "having," as this loss puts them in a dilemma in the field of "being."

Social objects highlight the importance of the subject's belonging to the collective, concerning the quality of psychic life. Their loss reflects the loss in the realm of the relationship with others and can trigger, in turn, as noted by Furtos (2011), a triple loss of confidence in the subject's experience: loss of confidence in another who recognizes their existence; loss of confidence in themselves and their dignity to exist; and equally, loss of confidence in the future, which in this case takes on the tone of threat, catastrophe, or even the disappearance of the horizon of possibilities. In situations of social precariousness, the subject can face a lived experience of despair, of feeling as if they do not belong to humanity, suffering, at once, of a social and psychic nature.

The choice of the term "precariousness" is justified by Furtos (2011) based on the etymological origin of the word, which comes from the Latin "precarĭus," meaning "obtained through a prayer." This etymology emphasizes an addressing

of the other, something not assured beforehand but depending on their goodwill. The term "precariousness" allows for an emphasis on the alterity dimension, unlike the term "vulnerability," which relates to an individual in a state of "injury" or "wound," without a more direct connection to alterity. Paying attention to the etymological origins of these terms enables the psychic dimension of social precariousness to be underscored by bringing the subject's position in the social bond to the forefront of analysis. Despite its effects being experienced individually, no one is inherently precarious from an individualized perspective alone.

It is also from the perspective of an alterity dimension that Birman (2012) proposes distinguishing between helplessness ("desamparo") and despondency ("desalento"). The latter term refers to social situations marked precisely by exclusion and violence. Helplessness presupposes an openness to the other, which, in turn, is a fundamental condition for symbolization, the temporalization of subjective experience, and the establishment of a desiring movement. In contrast, despondency reflects a condemnation of the subject to a solipsistic position, with no possibility of appealing to the other. This relates to the silencing that individuals excluded from the social bond are subjected to since they are situated there based on massive and disqualifying identities.

Without the possibility of addressing the other, the experience of helplessness tends to be updated under the sign of despondency, marking a closure to the reception of the other. In Birman's words (2012), "everything happens as if subjectivity believed that it was living in an eternal present, in which the repetition of the same was so powerful that it no longer announced any possibility of rupture and discontinuity (p.9)." In the despondency of social exclusion, the subject is exposed to a drifting pain, without a direction for elaboration, without reference to its starting and intensifying points, lost pain, and therefore, devoid of its possibility of meaning.

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