Ties that (un)bind? The case of Latin Americans in Portugal and Spain

Laços que (des)unem? O caso de latino-americanos em Portugal e Espanha

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Abstract: Latin American migration to Portugal and Spain is usually facilitated by the historical and cultural ties that bind Latin American and Iberian countries. Nevertheless, these bonds might also function as a means of reinforcing power asymmetries and social hierarchies. Based on Decolonial Thinking and on theories of Social Psychology, this study is aimed at analyzing the dual role of these ties, both as factors of approximation and as instruments of domination and violence. Therefore, we conducted individual interviews with 23 Latin Americans (from Brazil, Chile and Mexico), aged between 18 and 49 years old, who migrated to Portugal or Spain. Data were analyzed through Thematic Analysis. The results allowed us to discuss: the use of language as an instrument of domination; the existence of negative stereotypes regarding Latin America(ns) and the process of essentialization of the "Other"; and how Latin Americans are sometimes seen as a preferred type of migrant and at other times as being eternal foreigners. We hope this study serves as an incentive for future reflections on how the different forms of coloniality might still shape present-day intergroup relations among countries with a shared colonial past.

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RESUMO: A migração latino-americana para Portugal e Espanha é geralmente facilitada pelos laços históricos e culturais que unem países latino-americanos e ibéricos. No entanto, esses laços também podem funcionar como um meio de reforçar assimetrias de poder e hierarquias sociais. Baseado no Pensamento Decolonial e em teorias da Psicologia Social, este estudo teve como objetivo analisar o duplo papel desses vínculos, tanto como fatores de aproximação quanto como instrumentos de dominação e violência. Para tanto, realizamos entrevistas individuais com 23 latino-americanos (do Brasil, Chile e México), com idades entre 18 e 49 anos, que migraram para Portugal ou Espanha. Os dados foram analisados por meio de Análise Temática. Os resultados permitiram discutir: o uso da linguagem como instrumento de dominação; a existência de estereótipos negativos em relação à América Latina e aos latino-americanos e o processo de essencialização do "Outro"; e como, às vezes, os latino-americanos são vistos como um tipo preferido de migrante e, em outras vezes, como eternos estrangeiros. Esperamos que este estudo sirva de incentivo para futuras reflexões sobre como as diferentes formas de colonialidade ainda podem moldar as relações intergrupais atuais entre países com um passado colonial compartilhado.

INTRODUCTION

Latin American migration to Portugal and Spain plays an important role in the demographic profile of these countries. Some of the main factors that contribute to the maintenance and sometimes the increase of this migration corridor are the historical and cultural ties that bind Latin American countries and their former colonizers (Padilla, Cuberos-Gallardo, 2016; Peixoto, 2012). However, as previous studies (e.g., Brasil, Cabecinhas, 2017; Bobowik, Valentim, Licata, 2018; Padilla, Cuberos-Gallardo, 2016; Volpato, Licata, 2010) have shown, despite the cultural similarities that countries with a common colonial past supposedly share, this violent experience may have important repercussions on contemporary societies, influencing present-day intergroup relations among former colonized and former colonizing peoples.

In this paper, we discuss data regarding the life experiences of migrants from three Latin American countries (Brazil, Chile and Mexico) living in Portugal and Spain, based on Decolonial Thinking and on theories of Social Psychology.

COMBINING RESOURCES OF CULTURAL STUDIES AND SOCIAL
PSYCHOLOGY: AN INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO THE STUDY
OF MIGRATION ISSUES

Considering the complexity of the migration phenomenon, in this study we combined theoretical perspectives of Cultural Studies and Social Psychology. With regards to Cultural Studies, we focused on the perspective of Postcolonial Studies from Latin America, known as Decolonial Thinking, Decolonial Option or Decolonial Turn (Castro-Gómez, Grosfoguel, 2007; Maldonado-Torres, 2007, Mignolo, 2017). Following this perspective, several authors (e.g., Grosfoguel, 2008; Maldonado-Torres, 2007; Mignolo, 2000; Quijano, 2005) argue in favor of a decolonization of knowledge (Lander, 2000), in order to think about the world beyond a (North) European and/or North American point of view, and taking into account the Latin American colonial history (Mignolo, 2007).

Two of the main concepts in this approach are: modernity/coloniality and coloniality of power. The first one – modernity/coloniality – is a re-elaboration of Wallerstein's idea of a world-system (1974-1989), which highlights the importance of coloniality as an essential part of modernity (Castro-Gómez, 2005), as well as evidences the patriarchal, capitalist and Eurocentric feature of this world-system (Grosfoguel, 2008). Therefore, the subjugation of "native peoples" (*pueblos originarios* in Spanish) in America, together with slavery and the trafficking of black Africans who were brought to this continent, contributed to the consolidation of Europe's central position, building this "modern/colonial world-system" (Grosfoguel, 2008; Porto-Gonçalves, 2011).

The second concept – coloniality of power – was elaborated by Aníbal Quijano (e.g., Quijano, 2005), in order to "draw attention to the historical continuities between colonial times and the so-called 'postcolonial' times" (Castro-Gómez, Grosfoguel, 2007: 19), hence the use of the expression "coloniality" instead of "colonialism". This means that "the end of colonialism as a political relation did not mean its end as a social relation, as a mentality and form of authoritarian and discriminatory sociability"[3] (Santos, 2004: 8). This concept was later expanded and also started to be used to refer to a coloniality of being (e.g., Maldonado-Torres, 2007) and to a coloniality of knowledge (e.g., Lander, 2000).

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[3] Translations are our own.

Regarding Social Psychology, we used two perspectives: Social Representations Theory (SRT) (Moscovici, 1961/2004) and Social Identity Theory (SIT) (Tajfel, 1981; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). According to the SRT, social representations are "a particular modality of knowledge whose function is the elaboration of behaviors and the communication between individuals" (Moscovici, 1961/2004: 26). As theories of common sense, social representations enable individuals to understand, explain and signify the reality, hence facilitating social communication (Moscovici, 1961/2004).

In line with this reasoning, previous studies (e.g., Deschamps, Moliner, 2008; Zouhri, Rateau, 2015), emphasized the importance of articulated use of the concepts of social representations and social identities, insofar as the relations that group members establish with "Others" are also (re)produced by the social representations they construct and share, just as these representations are expressions of these relations and of people's social belonging to different groups (Deschamps, Moliner, 2008). This possibility of identification with different social groups is one of the key features of the SIT, according to which social identity is a relational process, involving cognitive, emotional and evaluative attributes regarding their sense of belonging to different psychological groups (Tajfel, 1981).

One of the basic mechanisms for constructing social identity is the process of intra and intergroup social comparison, through which individuals negotiate their different identifications and establish distinctions between "Us" and "Them" (Tajfel, 1981). This process of social comparison can be enhanced in the migratory context due to direct contact with different "Others", which is also affected by the common past that these groups share, as we previously mentioned.

LATIN AMERICA AND LATIN AMERICAN MIGRATION TO EUROPE

Latin America is a very heterogeneous region, which had its development permeated by several transformations that happened in its countries: from the long period before the process of conquest which begun at the end of the 15th century, during European colonization (between the 16th and 19th centuries), followed by the (in)dependence processes (mostly during the 19th century), until present times (Burns, Charlip, 2002; Williamson, 2009). Such heterogeneity is also part of its concept, which depends on different criteria, such as historical, cultural and geopolitical ones (Brasil, 2017; Farret, Pinto, 2011). In this paper,

we consider all the countries and areas from South and Central Americas, from the Caribbean and also Mexico as part of this region, following the reference of the UN (2017), regarding the so called "Latin America and the Caribbean" region.

For centuries, Latin American countries were popular places of destination for migrants from different parts of the world. However, as stated by Durand and Massey, "migratory processes are reversible" (2010: 20). Accordingly, Latin America became a sender of migrants to different locations, notably from the 1980s and 1990s onwards (e.g., Cavalcanti, 2007; del Castillo, Bach, 2008; Durand & Massey, 2010), while countries that were traditionally senders became important receivers of migrants, as has happened with many European countries throughout the years (e.g., Cavalcanti, 2007; Ferin, 2008). Considering this multiplicity of migratory flows and the fluidity of this phenomenon, in this paper we use the term "migrant", without any prefixes specifying entry into or leaving a country.

According to the UN (2017) in the International Migration Report, there were about 258 million international migrants in the world in 2017. The main factors that contribute to the increase of migratory movements, are: the intensification of the globalization process, the advancement of information and communication technologies, situations of conflict or wars, environmental disasters, among many other (Araújo, Cogo, Pinto, 2015). Despite the higher numbers, it is worth mentioning that migration is not a particularity of current times, it is a part of human history and helped shape our societies (Brown, Zagefka, 2011).

With regard to migratory movements involving Latin America in present times, these are quite heterogeneous. According to Durand and Massey (2010), there are three main current flows involving the region: intraregional; south-north, to the United States of America (USA) and Canada; and also transoceanic, especially to European countries, Japan and Australia. Among these, we will focus on the flow to Europe, and especially to Portugal and Spain. According to UN data (2017), of the 32 million Latin Americans living outside of their major region of birth, the majority (26 million) lived in North America and in Europe (5 million) at the time of this report. Although most Latin Americans still migrate to countries such as the USA and Canada, the migration corridor between Latin America and the Caribbean and Europe was one of the fastest-growing between the years 2000 and 2017, about 5.7% a year, or 2.8 million people more (UN, 2017).

Some of the main reasons that drive Latin Americans to migrate to Europe are socioeconomic difficulties, demographic changes, more rigorous control of migrant entry into the USA, and demand for specific jobs in Europe (e.g., Cavalcanti, 2007; del Castillo, Bach, 2008). Moreover, especially for countries such as Portugal and Spain, which as previously mentioned were the main colonizers of Latin American countries, other reasons stand out, like the "former historical links, cultural and linguistic affinities, family ties and diplomatic channels" (Peixoto, 2012: 58). Therefore, Portugal and Spain, as well as Italy, are the European countries with the largest contingent of Latin American migrants (del Castillo & Bach, 2008; Durand & Massey, 2010; Padilla, 2009).

During the early 2000's Portugal and Spain emerged as important destinations for international migrants, mainly from Latin American countries (Padilla, Cuberos-Gallardo, 2016; UN, 2017). According to Padilla e Cuberos-Gallardo (2016), the increase in this flow is connected to the implementation of government policies, such as binational or multilateral treaties and agreements, that "construct the Latin American immigrant as a 'compatible' other with the native population, based on an alleged cultural proximity or brotherhood (brother peoples) forged through shared colonial and postcolonial history" (Padilla, Cuberos-Gallardo, 2016: 193). Nevertheless, Portugal and Spain "experienced large net outflows of both natives and immigrants during the period from 2010 to 2015" (UN, 2017: 15), mostly due to the economic crisis that hit these countries (Padilla, Cuberos-Gallardo, 2016). Despite the variations in migration flows, both countries still host large numbers of migrants from the former colonies.

Considering this brief contextualization, we conducted this study to analyze how the ties that bind Latin American countries and their former colonizers might also tear them apart, by functioning as a means of reinforcing old social hierarchies through new intergroup interactions. We conducted this analysis based on the social representations that Latin Americans who migrated to Portugal and Spain think that people from these countries share about Latin America and the Latin Americans, and based on how these migrants make sense of their experiences in the host country, taking into account different instances of discrimination they reported.

METHOD

The present study was part of a broader investigation aimed at analyzing the identity processes of Latin Americans (from Brazil, Chile and Mexico), both in a Latin American context (with people who were born in these three countri-

es and lived there at the time of the study), and in the context of migration (with people from these three countries who migrated to Portugal and Spain).

The choice of the aforementioned Latin American countries (Brazil, Chile and Mexico) was made due to their importance to the economic, political, and social decisions that concern Latin America, since they are three of the largest economies in the region (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean [ECLAC], 2015), despite the crises that countries like Brazil and Mexico are currently going through.

The migrants' identity processes were analyzed based on the social representations that they share about Latin America and other social categories of belonging, and based on how they negotiate these identifications, in the midst of intergroup relations in a migratory context. For the purpose of this paper, we focused on the analysis of one of the main themes that seemed to organize the participants' narratives, as we will explain later.

PARTICIPANTS

The sample consisted of 23 individuals (16 women and 7 men) from Brazil (N = 9, seven women), Chile (N = 7, six women) and Mexico (N = 7, three women), aged between 18 and 49 years old, who had been living in Portugal or Spain for at least one year at the time of the interview. Residence time in the host country ranged from 1 to 17 years. Participants were recruited mainly through word-of-mouth and existing groups on social media (such as "Mexicans in Portugal", "Brazilians in Spain").

Seventeen participants had a university degree (from these, three also had a Master's degree and two had a PhD), four completed general secondary education (from these, three were pursuing a university degree), one had completed technical/professional secondary education, and one had an incomplete general secondary education. In terms of citizenship, 16 participants held only the citizenship of their country of origin (from these, three were pursuing the citizenship of the host country and were waiting for a response), and seven interviewees had dual citizenship.

INTERVIEW PROCEDURES

The data for the present study were collected in 2016 through individual interviews with a semi-structured guide. The interviews were conducted in person or through Skype, in Portuguese or Spanish, according to the participants' pre-

ferences. Participants gave their consent for audio recording of the interviews, which were later transcribed for data analysis.

The interview guide covered the following main themes: a) reasons for migration and process of adaptation to the host country; b) representations and identifications regarding different groups and definitions of Latin America; c) being Latin American in a migratory context: difficulties, changes, and future perspectives; d) sociodemographic data.

ANALYTIC STRATEGIES

After transcribing the interviews, we treated them through Thematic Analysis, which is "a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (Braun, Clarke, 2006: 79). The relevance of a theme is not directly proportional to the number of times it appears in the data, but rather to its importance in capturing relevant aspects to answer the research questions. Thematic Analysis involves (re)reading of the data; creation and grouping of codes into possible themes; verification of the pertinence of the themes in relation to the extracts that were coded and to the set of data as a whole; analysis of selected themes (Braun, Clarke, 2006).

Through this analysis, we identified eight themes that seemed to organize the participants' narratives about their multiple social belongings, and about their migratory experience. In this paper, we focused on the theme called "racism(s)", which was the broader theme we have analyzed and that unravels the identity dynamics and the power relations involved in present-day interactions between individuals from former colonized and former colonizing countries.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Considering that the different features which make up the larger theme are deeply intertwined, we chose to conduct the discussion of the results together with its presentation, in order to provide a better understanding of the complexities involved in the psychosocial processes that are being analyzed.

The theme we analyze includes discussions about ethnocentrism, homogenization of outgroups, and situations of discrimination. We decided to approach such issues together, under the name "racism(s)", because it was an expression widely mentioned (in its singular form – racism) by all participants from the three countries, despite not being used in the questions asked. In addition, this

expression concerns a phenomenon that involves essentialization and hierarchical differentiation with respect to "Others", and which is based on biological and/or cultural aspects (Vala, 2013). This phenomenon is present in the respondents' speeches about their experiences in this migratory context, influencing the relationships they establish in the host country and their identity dynamics.

Given the broadness of this theme, we divided it into three connected "sub-themes": 1) language as an instrument of domination; 2) essentializing the "Other": homogenization and negative stereotypes; 3) preferred type of migrant *versus* eternal foreigners. After the presentation and discussion of each of these "sub-themes", we will proceed to a brief general discussion on the set of results, followed by a presentation of the main limitations of the study, ending with concluding remarks.

LANGUAGE AS AN INSTRUMENT OF DOMINATION

Among the instances of discrimination reported by the interviewees, many involved discrimination because of their accent when speaking their native language, which is the same as that of their former colonizers: Brazilian respondents affirmed that they felt more discriminated against in Portugal, and Chilean and Mexican respondents said they experienced greater discrimination in Spain.

> [...] the issue of the accent, because, no matter how hard we make an effort, we cannot lose it completely, so, by opening our mouths we confess that we are Brazilians, you know? […] open your mouth and you spoil everything: 'you are Brazilian'. (Brazilian woman, eight years living in Portugal)
> It is ridiculous, but here I feel more at home, even if I do not speak Portuguese, here they understand you, they try. (Mexican woman, one year living in Portugal)

There seems to be a (dis)unity involving language (Abadia, Cabecinhas, Macedo, & Cunha, 2018), i.e. the common language, which, on the one hand, functions as a factor of approximation and as a facilitator of adaptation to the host country, and on the other hand, is one of the most targeted issues in discriminatory practices. This also reflects the maintenance of asymmetric relations between former colonizers and former colonized groups, stressing "the use of language as an instrument of domination" (Macedo, Martins, Cabecinhas, 2011: 125).

Regarding this dual function of language – as a factor of approximation and as an instrument of domination and violence – Padilla and Cuberos-Gallardo sum up:

[…] A clear example in this respect we observe in the linguistic matter, where the fact of sharing the same language often results in the stigmatization of Latin Americans from the host society, who considers that they do not speak it 'correctly'. In this sense, the shared cultural traits are in turn reactivated as scenarios where the power relations are made visible. And it is around them where, again, the old metropolises develop their ability to define and simultaneously classify/rank the other, determining what is correct (Padilla and Cuberos-Gallardo, 2016: 213).

ESSENTIALIZING THE "OTHER": HOMOGENIZATION AND NEGATIVE STEREOTYPES

The social representations that the interviewees believe the Portuguese and Spanish share about Latin America and Latin Americans are mainly composed of negative stereotypes, focusing on poverty and violence, as well as on the lack of competence, responsibility, and autonomy of Latin Americans. Even when "positive" stereotypes are used it is usually through attributes that are more related to nature, to expressiveness, to the ludic, and to exoticism, similar to previous studies carried out in other contexts (e.g., Cabecinhas, 2007/2017). There is, therefore, an essentialization (Wagner, Holtz, Kashima, 2009) of the region and its inhabitants. Such representations about these social categories are (re)constructed based on images that were historically associated with different "Others", especially the "Others" of the "New World", relating them to animality and childishness (Jahoda, 1999). When in the context of enhanced social comparison, provided by migration, such representations become more evident, reaffirming the relevance of conflict (be it real or imaginary) to the identity dynamics of individuals (Tajfel, 1981).

[...] they [the Spanish] think that from Mexico all the way down we are all exactly the same, that we are exactly the same people, that we all behave identically. So it is very bad, there is a very erroneous and very ignorant conception about what Latin America is. (Mexican man, eight years living in Spain)
Oh, they have a pejorative opinion against Latin Americans, they think we are all whores or thieves, and scoundrels, who come here just to steal. In general, they think that. (Brazilian woman, seven years living in Spain)
And people thought that all of Latin America is poor, that we all lived on trees and asked questions that at first hurt me. (Chilean woman, four years living in Portugal)
I, particularly, did not suffer any kind of label. Personally not, but yes, I have heard some, some people label Latin Americans pejoratively. They talk, 'ah, the sudaca, the panchito'. (Brazilian man, 12 years living in Spain)

This relation with the Latin American "Other" involves the homogenization and the attribution of negative stereotypes to this "Other", and, according to the interviewees, is linked to the colonial past, which remains alive in the way

many Portuguese and Spanish represent Latin Americans, reinforcing negative stereotypes and discriminatory practices targeting this group. Thus, references to racism among the participants were stronger in relation to their former colonizers, that is, for Brazilian respondents, there were more mentions of racism among those living in Portugal than those in Spain. Among Chilean and Mexican respondents (both in Spain and Portugal), there were more references to racism in Spain. They spoke about such racism both based on their own experiences on Spanish territory and on the narratives about their friends' and family's experiences.

> I think because we are the people who were conquered by them, that's why. The Portuguese conquered Brazil and the Spanish conquered us, then it is as if they feel superior to us. [...] I think it would be more difficult [to have migrated to Spain], from what I have heard from my friends, it would be more difficult in Spain, because the Spanish are very prejudiced, there are many extremists who call us '*sudacas*, do not leave there [Latin America]'. (Chilean woman, 13 years living in Portugal)
> [...] these are people who still feel as conquerors, these are people who have a certain racism. (Mexican woman, one year living in Portugal)

While in the case of Spain some participants emphasize existing racism, especially because they believe many Spanish people still feel like colonizers, in the case of Portugal, some interviewees report that there seems to be an imperial nostalgia (e.g., Feldman-Bianco, 2001; Martins, 2006/2017), which also translates into nationalism:

> I do not know if it is the fact that Portugal was a big nation, territory and have lost everything and have stayed on the edge of the Peninsula, which is why the extreme nationalism. [...] I do not know, it is always this comparison, I think there are comparisons to enhance national self-esteem, in a way. (Mexican man, seven years living in Portugal)

As we can observe in the participants' answers, the term "racism" is used here in a broader sense, not only to refer to the phenotypic or racial prejudice, but also referring to other ways of hierarchies among individuals and groups (Cabecinhas, 2007/2017; Souza, 2017; Vala, 2013). According to this perspective, we understand racism as "a phenomenon which organises relations between social groups" (Vala, 2013: 3) and which is:

> a social representation of the nature of humanity based on the following fundamental psychological and social processes: categorisation (belief that humanity is organised according to racial or ethnic groups); differentiation (there are profound differences between human groups); hierarchy (certain groups have a permanent superiority to others); essentialization (differences are immutable due to biological as well as cultural essences) [...]; radical alterity (not all groups have all the essences which common sense considers to be specific to humans) (Vala, 2013: 4).

In line with this discussion, another recurrent issue, reported only by the female participants, especially ones from Brazil, was the existence of negative stereotypes regarding Brazilian women, which translate into discrimination and harassment, especially in Portugal, as discussed in previous studies (e.g., Brasil, 2017; Gomes, 2013; Oliveira, 2016).

> In Portugal, they are very prejudiced against Brazil, a lot. For them, all Brazilian women are whores. (Brazilian woman, seven years living in Spain)
> [...] the Brazilian woman here is really, really known in a bad way. [...] you open your mouth to speak and one realizes that you are Brazilian…already looks at you from top to bottom, it is complicated, it is complicated. Men already look at you with an air of, 'girl of the night', it is very difficult. (Brazilian woman, one year living in Portugal)

Brazilian women, therefore, "are seen as a 'colonial body', insofar as they are defined, essentialized and stigmatized by means of characteristics attributed to them since the historical colonialism" (Gomes, 2013: 890). These representations were built during the colonial period and were revived mainly at the end of the twentieth century and onwards, through advertising to promote European tourism in Brazil, which contributed to the accentuation of this social imagery that perceives Brazilian women as hypersexualized and available for (European white) men (Gomes, 2013). These social representations about Brazilian women have a great impact on the experiences of these women in different situations, such as in a migratory context (Gomes, 2013, Piscitelli, 2008), especially when the country of destination is the former colonizer, Portugal, as we have seen in the interviews we conducted.

One last aspect worth mentioning regarding this "sub-theme" is the association that some interviewees draw between racism and ignorance. For some of them, racism is a consequence of ignorance about the reality of the "Other", as these participants argue:

> And they think that all of Latin America is like this, the thing of the bad information, that's what I say, people who think like that it is because they don't know, don't care, they don't travel, they have that idea from movies, because movies always show the Latin American woman as the maid, the prostitute. (Chilean woman, seven years living in Portugal)
> [...] And to see that the issue of racism is mainly because of ignorance, they do not realize that we are physically different, but internally we are all alike all over the world. (Chilean woman, four years living in Portugal)

However, situations of contact between groups, which could provide greater knowledge and respect for the "Other", are not a guarantee that homogenization of the outgroup and discriminatory practices will diminish (e.g., Lima, Faro, Santos, 2016). In order to try to promote the reduction of prejudice, through intergroup contact, it would be necessary, for example, for individuals

to have more personalized relationships, to develop cooperative activities in common, and for groups to have a similar status in that interaction (Allport, 1954/1979; Lima, 2013). Nevertheless, it is quite difficult for all these conditions to be met, especially in relations involving minority and majority groups, as in the case of Latin American migrants in a European context, and even if they are achieved, they also do not guarantee the absence of prejudice and discrimination.

PREFERRED TYPE OF MIGRANT *VERSUS* ETERNAL FOREIGNERS

As previously mentioned, in Iberian countries Latin Americans are at times considered "brother peoples" while at other times they are seen as distant "Others": when compared to more "culturally distant" migrants, such as those who profess the Islamic religion, Latin Americans become the preferred type of migrants due to their cultural ties with Iberian countries (Padilla & Cuberos-Gallardo, 2016). But, in times of crisis, with higher unemployment rates, Latin Americans are viewed as a weight, returning to a place of unfamiliarity, of "Otherness", without any recognition of the supposed "cultural singularity" of Latin Americans (Padilla, Cuberos-Gallardo, 2016).

According to some respondents, there has been an increase in discrimination against migrants in general, because of the crisis that has accompanied some European countries in recent years (e.g., Pizarro, Christiny, Contrucci, 2014), based on the idea that there is greater dispute for resources and jobs between migrants and locals.

> I think that this discrimination increased more due to the crisis. With the crisis they thought, 'we should not leave the country to foreigners'. [...] among themselves [the Spanish] they are always fighting and did not have time to fight with foreigners, until now with the crisis. (Chilean woman, eight years living in Spain).
> In general, [the Spanish] see us as a plague, a plague, that we come to take their jobs. (Mexican woman, one year living in Portugal).

Based on the idea of cultural affinities and distance, the discourse of the "colonial inheritances" is recovered, since, according to this notion, Latin Americans would be easier to integrate into the host culture, therefore being a more "acceptable" type of migrant, posing a lesser threat to the national identity of these countries (Padilla, Cuberos-Gallardo, 2016).

> Now, this I think it important to say, that the dangerous people now are not the Latin Americans, are the Arab countries, because the people of Latin America are going away. [...] the European has this thing of superiority, that 'because I am American or European, I have the

superiority in face of an Indian, a Black person or any other, an Arab', that I don't like. [...] 'Europe is for the European, we do not want outsiders, Europe for the Europeans, Spain for the Spanish, Portugal for the Portuguese', that kind of thing, very dangerous. (Chilean woman, seven years living in Portugal).

Nevertheless, when the use of rhetoric regarding the "historical and cultural ties that bind" is not needed, Latin Americans are perceived as "eternal foreigners", as reported by these two participants:

> We may really enjoy a place, enjoy the people, enjoy the food, but it's always us, we're foreigners and the others keep seeing us…people, they always see us as foreigners, always. (Chilean woman, four years living in Portugal).
> [...] it cannot be explained, only those who live abroad know what it is, it is very difficult, I don't feel at home, I feel like a guest, a visit. (Brazilian woman, seven years living in Spain).

Finally, in this "sub-theme" we also observe references to different forms of coloniality (power, being and knowledge) (Quijano, 2005), but within European countries, denouncing existing asymmetries of power in different contexts, depending on the references adopted. Therefore, according to some respondents, Portugal and Spain may share more similarities with Latin American countries than with richer countries of Europe, for example:

> And now this is happening with the Portuguese and the Spanish, with the crisis, it is as if what goes around comes around: now they are suffering prejudice from the Germans, the upper countries, the rich countries of Europe, Germany, France, England. Because they say on television, 'we are in bad shape: The European crisis is because of the lazy ones from the South, because of the Portuguese', as if they were all day at the beach, not working. The crisis affected those who lived well and now they are suffering a little with the discrimination. (Chilean woman, seven years living in Portugal).
> [...] If we usually compare Latin America with Europe, let us say that Spain does its internal comparison: they would be the Latinos, would be the South Americans from all over Europe. (Chilean woman, 17 years living in Spain).

Given the whole set of results we discussed, it was possible to apprehend the relative and changing weight attributed to the cultural ties that (un)bind Latin American countries and Portugal and Spain. As argued by Padilla and Cuberos-Gallardo:

> […] the policies that have built the cultural compatibility of the Latin American immigrant in the Iberian Peninsula can be interpreted as neo-colonial government technologies that project on this immigrant a double effect: on the one hand, it constructs the immigrant as inferior, since the very notion of proximity is based on the inequality of the relationship, in which Latin Americans are a poorly made copy of the original. On the other hand, it blames the Latin American immigrant in her/his failed integration when s/he no longer fulfils the desired role, and especially when the labour market does not absorb or need him (Padilla, Cuberos-Gallardo, 2016: 214).

Hence, the pertinence of adopting a decolonial perspective (e.g., Grosfoguel, 2008; Mignolo, 2000; 2017) when analyzing the migratory phenomenon between countries with a colonial past, because it involves a context that is not neutral (Padilla & Cuberos-Gallardo, 2016), but rather implies an asymmetric relation in which the colonizing country strips the racialized colonized "Other" of its condition of being and produces knowledge about the Other", justifying the relation of domination.

LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER STUDIES

The main limitations of this study were as follows. The sample was non-probabilistic, with specific characteristics, such as: most of the participants were highly educated, and, in general, they identified themselves as Latin Americans, which might not reflect the reality of these countries. For example, Brazil is historically distanced from Latin America, resulting in lower level of identification with this social category of belonging (Onuki, Mouron, Urdinez, 2016). Therefore, these samples cannot be considered representative of the entire populations of the respective countries, or of Latin America.

In addition, in this paper we focused only on one of the themes present in the participants' narratives. Therefore, other factors that might influence their identity dynamics and their present-day intergroup relations were probably not captured. There are countless elements that can influence the sense of belonging to different groups, particularly when individuals migrate, and that might have different impacts on their process of acculturation, such as gender, social class, years of residence in the host country, degree of involvement and stabilization in the new place (e.g., documentation, employment, having friends), the relationship maintained with the country of origin (e.g., family, friends, following news in the media), among many other factors (e.g., Brown & Zagefka, 2011; Machado, 2007).

Given these considerations, further studies could be developed with larger samples from different Latin American countries, and using different methodological strategies for data collection (e.g., questionnaires) and analysis (e.g., with textual analysis software). Furthermore, as suggested by Figueiredo, Oldenhove, and Licata (2018), future studies could also benefit from pursuing an integrated analysis of identity and acculturation dynamics, collective memories of colonial past and present-day intergroup relations in contexts of migration involving groups with a past of colonization, as was the case for some of the participants in this research.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this paper we discussed how the ties that bind Latin American countries and their former colonizers might also function as a means of reinforcing power asymmetries and social hierarchies. The discriminatory practices against former colonized groups when they migrate to the countries that were their former colonizers are examples of how the end of colonialism as a political relation did not mean its end as forms of social relations (Santos, 2004). It is also in response to this coloniality of power (Quijano, 2005), of being (e.g., Maldonado-Torres, 2007) and of knowledge (e.g., Lander, 2000), that the interviewees construct their representations and their social identities, also showing greater appreciation and identification with Latin America, after the migration (as we discuss in another study).

To conclude, we believe this research may serve as an incentive for future reflections on how the different forms of coloniality might still shape present-day intergroup relations among countries with a shared colonial past. Furthermore, we hope this study contributes to future dialogues between Latin American countries and their former colonizers, which could help reduce intergroup conflicts between them, leading to social change.

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COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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