THINKING ABOUT HOSTING REFUGEE IMMIGRANTS: DECULTURATION, STIGMA AND SOLIDARITY

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ABSTRACT. In the last decades, Brazil has faced the challenge to host and integrate people who have been forced to migrate, coming mainly from Haiti, Venezuela, and Syria. This paper presents a discussion, from a theoretical focus, on the hosting of refugee immigrants. Firstly, we explain the psychic vulnerability condition constituted in migration, caused by the rupture of the cultural references background internalized by the displaced individual; we highlight the relevance of hosting activities to promote the mental health of that population. Secondly, we reflect upon some of the undesirable effects that may be produced during the hosting practices, due to the intercultural dimension of the relationship between the actions' agents and subjects. Namely, those effects are the deculturation and the stigmatization, phenomena that threaten the immigrants' integrity and mental health, and, therefore, should be avoided within a hosting context. The construction of solidarity and reciprocity bonds are seen as desirable effects of the contact established between the immigrants and the volunteers in the hosting practices. This paper was inspired by the experience of the realization of Portuguese language lessons to Haitians in the city of Dourados, State of Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil.

Keywords: Refugees; hosting; health promotion.

PENSANDO SOBRE O ACOLHIMENTO DE IMIGRANTES REFUGIADOS: DESCULTURAÇÃO, ESTIGMA E SOLIDARIEDADE

RESUMO. Na última década, o Brasil tem vivido o desafio de acolher e integrar pessoas que migraram por razões forçadas, vindas principalmente do Haiti, da Venezuela e da Síria. Este artigo discute, a partir de um enfoque teórico, o acolhimento de imigrantes refugiados. Discorre-se, primeiramente, sobre a condição de vulnerabilidade psíquica constituída na migração, decorrente da quebra no quadro de referências culturais interiorizado pelo indivíduo deslocado, e ressalta-se a relevância de atividades de acolhimento para a promoção de saúde mental nesta população. Em seguida, reflete-se sobre alguns efeitos indesejáveis que podem ser produzidos na prática de acolhimento devido à dimensão intercultural da relação entre agentes e sujeitos das ações. São eles a desculturação e a estigmatização, fenômenos que ameaçam a integridade e a saúde mental dos imigrantes, devendo, portanto, ser evitados em um contexto de acolhimento. A construção de laços de solidariedade e reciprocidade apresentam-se como efeitos desejáveis do contato estabelecido entre imigrantes e voluntários na prática de

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acolhimento. Este artigo foi inspirado na experiência de realização de aulas de português para haitianos na cidade de Dourados, estado de Mato Grosso do Sul.

Palavras-chave: Refugiados; acolhimento; promoção de saúde.

PENSANDO EN LO ACOGIMIENTO DE INMIGRANTES REFUGIADOS: DECULTURACIÓN, ESTIGMA Y SOLIDARIDAD

RESUMEN. En la última década, Brasil ten vivido lo desafío de acoger e integrar a las personas que migraron por razones forzadas, venidas principalmente de Haití, Venezuela y Siria. Este artículo discute, desde una perspectiva teórica, la recepción de inmigrantes refugiados. En primer lugar, se discute la condición de vulnerabilidad psicológica constituida en la migración, debido a la ruptura de las referencias culturales internalizadas por el individuo desplazado, y se enfatiza la relevancia de las actividades de acogimiento para la promoción de la salud mental en esta población. En seguida se refleja sobre los efectos indeseables que si pueden ser producidos en la práctica de acogimiento debido a la dimensión intercultural de la relación entre agentes y sujetos de las acciones. Son la desculturación y la estigmatización, fenómenos que amenazan la integridad y la salud mental de los inmigrantes, por lo tanto debe evitarse en un contexto de recepción. La construcción de lazos de solidaridad y reciprocidad se presentan como efectos deseados del contacto establecido entre inmigrantes y voluntarios en la práctica de acogida. Este artículo fue inspirado en la experiencia de conducir clases de portugués para haitianos en la ciudad de Dourados, estado de Mato Grosso do Sul.

Palabras clave: Refugiados; acogimiento; promoción de salud.

Introduction

According to the Migrations and Human Rights Institute (known in Brazil as Instituto de Migrações e Direitos Humanos [IMDH]), human migration is defined as "[…] the movement of individuals, family units or large groups of people from one place to another" (Instituto Migração e Direitos Humanos [IMDH], 2014). It is everyone's right, according to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article XIII, item 2, Dec. 10, 1948: "Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country".

Migration processes have always been present in human history, linked to different motivations and following different patterns. Currently, the intensification of a special type of migratory flow, the so-called forced displaced, has afflicted countries around the world. It is marked by its 'involuntary' character, motivated by internal conflicts in the countries, wars, political persecutions, actions by terrorist groups and violation of human rights. People who migrate for forced reasons are the most vulnerable among the displaced population, raising the need for national protection. Hence, as the United Nations (UN) points out, the current increase in this type of displacement represents one of the worst humanitarian crises ever seen in the world. (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR], 2018; Jubilut & Godoy, 2017; Milesi & Carlet, 2012; Pacífico & Pinheiro, 2013).

The concern with the theme of forced migration expanded worldwide after the Second World War, when the United Nations Organization (UNO) created, in 1950, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, an organ responsible for the protection and assistance to refugees at the international level. The person who leaves his country for involuntary reasons may receive protection at the international level, following the United Nations Conference's criteria in 1951 and the 1967 Protocol, both relating to Refugee Status (Alto Comissariado das Nações Unidas para Refugiados [ACNUR], 2016). Together, these documents ensure, in case of need, that anyone can exercise the right to seek and receive refuge in another country and also establish basic standards for the treatment of refugees, in an agreement made among several nations.

The 1984 Cartagena Declaration instituted concern for displaced persons for forced reasons in Latin America, broadening the definition of refugee proposed by the UNO, including people who have fled their country "[…] because their lives, safety or freedom have been threatened by generalized violence, foreign aggression, internal conflicts, massive violation of human rights or other circumstances which have seriously disturbed public order" (ACNUR, 2016, p. 147). This Declaration inspired Brazil's conduct regarding the issue, leading it to formulate a specific law on the subject, Law no. 9.474 (1997), which further extends the definition of refugees, including individuals who have fled their country of origin due to the serious and generalized violation of human rights. It is important to note that a new law was recently passed to address the rights of migrants (emigrants and immigrants) in Brazil, the so-called Migration Law, Law no. 13.445 (2017). It establishes principles and guidelines for public policies relevant to immigrants' protection, including refugees and humanitarian visa holders.

From the year 2010, Brazil became a more frequent destination for forced displacement groups when a strong earthquake that destroyed much of its cities hit Haiti's territory, including its capital, Port-au-Prince. However, migration motivated by natural accidents was not among the criteria established by Law no. 9.474 (1997), so that Haitians were not qualified as a refugee (Jubilut & Godoy, 2017). Thus, at the time, the Brazilian government considered humanitarian reasons the 'worsening living conditions of the Haitian population due to the 2010 earthquake' and determined that a special visa be granted to them by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, through the Brazil Embassy in Port-au-Prince. Besides, it was established that not only who applied for a visa would benefit, but also their spouses and relatives, as the family unit is a principle-duty applied by Brazil to immigrants.

From that moment on, a gradual increase in the migratory flow of Haitians to Brazil began. The fact that the Brazilian government granted them a visa for humanitarian reasons encouraged them to come to Brazil, even though the migration was no longer associated with the 2010 earthquake event (Jesus, 2018). A few years after the arrival of Haitians, between 2015 and 2018, Venezuelans also arrived in Brazil in a very significant number due to the serious economic and political crisis installed, as a refugee. A little later, starting in 2019, Syrians sought refuge in Brazil, fleeing the war.

This scenario brought to Brazilian society the challenge of welcoming and integrating these populations into local life. After all, it is essential to highlight that although the issue of receiving these immigrants has been treated as a priority in Brazil's internal and external agenda, aspects related to the reception and living conditions of these individuals was not defined, as well as their integration into society, as pointed out by Piovezana and Bordignon (2015) and Pacífico and Pinheiro (2013). For this reason,

immigrant communities are present today in countless cities in the most diverse regions of the country, having to restart their lives in a condition of great material and labor precariousness.

Faced with this situation, many society segments, supported by various institutions, have organized themselves to welcome these people, supplying the needs left by governmental actions' limited reach. As a result, there are currently, in many Brazil regions, proposals for welcoming and psychological assistance for the public of forced displacement. These are initiatives in which civil society and institutions, mostly religious and educational institutions, usually participate (Assis, Martins, Souza, Nicolao, & Souza, 2017; Machado, Barros, & Martins Borges, 2019; Rosa, 2019; Silva, 2017).

This article reflects on the welcoming of refugee immigrants. We will use the term 'refugee' to designate people who migrate to another country for forced reasons searching for refuge, regardless of the visa category they receive. The ideas discussed here arose from the experience of conducting Portuguese language classes for Haitians in Dourados, state of Mato Grosso do Sul. The classes consist of an action promoted by an extension project linked to the Federal University of Grande Dourados, in progress since 2017. This pioneering project in welcoming immigrants for forced reasons in the municipality was carried out by volunteers committed to providing a humanitarian response to Haitians who came to seek refuge in Dourados.

The presented debate addresses some subtleties that appeared in the welcoming process for refugee immigrants and is not restricted to the reception of Portuguese language classes. Based on a theoretical approach, it is argued that welcoming actions should consider the subjective fragility that immigrants often carry and incorporate a perspective of care concerning it in their dynamics.

Therefore, firstly, it is discussed the condition of psychological vulnerability constituted in migration due to the break in the cultural reference framework internalized by the displaced individual, reinforcing the importance of the implementation of forms of welcoming for this population by the host countries in which the subjective needs of immigrants are considered. Then, the welcoming project that inspired the reflections made in this article is briefly presented. Finally, some aspects are discussed that can threaten immigrants' integrity and mental health because of the interaction between host agents and host subjects, considering the intercultural dimension of this interaction. Deculturation and stigmatization are considered risk factors for the adaptation of immigrants. Solidarity and reciprocity are presented as desirable effects of contact between immigrants and participants in the welcoming.

The immigrant's psychological vulnerability

There is an important gap in the treatment generally given to immigrants by host countries. It is related to the little attention given to the subjective difficulties involved in the migratory process. In this regard, Baubet and Moro (2013), discussing the subjective consequences of migration and exile, warn that, when it comes to this issue, there is a tendency to forget the 'emigrant' hidden behind the figure of the 'immigrant', which amplifies the effects of mutilation that the migratory phenomenon represents for individuals. Generally, immigrants are treated as an abstract category, or, as Marinucci (2019) points out, as numerical data, amputating a part of themselves, referring to their history before migration, their past, their memory and their family identity, thus denying the singular aspect from the migratory experience.

In this way, this fact is quite serious since the existence of psychological suffering constituted from the migratory condition is ignored, contributing to its worsening. In migration, a psychic work precisely touches the question of the self-continuity sense facing the discontinuities that migration causes. The problem that arises is, in the words of Baubet and Moro (2013, our translation)[3], "[...] how to continue to be oneself while modifying oneself, how to maintain the feeling of self-continuity, one's history, one's relationship to others (visible and invisible), when the reality is only ruptures?".

In typical situations, the personal impact of migration is explained by the articulation among culture, psychic world and mental health, a theme seriously explored in studies developed in ethnopsychiatry (Baubet & Moro, 2013; Laplantine, 1998; Moro, 2015; Nathan, 1986). Psyche and culture are homologously structured so that one cannot conceive of a culture that is not experienced by a psyche or the formation of the personality independently of the culture. As Laplantine (1998, p. 73, author's emphasis), states, "The psychological is the 'inside' of culture, while culture is the 'outside' of the psyche".

As Geertz (1989), culture is understood from a semiotic concept, as an intertwined system of interpretable signs, structures of socially established meanings, webs of meanings that govern human behavior. According to this view, the human being is an animal tied to webs of meanings that he wove himself so that his acting is always a symbolic action. Then, culture is a context within which social events, behaviors, institutions or processes can be described in an intelligible way.

Culture allows members of a society to internalize behavioral models and cognitive and affective acquisition. Thus, it constitutes a 'mental map' that allows the inner world (psychic world) of individuals and the external world (culture) to communicate themselves (Martins-Borges, 2013). For this reason, the migratory event, in addition to being a social event, is conceived as a psychic act since the rupture of the external framework of cultural references generated by the displacement causes a break in the cultural framework internalized by the individual.

As pointed out by Moro (2015), migration establishes an experience of meanings rupture, or better said a rupture of the external context that implies the universe's disorganization of internalized cultural meaning. As a result, the migrant subject, even the one who migrates for reasons that are not forced, when outside their cultural geographic zone, has shaken the communication between the external world and the inner world, at least temporarily, which can generate a state of crucial psychic vulnerability.

In the case of refugee immigrants, such as Haitians, Venezuelans and Syrians in Brazil, the condition of displacement has consequences, or rather, specific difficulties to the migration experience. According to Martins-Borges (2013), this condition influences the type of psychic work that the migration process requires, further affecting the mental health of the migrant.

Firstly, people who migrated for forced reasons are especially fragile because, due to the urgency of displacement, they usually leave without much planning, arriving in a situation of significant social and emotional vulnerability, without being able to guarantee the provision of basic needs, such as food, housing or transportation, and depending on the help of other people, often unknown people (Martins-Borges, 2013). Secondly, in migration, they carry with them the memory of the psychological suffering to which they

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[3] "[...] comment continuer à être soi tout en se modifiant, comment maintenir le sentiment de continuité de soi, son histoire, de son rapport aux autres (visibles et invisibles), lorsque la réalité n'est que ruptures?".

were subjected in the pre-migratory period – the memories of violence suffered or witnessed by them, such as torture, massacres, deaths, et so on – an in the migratory period – usually these people undergo humiliating, unhealthy, unhuman situations until they reach a safe place – that need to be digested along this trajectory (Baubet & Moro, 2013; Martins-Borges, 2013).

Another difficulty that forced displacement presents to immigrants is that the traumatic memories that precede the trip are often mixed with nostalgic memories when they were happy in their homeland, as Moro emphasizes (2015). Described as 'the sad joy of exile', there is an ambivalence between the desire of staying in their land, even though it no longer exists, and leaving for a new place. This paradox decisively marks the crossing that these immigrants need to make to reach a state of satisfactory adaptation.

Thus, immigrant subjects have to do a double work of psychic elaboration: mourning and post-traumatic reconnection. To overcome the trauma of the internal cultural framework loss from which the external reality was decoded - the migratory trauma par excellence - and to adapt to its new territory, the individual needs to elaborate on the loss of everything that is left behind when he leaves a country - relatives, friends, work, social status, identification with the territory - and renounce the nostalgia that can remain as a memory. Failure to do this elaboration may give rise to anxiety, loneliness, abandonment, depression symptoms, as stated by Martins-Borges (2013) in specialized psychological care service for immigrants and refugees in Canada. The frequent presence of clinical pictures of post-traumatic stress, anxiety, depressive manifestations, hypochondriac symptoms, alcohol and drug abuse among the population of met immigrants usually expresses the pain generated by the cultural rupture and the difficulty of reconstructing a new identity after migration. It is a clinically serious condition that can make it impossible for these individuals to integrate into social life in the new country and negatively influence the trajectory of their entire family (Martins-Borges, 2013).

It is essential to consider that immigrants' conditions on their arrival in the destination country may be a factor that aggravates or mitigates this process. In fact, as Rosa (2019) points out, the hostility of the native population may be the main obstacle to these immigrants' inclusion. The difficulties encountered in the migratory process can even constitute a new trauma, enabling the development of acute psychological symptoms produced in the absence of the founding culture (Moro, 2015). Therefore, exclusion, discrimination, racism, precarious working conditions, among others, make the registration of immigrants in the new society more fragile, which should be the host country, but which often ends up mistreating these subjects even more. Finding themselves fragile precisely in a situation in which they have to start all over and, still, without mastery of the language, without documents that prove their knowledge and skills, distant from many of their friends and family, far from the cultural references that marked their belonging to specific groups, Martins-Borges (2013) points out that these immigrants may have serious difficulties to project themselves in a new place, remaining psychically taken by the past, by their memories, for what they were.

For all these reasons, inattention to hospitality and the subjective aspects of migration need to be seriously combated. The painful experience of displacement about their culture must be mitigated through welcoming strategies promoted by the community that receives these immigrants. It is especially important that countries that receive refugees, or hold a humanitarian visa, as is the case with Haitians in Brazil, promote welcoming actions, taking into account their psychological vulnerability condition.

A welcoming through Portuguese language classes

Before discussing the factors that may negatively influence welcoming refugees' dynamics, we will briefly describe the project that inspired the reflections made in this article. The proposal to offer Portuguese classes to Haitians in Dourados was established to open a welcoming space specifically for this population and encourage other local community sectors to contribute to their social insertion based on the demands that arise. Classes are inspired by the teaching method called Portuguese Host Language (Known in Brazil as Português Língua de Acolhimento - PLAc) (Adrighetti, Perna & Porto, 2017; Pereira, 2017), aimed to teach the local language, considering the primary needs of the host group – such as to familiarize oneself with everyday situations and to survive - as well as everything that can hinder his participation in classes. In the case of people who have migrated for forced reasons, students are generally in a situation of great financial precariousness. Generally, they do not have the means to obtain school supplies, move among distant points in the city, and regularly attend classes. All of this was taken into account when organizing the course, with a great effort by volunteers to adapt to this audience's possibilities.

From the perspective of the PLAc, the Portuguese language teaching has the primary purpose of providing social insertion through language and culture and providing information on laws and rights of immigrants in the society that welcomes them. As stated by Adrighetti et al. (2017), it is a matter of conceiving the classroom as a link between immigrants and the society in which they move daily. Thus, in addition to the transmission of linguistic content, the time for classes is configured as a space for meetings and cultural exchanges between Haitians and Brazilians in the strictest sense of the term. In this sense, priority is given to the use of material with content related to Brazilian culture, also valuing the participation of external colleagues who can bring them clarifications about, for example, the history of Brazil., labor market, home economics, documentation, racism, national holidays, capoeira (it is an Afro-Brazilian martial art that combines elements of dance, acrobatics, and music) and other topics, thus making Brazilian and regional social life more intelligible to Haitians.

Making the local language teaching a welcoming strategy for immigrants means providing them with more than language acquisition. Then, the classroom space becomes an instrument for building new perspectives, giving them a broader look, softening the break's effects in the framework of cultural references internalized by the displaced individual.

In any type of migration process, we understand that the language constitutes a barrier in the process of assimilation of local culture by immigrants and, for sure, determines difficulties for insertion in society. However, the lack of knowledge of the language can have even more profound consequences and constitute a scenario of risks for the mental health of immigrants because, as discussed, the cultural rupture promoted by migratory displacement can expose individuals to a condition of cultural unintelligibility - theirs concerning the community that welcomes them and also from the community to them - which accentuates the experience of discontinuity of themselves, which can lead even to the development of psychopathological symptoms. For all these reasons, considering the relevant influences that the local language's learning has on adaptation in a new country, Portuguese classes constituted an interesting welcoming strategy to promote immigrants' mental health.

Risks in welcoming: the immigrants' deculturation and stigmatization

In a welcoming practice, whether carried out through Portuguese language classes or not, the established interactions can negatively influence immigrants' adaptation. First, we will address the care that must be taken concerning the immigrant's deculturation process.

Adapting to a new culture involves discovering and interpreting signs that constitute life in that new society. It presupposes the assimilation, to some degree, of values and customs shared by the host community by the immigrant, an expected and inevitable step. You learn the language spoken on the spot, eat what is customary in the region, listen to music typical of that culture, and dress the local costumes. Events that allow a foreigner to participate more actively in social life.

However, in contact among two or more cultures, there is always the risk of establishing clashes and attempts at subordination, which can affect immigrants' subjectivity. Its effects can be understood through the concepts of acculturation and deculturation developed in the field of ethnopsychiatry (Laplantine, 1998).

According to Laplantine (1998, p. 78), acculturation refers to the process of cultural domination; that is, it is "[…] the situation in which a dominant culture imposes its system of values and behaviors on a dominated culture". Acculturation can lead to deculturation, which consists of "[…] detaching the culture material from its matrix, which gave it a meaning, to metamorphose it into symptoms" (p. 78). Therefore, deculturation results from a social divestment of the culture to which one belongs, leading to an impoverishment of the personality and the development of specific forms of suffering by the individual.

Laplantine (1998) points out that one of the most crucial deculturation processes in history occurred with the arrival of black Africans to America, between the 16th and 19th centuries, when there was a disintegration of civilizations caused by the impossibility of blacks to continue living according to their customs, beliefs and values. In the face of this, counter-acculturative responses were constituted; that is, a resistance movement against the establishment of domination. For example, the formation of *quilombos* (it is a Brazilian hinterland settlement founded and organized by African fugitive slaves in the colonial period).

However, another type of individual reaction frequently produced in this context is the development of psychic symptoms due to his own culture's total divestment. He refuses his own society without, however, getting to internalize the values of the other society. From this condition, several mental disorders may emerge, classified as neurotic, psychotic and schizophrenic deculturation.

Deculturation occurs, according to Laplantine (1998), mainly in cases marked by the impossibility for immigrants to experience their cultural identities, either by explicit social prohibitions or by the need to be subjected to a social discourse that disqualifies the idea of 'another', refusing the 'different'. This is what happens in the case of African blacks or Muslim Arabs who arrive in Europe, where "[…] they can hardly remain African and become Europeans" (Laplantine, 1998, p. 79). To build a new post-migration identity, these immigrants have to find a balance within this established paradox.

In Brazil, a country with a social identity marked by cultural diversity and miscegenation, being someone different may not constitute an identity problem. Since its constitution, the discourse about 'being Brazilian' is not linked to the idea of a single ethnic and cultural origin for the people. However, impasses can be established with immigrants'

specific characteristics, as is the case of black skin color. The social integration of people who have black skin suffers from the effects of racism and prejudice instituted due to the history of Africans' slavery in Brazil (Farias, 2015; Huntley, 2000; Gusmão, 2011).

This specificity of the Brazilian context must be considered when trying to understand Haitians' migratory experience, for example. In Brazil, black immigrants may have their real possibilities of insertion in society limited not precisely because of their condition as a foreigner, but because they are the target of prejudice towards the black community. This is a fact that can influence the self-concept of Haitians who come to Brazil, affecting the appreciation of their cultural roots and contributing even more to the triggering of a process of deculturation described above.

These reflections indicate, fundamentally, the subtleties involved in the undertaking to welcome immigrants. Suppose reception activities can act as a strategy to facilitate the social insertion of immigrants in Brazilian society. In that case, the risks of configuring a practice of cultural domination must also be considered.

Taking as an example, the welcome made through Portuguese language classes, teaching words, expressions and customs of local culture to Haitians should not lead them to undervalue their experiences, history and traditions. It is essential to consider the role of the original culture in the structuring of the personality and, thus, to provide a form of interaction that carefully promotes the construction of a kind of bridge between the two cultures so that individuals can move smoothly from one to the other culture, understanding the reality of Brazilian social life without having to break with its original references.

Therefore, besides being careful with the content transmitted in the welcoming activity, which could be a capoeira class, music class, Portuguese class, cooking course, multicultural fairs et so on, it is interesting to encourage respectful sociability among the participants so that immigrants can build bonds with each other, nourishing themselves with affections that refer to their original culture, if they met people of their nationality, at the same time that they undertake their trajectory through Brazilian culture. In fact, it should be noted that the sociability produced among immigrants during welcoming activities is an indirect contribution, however of great relevance, which can be provided to immigrants. Britto, Corá and Souza (2017) point out that local language teaching institutions, for example, tend to be identified by immigrants as an outstanding opportunity to establish contacts and build social bonds that can become social protection. These are occasions when you can meet people in a similar situation, share problems, impressions and strangeness about their new lives, based on references from their original culture and the teachers' support, who transmit much useful information related to the local culture.

Thus, we believe that attention to a possible process of immigrants' deculturation needs to be present in strategies for welcoming refugees. Another aspect that deserves attention in welcoming them is the stigma of *persona non grata* that usually falls on immigrants for forced reasons.

According to Bauman (2017, p. 27), in the face of those who arrive "[…] floating by insecurity in search of an anchor […]", the question of welcoming them or rejecting them is a significant impasse. Dealing with the discomfort presented by this kind of "[…] personification of the collapse of order […]", who are the emigrants who leave in search of a refuge, or "[…] nomads due to the verdict of a cruel destiny […]", to use the author's own expressions (p .21), is distressing, as it brings us closer to the realization of our own vulnerability and the fragility of our hard-won well-being (Bauman, 2017).

The individual who leaves his country for forced reasons is not only a refugee but an emigrant who leaves in search of another condition of life. Being a refugee represents the discovery of a new place: a place to live and, at the same time, a new status of the self. To conceive himself as a 'refugee', he starts to integrate his identities through processes that operate in a nomination act.

According to Bourdieu (1982), the nomination act establishes a relationship between personal identity and society when addressed to a person. This relationship resides in the fact that 'to name is to institute'. It is not just an act of naming someone or himself, but the inscription of that person in a social whole, indicating an essence, a competence, a right to be and a 'duty to be'. In the author's words, "It is to tell someone what he is and tell him he has to act accordingly" (Bourdieu, 1982, p. 126, our translation)[4].

In this way, naming has the effect of delimiting boundaries, naturalizing limits among universes, demarcating places to be occupied, and distances to be maintained by people; that is, it serves to maintain an instituted order. To address a name to a person is to institute an identity.

Therefore, being in a country under the status of 'refugee', immigrants are given a new place to live and also a new definition of themselves, which needs to be integrated into their identity. This, on the one hand, represents a relief, since these individuals are looking for new perspectives for their lives, but, on the other hand, within a context that treats this type of migratory movement as the 'migration problem', this immigrant may be stigmatized as a *persona non grata*.

For Goffman (2012), stigmatized individuals, for whatever reason, are marked by the similar experience of having a trait that imposes themselves on everyone's attention, diverting the possibility of attention to others from their attributes. In other words, they are in a condition where a pejoratively defined social identity overlaps their personal identity. This has the consequence of a movement of repulsion of people by the groups identified with normality since it prevents, at least at first, attention from other attributes from them.

The emergence of different manifestations of social rejection, such as, for example, hostile attitudes towards immigrants, entails what Bourdieu and Passeron (1982) called 'symbolic violence'. Symbolic violence is related to ideology and takes place through a consensual discourse about the 'natural' character of certain social groups' inferiority. The different is transformed into the inferior, 'naturalizing' the inferiority of the socially constructed order. This 'naturalization' process, which, despite being culturally constructed, attributes to a supposed distinct 'nature' the inferiority of particular groups of people, discriminating, stigmatizing, and disqualifying these groups, making invisible the violent practice made this process possible.

Having made these considerations, it is mentioned that a proposal to welcome refugees focuses, above all, on the recovery of identities subjected to the depreciation process inherent to the dynamics of stigmatization, which mainly affects this immigrant population. Within a context in which some mechanisms institute asylum for these groups, they are qualified as 'a problem' that can impact their subjectivities.

For this reason, activities to welcome immigrants for forced reasons have the additional potential to act, even if indirectly, on the painful effects of the institution of stigmas, such as humiliation, shame, which could, otherwise, lead to social isolation and the development of serious psychological disorders associated with feelings of fear, anger, anxiety and depression. It should be an objective of any activity to welcome refugee

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[4] "C'est signifier à quelqu'un ce qu'il est et lui signifier qu'il a à conduire en conséquence".

immigrants to rescue the self-respect and self-esteem of these people who migrated for compelling reasons, and, in the case of Portuguese language classes, make them able to take the floor, in the broadest sense of expression, and affirm their dignity in the search for another place for themselves.

Promises of welcoming: reciprocity and solidarity

It would be a mistake to conceive the problems that touch immigrants' mental health, especially those who migrate for forced reasons, as individual issues, completely circumvented through specific strategies. As pointed out by the UNO, the humanitarian crisis brought about by the migratory crisis requires broader changes to take place worldwide. As Bauman (2017) rightly noted, it is a fact that humanity is in crisis and that solidarity among human beings is the only way out; so, instead of walls, we need to build bridges.

Our last reflection on welcoming refugee immigrants focuses on the essential consequences of these actions on their own directors. On the one hand, it is observed that if welcoming projects, such as this carried out using Portuguese language classes, facilitate the connection of immigrants with local culture; they can also connect local participants to immigrants and, thus, drive a more profound social transformation that leads to the construction of a more fraternal world. After all, the experience of welcoming also affects the subjectivity of those who practice it.

Hospitality, like Hastings, Héraud and Kerlan (2018) stated, is a social experience founded on the encounter of someone with someone from outside, in a specific context, which transforms oneself through exercise and learning. "Welcoming the stranger, in his strangeness and often his vulnerability, 'works' the welcoming subject" (Hastings et al., 2018, p. 12, autor's emphasis, our translation)[5].

Welcoming raises questions on the part of that who undertakes to welcome. Reflecting on hospitality is not just asking himself about what can be provided to foreigners, but, above all, about what the latter produces in the host (Hastings et al., 2018). Reception is exchange and reciprocity. It is, therefore, an essential means of transforming the world, spreading the spirit of fraternity.

Thus, it is noted that projects aimed to welcome immigrants can take on a threefold purpose of providing support to those who are arriving by transmitting some knowledge, as in the case of hosting carried out through Portuguese language classes, of establishing a network of relations between immigrants and the local community; and, also, produce humanistic and citizen training to subjects that constitute the host society, as Rosa (2019) points out. After all, underlying the intention to welcome immigrants is constructing a society where differences are embraced and respected in solidarity. Above all, it is the possibility of a friendly coexistence between individuals from different cultures, based on respect for each one's specificities and the spirit of fraternity, which is at the heart of a welcoming. Reciprocity and solidarity can be the antidotes against the deculturation and stigmatization of immigrants.

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[5] "Le fait d'accueillir l'étranger, dans son étrangeté et souvent sa vulnérabilité, 'travaille' le sujet accueillant".

Final considerations

Welcoming actions are of great relevance for promoting immigrants' mental health, especially those who, for imperative reasons, had to flee to other countries to guarantee their survival. In the specific case of the welcoming carried out through Portuguese language classes, providing these immigrants with the learning of the language spoken in the country of arrival is engaging in order to establish an intelligible relationship between them and the local community, attenuating strangeness that can turn into violence or psychological distress. Many other activities can be transformed into reception, providing interactions that mitigate the effects of migratory disruption, leading to a decrease in symptoms that usually constitute forced migration. Regardless of the activity involved in the welcoming, the appreciation of the immigrants' culture and the concern with stigmas generally linked to the refugee image must be present in the forms of interaction established between agents and subjects of reception. By involving members of civil society, a practice of welcoming immigrants can also function as an important means of spreading the spirit of solidarity and reciprocity among people of different nationalities. After all, the intercultural meeting promoted in carrying out these actions can generate the awareness of the participants involved concerning the humanitarian problem underlying the phenomenon of forced migration.

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