

The local configurations of hate. Anti-migratory discourses and xenophobic practices in Foz do Iguacu, Brazil

Las configuraciones locales de odio. Discursos antimigratorios y prácticas xenofóbicas en Foz de Iguazú, Brasil

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Abstract

The objective of the article is to ethnographically describe the social impacts of anti-migratory hate speeches in the Brazilian city of Foz do Iguacu (in the triple border of Paraná). We analyze the current Brazilian political context by investigating the present impact of the imaginations of militarism, disseminated on these borders since 1970. We use an ethnographic methodology, with 60 qualitative interviews and a focus group with 11 participants (international migrant students, teachers and technical staff from the University of Latin American Integration). The results show that xenophobia was converted into official discourse in Brazil, articulating statements that advocate intolerance towards minorities and vulnerable sectors. This particularly affects Foz, given the border and military configurations of the city. Likewise, the study allows us to conclude that both speeches and xenophobic practices are articulated by racist imaginary that most strongly impact migrant women.

Keywords: hate speech, migration, Paraná's tri-border-area, Foz do Iguacu.

Resumen

El objetivo del artículo es describir etnográficamente los impactos sociales de los discursos de odio antimigratorio en la ciudad brasileña de Foz de Iguazú (en la triple frontera del Paraná). Analizamos el actual contexto político brasileño indagando el impacto presente de los imaginarios del militarismo distendido en

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estas fronteras desde 1970. Utilizamos una metodología etnográfica, con la realización de 60 entrevistas cualitativas y un grupo focal con 11 participantes (estudiantes migrantes internacionales, profesores y personal técnico de la Universidad de la Integración Latinoamericana). Los resultados arrojan que la xenofobia fue convertida en discurso oficial en Brasil, articulándose a enunciados que preconizan la intolerancia hacia las minorías y sectores vulnerables. Esto incide de forma particular en Foz, dadas las configuraciones fronterizas y militares de la ciudad. Asimismo, el estudio permite concluir que tanto los discursos como prácticas xenofóbicas están articulados por imaginarios racistas que impactan más fuertemente a las mujeres migrantes.

Palabras clave: discursos de odio, migración, triple frontera del Paraná, Foz de Iguazú.

Introduction

This article addresses the social consequences of hate discourses against migrant populations, which characterize the reactionary turn in the Southern Cone. These discourses reproduce symbolic logics that have become hegemonic in the global north (particularly since 2008), where they served as mobilizing elements of public opinion at decisive moments (the Brexit vote, in 2015, or Trump's election, in 2016) (Guizardi, 2019, p. 591). In South America, these conceptualizations are propelled by a hegemonic media (Matossian et al., 2019, p. 31), reviving the configurations of racism, androcentrism, and xenophobia that have underpinned national projects and regional border models (Canelo et al., 2018, p. 150-153). They thus articulate enduring imaginaries and myths with great mobilizing power (Aquino, 2019, p. 180).

Our objective is to investigate how these discourses impact or mobilize certain specific contexts, configuring the daily relationships of those who are labeled "migrants." The chosen context is the Brazilian city of Foz de Iguazú (also known as Foz), located on the triple frontier of Paraná (where Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay meet), a territory characterized by an intense transnational circularity (Agulló, 2017, p. 59; Cardin, 2012, p. 208; Renoldi, 2014, p. 2). However, the case study that we carry out in the following pages is primarily descriptive-ethnographic: we seek to provide qualitative empirical information that allows us to account for the local configurations of racism and anti-immigrant xenophobia and their intersection with hate discourses.

To achieve these aims, in the second section we will describe the methodology of our case study, explaining the methods for collecting and analyzing the qualitative information. In the third section, we will discuss the discourses employed against migrants by the current president of Brazil, Jair Bolsonaro. The fourth section contextualizes the urban and identity-based configurations of Foz de Iguazú, explaining the role it played in structuring perspectives on development and militarism in Brazil during the last military dictatorship (1964-1986). Based on the accounts of our interviewees, we will address the creation of the University for Latin American Integration (Universidad de la Integración Latinoamericana [Unila]) and its connection with the Workers' Party (Partido de los Trabajadores [PT]) governments in Brazil. We will demonstrate the growing

unpopularity of those governments in Foz since 2013. The fifth section focuses on the discussions held in the focus group with migrant students and employees at Unila, also known as “*unileros*” (Alarcón, 2019). Through their accounts, we will address the legitimation of hate practices in territories where identity frictions are elements of everyday life. We will end with some conclusions about our case study.

Methodology

Since 2017, this article’s first author has been traveling to Foz to make ethnographic observations about the experience of cross-border women. The second author joined this research agenda in 2019 as part of a comparative ethnographic project across South American borders. This project is led by the first author and has a team of 12 researchers from different disciplinary fields.

The authors of this document, along with four members of the team, conducted fieldwork in Foz between July and August 2019,¹ recording the experiences of migrant and cross-border populations in field diaries, photographs, and videos. They also carried out a total of 60 qualitative interviews: four with Catholic missionaries who serve the migrant population, three with consular authorities, two with Argentine women, 14 with Brazilian women, 31 with Paraguayan women, one with a woman of a different nationality, and five with Brazilian and Paraguayan men.² Table 1 summarizes the data of those interviewees.

To complement this material, we conducted a focus group with 11 participants, including international migrant students and employees at Unila.³ The activity was held on July 20, 2019 on the Unila campus from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Table 2 summarizes the information of the participants.

¹ We would like to thank Carolina Stefoni, Herminia González, Eleonora López, and Esteban Nazal, with whom we shared this ethnographic work.

² In accordance with the ethics regulations of the agencies that financed the study, the initials of the interviewees are used to protect their identities. We also followed their requests regarding which information to disclose.

³ We would like to thank Rodrigo de Medeiros da Silva (Vice-Rector for International and Institutional Relations at Unila) and Silvia Lilian Ferro (from the Latin American Institute of Economy, Society and Politics, Unila).

Table 1. Summary description of the interviewees

| Num. | Initials | Nationality | Sex | Age | Occupation | Place of residence | Date | Method |
|------|----------|-------------|------|----------|--|-------------------------|-------------|-----------------|
| 1 | I. | Brazilian | Male | 56 years | Taxi driver (former construction worker at Itaipú) | Foz | 07.17.2019 | Field diary |
| 2 | S. | Brazilian | Male | 50 years | Taxi driver (former construction worker at Itaipú) | Foz | 08.31.2019 | Field diary |
| 3 | P. | Brazilian | Male | Unknown | Taxi driver (former construction worker at Itaipú) | Foz | 08. 19.2019 | Field diary |
| 4 | TVTW | Brazilian | Fem. | 35 years | Lawyer and businesswoman | Hernandarias (Paraguay) | 08. 01.2019 | Video recording |
| 5 | SLF | Argentine | Fem. | 52 years | Political scientist | Foz | 08. 01.2019 | Video recording |
| 6 | J. | Brazilian | Male | 65 years | Retired military | Foz | 10. 13.2018 | Field diary |

Source: created by the authors.

Table 2. Participants in the focus group held at Unila. Foz do Iguacu (Brazil), 07/20/2019

| Num. | Initials | Nationality | Sex | Occupation/major | Place of residence |
|------|----------|---------------------|------|--|--------------------|
| 1 | AHC | Venezuelan/Lebanese | Male | Undergraduate student of Political Science and Sociology | Foz |
| 2 | RMVG | Paraguayan | Male | Undergraduate student of Political Science and Sociology | Foz |
| 3 | EMTP | Brazilian | Male | Unila administrative staff | Foz |
| 4 | CD | Haitian | Fem. | Student of Public Administration | Foz |
| 5 | MLPH | Peruvian | Fem. | Undergraduate student of Political Science and Sociology | Foz |
| 6 | NCA | Haitian | Fem. | Student of Political Science and Public Policy | Foz |
| 7 | MBA | Colombian | Male | Sound technician | Foz |
| 8 | FJVD | Colombian | Male | Undergraduate student of Mathematics | Foz |
| 9 | JAMP | Colombian | Male | Undergraduate student of Economics | Foz |
| 10 | LKMA | Brazilian | Fem. | University professor of Spanish | Foz |
| 11 | DMMF | Brazilian | Male | Student of Music | Foz |

Source: created by the authors.

The conversations were filmed. The university is a bilingual Spanish/Portuguese institution, where each person chooses their preferred language: we followed this maxim for the interviews and focus groups (for this article, we translated the contributions in Portuguese into Spanish).

After completing the fieldwork, the interviews and focus group discussion were transcribed and coded using MAXQDA software. For the coding, we constructed an analytical matrix with six macro categories: 1) Border constructions; 2) Trajectories of border migrants; 3) Inclusion of border migrants; 4) Configurations of border care; 5) Experiences of violence; and 6) Andean and Paraná triple frontier connections. Each of them was subdivided into a total of 130 codes. The topics addressed here were classified as linked to the macro category “Border Constructions” under the codes: i) Cross-border political strategies; ii) Cross-border identity strategies; iii) Discourses of otherness and difference; iv) Hate discourses; v) Practices of otherization/differentiation; vi) Nationalism; vii) Xenophobia; and viii) Racism.

The ethnographic descriptions developed by the authors, together with the accounts resulting from the interviews and the focus group, constitute the empirical resources with which we trace the impacts of anti-immigrant discourses in Foz.

Bolsonaro: Anti-Immigrant Discourse

On January 9, 2019, one week after taking office as president, Bolsonaro used his Twitter account to announce that he was withdrawing Brazil from the United Nations (UN) Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.⁴ With this, Brazil and Chile (the only Latin American country that did not sign the compact) joined the nation-states that are most reactive on the issue of migration: the United States (US), Hungary, Israel, Poland, and the Czech Republic. Unlike those countries, Brazil has more emigrants (three million) than immigrants (800 000) (Armendáriz, 2019). But it was not difficult to predict that this would be Bolsonaro’s position. In December 2018, before he had taken office, he justified that decision, passing judgment in a description—in our opinion, xenophobic—of what, according to him, has occurred in France:

Living in some parts of France is becoming unbearable, and the trend is towards an increase in intolerance. For those who went there, the (French) people welcomed them in the best possible way, but you know the history of those people, they have something in them, they don’t give up their roots, and they want to assert their culture, their prior rights, their privileges (*El Periódico*, 2018).

Comparing Brazil with countries that have large migrant populations, the president-elect explained that foreigners and nationals should not have the same rights and that the former should be denied their cultural practices. The declaration went against Articles 22 and 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), which

⁴ A nonbinding treaty that recommends mechanisms for seeking comprehensive solutions to international migration. It proposes 23 objectives to discourage undocumented migration, ways to protect migrants, their inclusion or to facilitate return migration.

establish, respectively, that everyone has the right to the “realization...of cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality” and the “right to freely participate in the cultural life of the community” (ONU, 1948).

Even though the compact proposed by the UN does not imply that anyone must take responsibility for any specific demand, Bolsonaro justified himself, arguing that “Brazil is sovereign in deciding whether or not to accept migrants.” He thus put pressure on Brazilian public opinion, by establishing—without any factual evidence—that remaining in the agreement signified undermining the national sovereignty. Moreover, he juxtaposed the figure of migrants with the loss of sovereignty, equating them with a “threat” to the native population. In the same vein as Trump and Sebastián Piñera (the Chilean president), he spoke of the “need” to implement border security policies against migrants and compared the country to his own residence: “We don’t let just anyone come into our home, nor will just anyone enter Brazil through a compact adopted by others” (*France24*, 2019). The Brazilian Foreign Minister, Ernesto Araújo, added: “Brazil cannot leave the doors completely open for anyone who wants to enter” (*El País*, 2019). The country is thus represented as the home of the leaders—all white men—who decide to open or close their doors. It is therefore portrayed as a masculine property over which control must be exercised, using legal frameworks that were established based on the desire for control of the man who governs.

Simultaneously, by withdrawing from the UN compact, Bolsonaro left his emigrants unprotected, which caused revolt and confusion among his voters. That is the case of the Brazilian community of more than one million people in the US. The decision shocked the colony, which overwhelmingly voted for the president (who received 81% of the votes of Brazilians residing in the US in the second round of the 2018 presidential election) (Brotto, 2019).

Moreover, Bolsonaro reproduces other terminology from Trump’s rhetoric and establishes a direct association between drug trafficking, security, and migration. This connection lacks empirical support, both in official Brazilian and US statistics, as well as in social research on those phenomena. However, Bolsonaro reiterates it, frequently relying on false information (Cunha et al., 2019). With the same “flippancy,” he compares the Brazilian migration context (with a migrant population of 0.4%) with that of the US (14% migrants) (International Organization for Migration [IOM], 2018, p. 69).

In March 2019, Bolsonaro had a meeting with Trump in Washington, where he expressed his support for the plan to build/expand the wall between Mexico and the US. Following the meeting, in an interview with the US network *Fox News*, he stated that “most potential immigrants do not have good intentions” (*Huffington Post*, 2019). Several hours later, after receiving strong criticism, he stated the opposite: “Most migrants have good intentions” (Soares, 2019).

On that occasion, the President’s son, Eduardo Bolsonaro, a deputy in the Brazilian national congress, stated that “illegal Brazilian migrants were a disgrace to us” (*La Voz*, 2019). In reaction, women from the Brazilian community in the state of Massachusetts (US) stated: “We are used to defending our community from persecution, discrimination, and xenophobia by the US government. We never thought we would have to defend Brazilians from the Brazilian government” (Brotto, 2019).

Since 2018, Bolsonaro has been using the impact generated by the migration of Venezuelans to Brazil as a media strategy. The Venezuelan contingent that emigrated to Brazil is smaller than that of neighboring countries, but the issue was treated by

Bolsonaro and his ministers as an “invasion.” The land entry of approximately 130 000 Venezuelans into the northern Brazilian state of Roraima became an important story in the media, which was capitalized on by the government as a central argument in its anti-left discourse (Armendáriz, 2019). In August 2019, following the Simultaneous and Mandatory Open Primary (*Primarias Abiertas Simultáneas y Obligatorias - PASO*) elections in Argentina, Bolsonaro wove a story that juxtaposed left-wing governments with migration movements:

If those leftists return to power in Argentina, Rio Grande do Sul could be the next Roraima. We do not want that, we do not want Argentine brothers fleeing here, thinking that something awful might happen if the result of yesterday’s vote is repeated in October (*Télam*, 2018).

Argentina, a country that has experienced several economic and political crises over its history, never viewed Brazil as a primary destination for migration. Bolsonaro’s rhetoric thus seeks to establish a comparison between Argentina and Venezuela, linking the rejection of left-wing governments with intolerance towards migrants. Despite not being supported by institutional or research data, these declarations stir deep feelings in Brazilians, who are experiencing a strong crisis of confidence in institutions, as well as a crisis of confrontation with the information produced by the media. Bolsonaro’s rhetoric thus encourages a semantics of fear, with important impacts on the worldviews of different sectors of the Brazilian population. They fuel the attack on any group identified as a “minority.” We will now look at how these ideas are contextualized in Foz.

The Context

The triple frontier of Paraná is one of the most famous border areas in Latin America (Agulló, 2017, p. 59). It has the greatest flow of humans, goods (Rhi-Sausi & Oddone, 2010), tourism (Cury & Fraga, 2013), and illicit activities in all of South America (Cardin, 2012, p. 208).⁵ Its territorial area is formed by the conurbation of three cities (Albuquerque, 2012), with more than 600 000 people (Renoldi, 2014, p. 2).

Puerto Iguazú, on the Argentine side, is the smallest of the three: 42 849 people, according to the Argentine census of 2010 (Dachary & Arnaiz, 2012). Founded in 1902, it lies within the province of Misiones (Renoldi, 2013). Its main activity is tourism (aimed at the Iguazú Falls), and it is connected to the Brazilian side by the Fraternity Bridge (Giménez, 2011, p. 8), which opened in 1985. Ciudad del Este, on the Paraguayan side, was founded in 1957 by a presidential decree (Lynn, 2008) to serve as a territorial link with Brazil. During the Stroessner dictatorship (1954-1989), it was named “Puerto Flor de Lis” and, later, “Puerto Presidente Stroessner,” in honor of the dictator. In 1989, following a plebiscite, it received its current name. In the 1980s, it became a Free Trade Zone, transforming into a large international trade center (Cardin, 2012). On the most recent Paraguayan Census (from 2012), it had 312 652 inhabitants. Foz de Iguazú, on the Brazilian side, is the oldest of the three cities. It

⁵ Particularly the trafficking of drugs and goods, organized crime (Cardin, 2012), and trafficking of women and children (Organización Internacional del Trabajo [OIT], 2002; Zsögön, 2013).

was founded in the nineteenth century as a military settlement (Catta, 2009; Renoldi, 2013), but its growth began in 1965 when, in accordance with the developmentalist projects carried out in the region, the Friendship Bridge was constructed, connecting it to the Paraguayan side (Lynn, 2008). On the most recent Brazilian census (from 2010), it had 256 081 inhabitants (Albuquerque, 2012, p. 191).

These three cities are strongly linked in economic, political, and cultural terms: it is very difficult to understand them separately (Albuquerque, 2012). As argued by Albuquerque (2012), Cardin (2012), and Renoldi (2013), the particular dynamism of this triple frontier is characterized by circuits of mobility and relationships (economic, social, and cultural), in which legality and illegality, belonging and rootlessness are not antagonistic peers (Lima & Cardin, 2019, p. 10). The daily lives of those who live in this territory thus involve the constant crossing of borders between cities.⁶

To understand this territorial configuration, we must go back in time. A historical review reveals that militarism played a fundamental role in the three cities: Their affiliations with the sovereignties of Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay are the result of war processes that continue to influence the social and political organization of the territory. Since the end of the Paraguayan War (1864-1870),⁷ the area was semipopulated, and it only became a strategic zone for the Southern Cone between 1960 and 1980 (Albuquerque, 2012), following agreements between Brazil and Paraguay regarding the construction of the Itaipú hydroelectric dam (1971-1985) and between Argentina and Paraguay regarding the Yaciretá hydroelectric dam (1983-2011) (Renoldi, 2013, p. 125). Both were designed by the military governments of the three countries, based on developmentalist projects with substantive social impacts (Lins Ribeiro, 1999),⁸ for which the governments did not sufficiently prepare (Renoldi, 2013). The dynamization driven by the hydroelectric dams led to sustained population growth on the triple frontier (Lynn, 2008), even though the Argentine side remained less populated due to a decision by the military during the Videla dictatorship (1976-1981).⁹ Despite the area's growth between 1970 and 1980, it was only after the signing of the Southern Common Market (*Mercado Común del Sur - Mercosur*), in 1991, that it was effectively understood as a tri-border area (Giménez, 2011; Rabossi, 2004).

But let us return for a few moments to the period of the dictatorship. To the Brazilian military dictatorship (1964-1986), Foz represented a priority territory for deploying the nationalist project of territorial control and military hegemony over the neighboring countries (Ribeiro, 2006, p. 53; Sessi, 2015, p. 25). The construction

⁶ This mobility is more prevalent between the Brazilian and Paraguayan sides: the inhabitants refer to the boundary between them as an "open border," given the lax oversight of the authorities. This does not imply that the crossings between Brazil and Argentina and between the latter and Paraguay are heavy. However, they are much more controlled by the Argentine authorities, warranting its being called a "closed border" by the tri-border inhabitants.

⁷ The conflict pitted the Triple Alliance (Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay, with British support) against the Paraguayan army, motivated by strife over economic interests and the establishment of territories, sovereignty, and borders (Reber, 1988). Following the victory of the Alliance, military and racial symbolism fueled the notion of ethnic and identity-based differences between Brazil and Argentina, in opposition to Paraguay. Brazilians and Argentines, each in their own way, projected their victory as proof of a supposed racial, moral, and civilizational superiority. These conceptions are still in effect in both Brazil (Souchaud, 2011) and Argentina (Grimson, 2012).

⁸ For example, they provided the area with some of the most connected river and land transport infrastructure in the Southern Cone (Lynn, 2008).

⁹ When Argentina chose to reduce the presence of the state in the cities bordering Brazil.

of large military projects and, among them, the Itaipú hydroelectric dam, provided the framework for the creation of Brazilian public complexes on the triple frontier (Heller, 1988): road networks, airports, and public services (schools, universities, and the main public hospital in the region). These findings appear in the accounts of our interviewees, such as EMTP, a Brazilian state public official in Foz:

Foz was a city that, until the 1950s, 1960s, wasn't seen as having any value. It was tiny; it was a colony until 1900. It was predominantly Argentines and Paraguayans. Brazilians were always a minority. Then came Itaipú [the hydroelectric dam]. Then, things started to change; Brazilian geopolitics unifies and tries to influence Paraguay: a border geopolitics that constructs Itaipú (EMTP, Brazilian, 07/20/2019).

This entire complex of projects and services made the Brazilian state hegemony popular among the local inhabitants. This does not imply that these projects were free of violence and militaristic repression, elements that structured many of the lives of the workers employed by the hydroelectric dam (Sessi, 2015). But the social consciousness of Foz continues telling this story according to the perspective of the elites who benefited from the military period (Ribeiro, 2006, p. xvi; Sessi, 2015, p. 18). This was explained to us by DMMF, a Brazilian professional working at Unila: "because Foz really has this thing, this military vibe. It's difficult to break, there are a number of barriers there to be deconstructed" (DMMF, Brazilian, 07/20/2019).

While the hydroelectric dam was under construction (1975-1986), male labor was in high demand (Ribeiro, 2006; Sessi, 2015). According to I. (56 years old, taxi driver, former construction worker at Itaipú), whom we interviewed in Foz (07/29/2019), construction work occurred 24 hours a day, in three shifts, employing 40 000 workers. Foz had a total population of 20 000 people when construction began (Sessi, 2015). The salaries at Itaipú were quite high compared to the labor market in other Brazilian cities: this attracted a massive internal migration, from different Brazilian regions.¹⁰ During construction, workers had risk insurance coverage, food assistance, support for their children's schooling, vacation time, and health care. To provide the city with infrastructure for the company's employees, all of Foz was redeveloped, gaining avenues, gardens, and parks. On this, we highlight two aspects:

First: the Brazilian dictatorship's strategy for state deployment was substantively different from the Argentine and Paraguayan military models of the time. Neoliberal reforms to reduce the state were not institutionalized in Brazil: beginning in 1968, the dictatorship adopted a nationalizing perspective on the economy, promoting primary industrialization for international consumption, investing in infrastructure for ports, transportation, and general industry (Bellingieri, 2005). All these aspects were part of a plan for social and territorial control. Foz was one of the main enclaves where this military-statist policy was concentrated, only ceasing to be a national vector in the 1990s, with the neoliberal reforms that occurred under democracy (Sader, 1999; Sallum, 1999).

Second: in the conception of the city's inhabitants, this fueled a direct association between the military regime and an era in which Foz experienced a bonanza (in

¹⁰ In addition to I., who migrated from Minas Gerais to work in Itaipú, we also interviewed S., who migrated from the Brazilian northeast, and P., who migrated from the state of Goiás, in the country's central-west region.

terms of the economy, labor, and services), which ended with the completion of the hydroelectric dam construction project in 1986, the year that began the Brazilian democratic transition. Democratic rule thus marked a moment when the labor market in Foz was affected by the unemployment of approximately 40 000 workers, some of whom began small-scale smuggling through the Free Trade Zone in Ciudad del Este (which, by that time, was in its first decade of implementation). Mass unemployment in Foz would occur with or without the military—construction would be finished at some point—but the popular mindset juxtaposed democracy with unemployment and militarism with a bonanza. The economic cycles that followed in the city were never able to create a labor market for unskilled workers as extensive as the one that characterized the construction of the hydroelectric dam. Between 1986 and 2008, Foz became a national center of pilgrimage for people who spent the night on the Brazilian side in order to make purchases in Paraguay and, later, through small-scale smuggling, transported those products to different Brazilian regions. During this period, the city ultimately became part of the international drug trafficking circuit, an economy that violently restructured the entire local environment. Beginning in 2004, with the fall in the purchasing power of the Brazilian currency and the appreciation of the dollar in the international market, trade with Ciudad del Este collapsed, and Foz turned to tourism. This activity is heavily financed by smuggling and drug trafficking capital, as indicated by TVTW, an expert lawyer in money laundering crimes, who works between Foz and Ciudad del Este (TVTW, Brazilian, 08/01/2019).

The PT, which led the Brazilian federal government during the presidential terms of Lula da Silva (2002-2005; 2006-2011) and Dilma Rousseff (2011-2014; 2014-2015), had a clear vision of Foz's centrality to the national political project (Rhi-Sausi & Oddone, 2010). They conceived of the city and the triple frontier as axes uniting the South American regional exchanges, which constituted the main political agenda for Brazil's integration into the international economy during those years. They intended to turn the city into an epicenter of Mercosur (Alarcón, 2019, p. 33).

With this in mind, Lula presented Law 12,189 to the national congress (in December 2007), which proposed the creation of Unila in Foz (Alarcón, 2019, p. 32). The project was approved by the committees of the National Congress and the Senate and authorized by President Lula in January 2010 (Alarcón, 2019, p. 32). Its first group of 200 students began classes in August of that year. The proposal states that the university would be located on the premises of the Itaipú Industrial Park, which, considered a "national strategic zone,"¹¹ remained under the strict control of the Brazilian army, even following redemocratization. There were a number of unbuilt areas in Foz that could house a university project of this magnitude; it would be naive not to assume a political intentionality in this gesture from the president, who sought to resignify one of the symbols of Brazilian militarism and transform it into the heart of Brazil's Latin Americanist vocation. The construction of Unila signified the implementation of a plan that sought to reinstate ties with the neighboring countries (Ricobom, 2010), instigating intercultural integration and establishing the "Brazilian vocation" to coordinate the "union of Latin American peoples." The bylaws of the university declare that:

¹¹ The space where the Itaipú hydroelectric dam operates is considered a zone of high national security, as it produces 80% of the electrical power used by Brazilian industrial centers.

It is born from our people's urgent need to promote—through the strategic role of education and shared knowledge—a culture of peace, respect, solidarity, and cooperation, in order to build sustainable societies in the twenty-first century, founded upon Latin American identity in its cultural diversity and orientation towards development, with social justice and socioenvironmental sustainability (Alarcón, 2019, p. 32).

Expanding on these values, the bylaws proclaim that the foundational objective is “to combat all forms of intolerance and discrimination resulting from linguistic, social, cultural, national, ethnic, religious, gender, and sexual-orientation differences” (Unila, 2009, in Alarcón, 2019, p. 32). Unila was thus created as a bilingual institution (Portuguese/Spanish), proposing to have 50% international students and teachers from Latin American countries. These notions were conceived based on a pronouncement from the center of national power, which made little attempt to ask how the local community would receive those values. The proposal also lacked the practicality that is so necessary for developing this type of university project, as a professor at the institution told us:

Unila is a project that was conceived by very impractical people. So impractical that they put the campus inside of a military security zone full of barriers. Full of “No! You can't go that way!” A university that is open to the universe, but within a military security zone. [...] So, Unila quickly began to have serious crises, as the project confronted reality. And it was necessary to negotiate with reality, but without casting aside utopia: a university focused on integration. [...] But Unila was put in a place, in a city, where the university is stigmatized; where it is uncomfortable to say that you are a professor at Unila. If you add Argentine, woman, foreigner, they think you are a project by the PT, a mothership for the PT; that you exemplify the PT's idea of diplomatic relations [...]. So, they leave Unila in a city that hates it for other reasons. [...] The idea of integration never had good popular literacy, people were never aware of integration, neither in Argentina, nor in Uruguay, nor in Chile, nor in Colombia. Integration appears to simply be a business of customs, of certain productive chains. But at the popular level, nobody understands what Mercosur is, how it makes life easier for them (SLF, Argentine, 08/01/2019).

That phrase from SLF—“they leave the university in a city that hates it”—connects us with the militaristic imaginary of Foz and with the political events that caused a cataclysm in Brazil. Since 2013, the new cycle of downturn in the Brazilian economy—with the appreciation of the dollar in the domestic market—pushed Foz's commercial and tourism-based economy back into a recession. This cycle was due to international macroeconomic factors, which impacted almost all of the countries of the Southern Cone (Svampa, 2013). But in Brazil, the center-right—supported by the national hegemonic media—launched a campaign to discredit the leadership of the PT.

This campaign, which served as a justification for the coup that removed Rousseff in her second term, resulted in a strong association between the PT and the idea of a national curse, gradually legitimating the use of hate discourses—racist, xenophobic, classist, misogynist, and McCarthyist—as an expression of popular discontent (Pessoa do Amaral & Arias Neto, 2017, p. 59). In almost the whole of Brazil, these measures and

discourses ended up legitimizing the notion that the country had an insurmountable ideological rift: two narratives constructed between those who support the right and those who support the left (Ribeiro, 2018, p. 87):

We are in the midst of a crisis, which is a crisis of identity in Brazil. It is not just a political crisis. Brazil was fractured. Brazil was divided between people who care about other people and people who don't care about other people (DMMF, Brazilian, 07/20/2019).

These discourses articulated the public expression of the attack on minorities, to the point of validating the emergence of Bolsonaro—from the extreme right—as a candidate for president:

The hate discourse about minorities, social movements, and unions, the persecution of professors and academic freedom, the attack on progressive mindsets, the rejection of the public good, and the exacerbated exaltation of the market have been just some of the manifestations of this type of reactionary “ebb” (Casimiro, 2018, p. 43).

In Foz, this process was absorbed by a local mindset that continued to view the dictatorship as “the best time in the county’s history,” as told to us by J., one of our interviewees (Field Diary, Foz, 10/13/2018). The city thus experienced an increasingly strong sense of rejection towards any idea identifiable with the PT. Combining Latin Americanist rhetoric with the incentive for regional migration, and having the notion of the *Patria Grande* (the concept of a shared homeland encompassing all of Latin America) in its founding principles, Unila became a scapegoat:

So, you have a well-targeted criminalization, targeting Lulaism. And that's where you have the pro-Bolsonaro movement and all of that. Public higher education is now an enemy that has to be destroyed, as a final voice of resistance in Brazil (EMTP, Brazilian, 07/20/2019).

According to information provided by Rodrigo de Medeiros da Silva (Vice-Rector for International and Institutional Relations at Unila), the university currently has more than 5 000 students, many of whom come from other Brazilian regions. Only 25% of them are not Brazilian, well short of the goal of 50% foreign enrollment. The nationalities of those foreign students are diverse, but Colombian, Ecuadorian, Haitian, and Chilean students predominate. Similarly, Medeiros da Silva informed us that the institution offers more than 29 programs (between undergraduate and graduate) and that its professional body is made up of 374 professors (fewer than 30% are non-Brazilian) and 532 administrative technicians.

Unila

In the focus group we held at Unila on July 20, 2019, the accounts and discussions by the international migrant students and employees of the institution accord Unila a dual dimensionality: as a space of exception and a space of contradiction.

Space of Exception

The university is still currently structured according to the notion of Latin American integration. Students from different countries reexamined this educational proposal, evaluating its critical dimension:

So, in this aspect, the university has a large staff of teachers who teach us our history of Latin America: how it was formed, the situation that all Latin Americans experienced. Things that I didn't know about in my own country. Because education is focused on European thought and we don't have knowledge about ourselves as a Latin American people (JAMP, Colombian, 07/20/2019).

The wonderful thing about Foz is that it has Unila. Because it is thanks to Unila that people from all over Latin America and the Caribbean have come to Foz. [...] I've traveled to other places in Brazil and I haven't seen that. It's very difficult: people don't even know that they're from Latin America. Here in Foz, they know they're from Latin America (AHC, Venezuelan-Lebanese, 07/20/2019).

Compared to Paraguay, it's a totally different education. An education... It is a macro view of Latin American and Caribbean integration. Despite the fact that, within that, there is a diversity that is pushing the limit: there are investigations, perspectives, and you absorb all of that (RMVG, Paraguayan 07/20/2019).

I see that there is a lot of knowledge [at Unila]: people prepared to embrace personal projects and all the perspectives they have. And we have many local and foreign students. It is fertile territory for being able to open up the doors to our dreams, to our possibilities for development and the acquisition of new knowledge. It is important to acquire a broader vision of what our Latin America is. [...] But since I've been here, I've realized: I no longer feel, shall we say, solely Colombian. I now identify with all of Latin America's past [...]. It's a subject that is enriching me as a person and the entire perspective that I have about myself and the region (FJVD, Colombian, 07/20/2019).

The university thus constitutes a "space of exception"—the "fertile territory," as FJVD as calls it—organized around a notion of social and intercultural integration that is unusual in Brazil. This openness to diversity also includes sexual heterogeneity:

When I arrived here, I had an experience. My way of thinking was no longer the same. When I arrived from my country, everything was like that, as you might say... For example: I came here to the University Botanical Garden, and there were lesbians, gays, all of that. In Peru, you don't see that [...]. You go to Peru and, I don't know, a person who wants to be free isn't able to do so (MLPH, Peruvian, 07/20/2019).

This freedom of expression is particularly difficult for the population of Foz to handle: an environment where the rejection of migrants, of foreigners (fear of social heterogeneity), was assumed as a hegemonic political imperative:

There have always been idiotic politicians. There always will be. But the serious problem in Brazil is when the people are divided. And that's where even more prejudice, racism, xenophobia emerges. This separatism should not exist [...]. I really feel, sometimes, after all this time at Unila, that the people of Foz don't seem to know that Unila exists [laughter] (DMMF, Brazilian, 07/20/2019).

Here we begin to understand the meaning of what SLF said, when she explained that the university is embedded "in a city that hates it for other reasons." Unila gives the city this sense of Latin American belonging, which stirs fear in the local border mindset: the fear is so great that the city, as DMMF says, refuses to see it, to acknowledge its existence. For some, in addition to being connected to the militarism that so strongly altered the city, this rejection of diversity signifies the fear of contamination by the border. EMTP, a Brazilian who migrated to Foz to work at Unila, clarifies:

I don't know anyone from Foz. I've been here for five years and I don't have any friends from Foz. It isn't easy. They're more closed off. It's an inside culture. I have trouble adapting to the city. It's a conservative, moralistic, Christian, closed-minded city. [...] So, I think it's a feeling of being defensive, in a region where everything is passing through. Goods, people, drugs, weapons are passing through. Even organs are passing through. Good and bad things are passing across the border. So, I think the people in this territory are very closed off (EMTP, Brazilian, 07/20/2019).

His analysis indicates that the strong espousal of conservative values by Bolsonaro's political campaign in Foz is linked to the Brazilian population's enduring sensation of the instability of the border condition. NCA corroborates these statements:

I had a different view of Foz. Because Foz is a border city, it has a lot of immigrants, foreigners. I thought that the people were open, that there would be no racism. And the question of Unila: we're afraid to say that we're *unileros* because for the people of Foz, Unila... Because of our style... It's hard to make Brazilian friends (NCA, Haitian, 07/20/2019).

It would therefore not be a conservatism aimed solely at the foreigner. EMTP (who is Brazilian) was also unable to socialize with anyone who did not come from another country or city. This "fear" of "others" was catalyzed by the media and local politicians who, observing its potential as an element of public manipulation, began a media campaign to juxtapose Unila with elements that—in the local imaginary—represent danger:

So, they begin to report that this is a local university, linked to a Bolivarian, PT, leftist, marijuana-smoking government... As if the students at private universities don't smoke marijuana. As if they only smoke it at Unila. At the private universities [in Foz], there is no smoking, no parties, no sex, nothing. There are only parties here. The police, the media, newspapers, tabloids, whenever there is a problem, if it involves an *unilero*, they visit there and put it in the headlines. To weaken the university's image (EMTP, Brazilian, 07/20/2019).

The international migrant students agreed with these observations and testified to how surprising it was to arrive in Foz and realize that there was a growing smear

campaign against the university, as well as the fact that a border city was closed to diversity. According to different comments, the linguistic barrier resulting from Brazilians not learning Spanish or Guaraní—the languages of the neighboring countries—would be evidence of this fear of “contamination”:

Well, at the beginning, before I came to Unila, I said: “It’s a triple frontier. There are two Hispanic countries.” Foz is relatively small, compared to Ciudad del Este. Puerto Iguazú, which is the neighboring Argentine city, spoke Portuguese. I thought that the language wouldn’t be too complicated. But to my surprise, when I arrived, many people who even work in Paraguay didn’t know almost any Spanish. [...] It was really a culture shock. Astonishing! Because I come from the Caribbean. [...] It was a culture shock because Foz de Iguazú is a mixture of cultures (AHC, Venezuelan-Lebanese, 07/20/2019).

Unila would thus be an exception to this cultural “closed-mindedness.” Against the current of this linguistic barrier, the institution would encourage contact with local languages, such as Guaraní, which in general is rejected by the Brazilian population in Foz:

The bilingual university: Spanish and Portuguese. But there is also a Guaraní program. And different people are studying in the program and they greet you in Guaraní. People from Ecuador, Colombia, Argentina. In other words, those are the integrations that are being built, which—at the same time—make the university richer in terms of culture, language, thinking (RMVG, Paraguayan, 07/20/2019).

Space of Contradiction

When we asked about the difficulty of reconciling the Latin Americanist integrative ideals of the university and its implementation in Foz, the definition that emerged for this situation was that of a “contradiction,” a conflict between identities:

We thought that we were going to find an integrated place, and it turns out that we became part of a process of integration. Unila, like any institution, [...] is a process that emerges from disorder and chaos and from a nonidentification [...]. We make up the student body, and we are the ones who are going to shape the process of integration [...]. So, this process of integration requires a certain patience because it isn’t going to be a fleeting integration, it isn’t going to be an explosion of integration (FJVD, Colombian, 07/20/2019).

The Brazilian professors also felt that this definition was accurate: “Therefore, it really is this. Unila is this marvel that you are seeing. But it is also all this conflict, this contradiction. And interestingly enough, I am experiencing it too” (LMA, Brazilian, 07/20/2019). In other words, the university maintains a contradiction between its proposal, the political and identity-based sensibility of Foz, and Brazilian political outcomes (particularly since 2018). This contradiction permeates the everyday lives of the international students in two ways. First: through the xenophobic rejection experienced in urban public spaces and on social networks:

The contradiction that Unila is an *other* within this conservative system [in Foz and in Brazil]. During Bolsonaro's campaign, some of our colleagues experienced violence. I mean, they experience violence. There are bars, for example, in the center, which are known for being places where our colleagues [*unileros*] go. [...] Where it is common for our colleagues to go, and there they felt attacked. I even think two or three people were physically assaulted. There was also a post on the city's own Facebook page rejecting the foreigners from Unila (RMVG, Paraguayan, 07/20/2019).

Several reported, for example, that the owners of residential properties do not rent to *unileros*, due to the negative image they have of them. Most of the students sought precarious housing solutions for at least part of their stay in the city, until they could access a moderately decent rental. Many explained that, even in newspaper ads, the owners openly reject them. Second: these rejections, reproduced by the Brazilian students, permeate the university. The greatest barrier to integration would be, precisely, Brazilians:

But interacting with Brazilians...I don't have Brazilian friends. They say that we're in a school for integration. That may be, but I don't have Brazilian friends. I stay in my corner, and they stay in theirs. Everyone in their own little corner; everyone takes care of their own life, in their own little corner. And so on (CD, Haitian, 07/20/2019).

Interaction is slightly difficult. It was hardest for me to become friends with Brazilians. And even though sometimes, I don't know... In my program, for example, there are groups and it's very difficult to become part of these groups.

Well, in my case, mostly, I only have Spanish-speaking friends (MLPH, Peruvian, 07/20/2019).

There are groups that don't integrate with others. I do have some Brazilian friends. In that sense, they are very welcoming to me. But I do know that other groups have a harder time integrating with Brazilians (EJVD, Colombian, 07/20/2019).

It is always complicated with Brazilians. The language always separates Hispanics from Brazilians. I have a lot of Brazilian friends, and I speak Portuguese very well. Because I spend time with them, I learned from them. But if it hadn't been for that, my closest group of friends would have only been Hispanic (AHC, Venezuelan-Lebanese, 07/20/2019).

In these accounts, we observe that their presence as students at Unila exposes them to "intersectional" processes of social exclusion. With this expression, we mean that their nationality, gender, and the way they are racially labeled by the Brazilian population overlap in the local mindset, legitimizing their marginalization. This occurs, for example, in relation to the labor market:

So, during my first year, I tried to work any job possible. But that's part of racism itself. Well, not racism: it's called xenophobia. Because they only see that you're a foreigner and you don't speak the language well, and you need the money and they abuse you... For example, they tell you: "I'll pay you this much and you'll work this much." And since you have no other option: "Well, what are you going to do?" So, you worked (AHC, Venezuelan-Lebanese, 07/20/2019).

The perception of their migrant status allows the Brazilian employer to exploit the needs of the young person and hire them for more hours at a lower salary. The discourse of rejecting the "foreign other," coupled with the conditions of an environment that makes their urban experience precarious, ends up enabling their economic exploitation: "Well, they take advantage of foreigners [...]. Sometimes maliciously: they see there is no way out and so they take advantage" (MLPH, Peruvian, 07/20/2019). The informality of the border economy exacerbates this exploitation of migrants:

So, it's part of this informality here too. There were a number of times when he [her husband, a foreigner] refused to work because it was life-threatening. And I, too, as a professor at Unila, I know several students who had accidents [at work] and who became destitute (LKMA, Brazilian, 07/20/2019).

For most of the students, these forms of discrimination would be conditioned by the racist bias of the local mindset: "Brazil is very racist and so is Foz. Most of the population is. How can I say this? It's a generalization" (RMVG, Paraguayan, 07/20/2019). This racism crosses the borders of the campus and permeates university life, establishing itself in the students' relationships with their colleagues and professors: "Now, about racism: yes, I have seen it. In my case, I did experience... That... Discrimination. In addition, the teachers sometimes do it inadvertently" (MLPH, Peruvian, 07/20/2019). This, then, is one of the contradictory facets of the university:

Unila creates a stigma. But at the same time, it creates contradictions. Because within the university, the issue of racism, xenophobia, is also reproduced. Recently, some colleagues, I don't know which group specifically, did a campaign on the visibility of blackness. They took pictures [of black people] and put them up in the university hallways. And they were written on, they were torn down. In other words, within the university itself, there is a latent racism that is being fostered. Another case, an experience, that I saw [...]. I think there was a conference for Haitians and a poster for it was put up at the entrance to the college. And the poster was taken down and thrown away (RMVG, Paraguayan, 07/20/2019).

Among the students, those who reported the most radical experiences of racism and xenophobia were the black women. NCA and CD spoke clearly about their marginalization from university interactions:

Unila is integration, but there is no integration within Unila. There is no integration: there are only people from different countries within Unila [...]. Everyone has their own group. There is the group of Haitians, the group of Venezuelans, a group of Paraguayans, Brazilians. There is no integration. When I do schoolwork, if there is no other Haitian in the class, I have to do

it alone. I don't know. Perhaps [integration] is a beautiful word, but one that doesn't exist at Unila. [...]. There's a lot of racism too, and I can say, after so many years, I don't know if that's going to change [...]. Unila brings together; but Unila also divides (NCA, Haitian, 07/20/2019).

This marginalization—that no one wanted to be in a group with her, for example—is closely related to the nonacceptance of her body:

Sometimes it's annoying. They bother us. They say things that are rude. And, for me, the issue of my hair, too. When I leave my hair down, people are so frightened. It seems like there aren't any people like that here [...]. And when I'm walking down the street, sometimes I feel very foreign, because people look at me differently. I don't know if it's a question of my hair, my body. That we have a different physiognomy. People look at us more [...]. I feel slightly uncomfortable about it (NCA, Haitian, 07/20/2019).

The two students traveled from Haiti to Belo Horizonte, the capital of the state of Minas Gerais, in southeastern Brazil. There, they felt they received better treatment, were more integrated and experienced less racist discrimination:

I lived in Minas Gerais and, for me, there was no racism. I arrived in Foz: "Are you Brazilian? Where are you from? Are you African?" And I said: "No, I'm from Bahía" [Brazilian state with a black majority]. And: "Oh, you're from Bahia," and I said: "But aren't there black people here in Brazil?" And: "Yes, but I thought you were from somewhere else" (CD, Haitian, 07/20/2019).

According to reflections by their male colleagues, the mistreatment of the female foreign classmates would be shaped by the male, sexist mentality in Foz:

Paraguayan women are treated very poorly. They are treated the worst. Brazilian women are treated like a piece of meat. And, just imagine, a black woman here in Foz, also mistreated. In other words, they are seen as a sexual object. The machismo here in Foz and in Paraguay is intense, it's strong. [...]. Several of my female colleagues at Unila have said that here, when they were waiting for the bus, a man appeared, lowered his window, and shouted a lot of nonsense at them. Sexual, obviously. Because, we might say, she's a foreigner: it happens more to foreigners and to black women. Because they see them as a sexual object (AHC, Venezuelan-Lebanese, 07/20/2019).

Conclusion

The topics addressed here allow different interpretations to be made about the specific consequences of hate discourses in Brazil.

We would like to draw four conclusions from the third section, in which we examined the discourses of the current president. First, that xenophobia was converted into an official discourse, and it was articulated in statements that advocate for intolerance towards minorities and vulnerable sectors. Second, that these uses were juxtaposed with the "ideologies of security" that characterized the military dictatorships of the

Southern Cone between the 1960s and 1980s, and associated minorities with danger. The migrant population thus figures in these discourses as an entity that is detrimental to the national identity. Third, far from being anodyne, these uses construct mindsets and symbolisms that have a strategic political function for the government: they instrumentally legitimize conservative legal reform proposals. Fourth, these discourses illustrate the centrality of the national government's patrimonialist, patriarchal, and racist perspectives on immigration policies, showing us how these readings have been participating in neofascist agendas.

These four aspects are linked to an international historical process, which therefore cannot be limited to the Brazilian context. Over the last two decades, international migrations have often been used to constitute an image of "external enemies" or a "national invasion," bringing together nationalist sentiments that can be easily politically manipulated: an outcome that we have watched take on characteristics of cultural hegemony since 2016, beginning with the US presidential elections and the Brexit vote in England. In a very sensible text, published shortly before his death, Bauman (2016) affirmed that all these events must be read through a specific political lens: they should be situated within the framework of a profound crisis in the structure of the global neoliberal economy (increasingly unable to restore itself following its cyclical collapses) and the inability of democratic regimes to reconcile the structural principles of the rule of law with the intensification of the neoliberal model of accumulation. As Miroslav Hroch said two decades ago, the nationalist rejection of "the diverse others" is "a substitute for factors of integration in a disintegrating society. When society fails, the nation appears as the ultimate guarantee" (Hobsbawm, 1998, p. 183). It is in this sense that xenophobia and racism are taking on a new dimension, gaining more and more space in the mindset related to international migrants and migration. In this, too, Bauman (2016) was correct: the international media incessantly repeats that we are experiencing a "migration crisis," when in reality simply calling it that is part of the problem, as it engenders the production of hatred for minorities as an escape valve that relieves the prevailing tension, but at the price of reproducing and materializing it in a specific confrontation with and rejection of certain social groups. The "crisis" is the mode of production and its increasingly conflictive relationship with the forms of political institutionality that are minimally necessary for the existence of democratic regimes.

When we approach the specific context of Foz, we observe that these political notions find fertile territory in a city that has created—in its social representations and memories—an association between militarism and economic stability, public services, large construction projects, and "protection from border contamination." Foz is a border space whose rapid growth in the 1970s contributed to the development of a local mindset that fears diversity.

The accounts analyzed make it possible to explore the idea that the strong espousal of the conservative values of Bolsonaro's political campaign in Foz are linked to the local Brazilian population's enduring sense of instability about its border status. The severity of the things that cross this border—crimes as varied as the trafficking of drugs or human organs—expose "the locals" to a constant situation of fear. Fear would thus be the fuel that feeds the lack of openness to the unknown, represented here by foreigners, the border, or even Latin America. The "closed-mindedness" and conservatism of the local population—its tendency to espouse securitist discourses

that reintegrate the ideas of protecting a homogeneous community from external threats—would thus result from exposure to dangers that are difficult to bear in the different spheres of social life, on a daily basis.

However, as our interviewees also told us, it is a conservatism aimed not only at the foreign but also at the extralocal. This “fear” of “the others” has been catalyzed by the media and local politicians, who—observing its potential as an element of public manipulation—began a media campaign with the intention of juxtaposing Unila with elements of “fear” and “otherness.” In this context, Unila would be a space of exception, where we see a project for integrating diversity unfold, as well as a space of contradiction that—contrary to its proposal—reproduces xenophobic, racist, and homophobic discourses and practices. In other words, the university maintains a contradiction between its aims, the political and identity-based sensibility of Foz, and the political outcomes in the current Brazilian scenario.

All these contradictions and this violence are magnified for black, female, migrant students (as has become clear to us with the accounts of our Haitian interviewees from Unila). In general, the socioeconomic inclusion of women in the postglobalization world is based on the reordering of systems of exploitation and gender hierarchies at global scales (Mills, 2003). Women experience the intersectionality of elements of social marginalization, causing them to experience processes that concentrate social inequalities. They experience an overlap of exclusionary factors linked to their ethnicity, class, and age group (Crenshaw, 1991, p. 1244), as well as their national belonging (we would add to Crenshaw’s argument), which would exacerbate their marginalization, as they combine those characteristics with their gender subordination in internationally patriarchal, sexist, and androcentric contexts. This experience of the intersectionality of excluding factors, which is experienced by migrant women (on the triple frontier of Paraná and in different contexts), defines their spaces, rights, and potential for social inclusion. But it does so by combining two simultaneous border experiences: that of belonging to the “other gender” and that of challenging the (racial, identity-based) borders of the nation-state.

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