

Nodes of inclusion and exclusion

Media, Context and the Shaping of Contemporary Movements across de Atlantic.

(first draft)

Marta Vilar Rosales
ICS books

Abstract

The chapter examines the role of media in the contemporary global movements of people and things. Particularly, the chapter focus on the circulations between Portugal and Brazil, from 2011 to 2015, and on the media contents generated in Portugal about these two contexts as sites of departure and arrival, in order to explore the experiences and strategies of inclusion and exclusion of those on the move.

For the past eight years, and until recently, Portugal experienced significant emigration flows due to the economic crisis the country faced and its negative impacts on unemployment. Outgoing moments were, at the same time, paired by an aggressive political campaign aimed at attracting specific immigrant groups from all over the world, potentially interested in investing and living in the country. Media played a significant role in both processes, by strategically producing and displaying information, not only about the opportunities of inclusion abroad for those who were experiencing varied forms of exclusion in Portugal, but also on the attractiveness of the country for middle class families and businessman from all over the world. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork carried out in the last five years, this chapter explores the circulations between Portugal and Brazil, two contexts connected by long colonial and post-colonial migration experiences, and the processes of inclusion and exclusion these circulations entail. The chapter examines how and to what extent Portuguese and Brazilian migrants interacted with and made use of Media contents to feed imaginaries and expectations, design positioning strategies, experience belonging and manage exclusion and inclusion, while crossing the Atlantic. Print Media contents, published during the time frame of analysis, will be discussed, with a particular focus on three topics: Portugal as a hospitable and inclusive context to foreign middle classes; the attractiveness of diverse migration destinations to the Portuguese middle classes; and the particular social framework at play, which promoted the simultaneous exploration of pulling and pushing aspects in Portugal and Brazil, by the Portuguese Media.

This presentation is based on comparative ethnographic research carried out in four cities (Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo, Lisbon and OPorto). The research addressed the migration movements between the four cities from 2011 to 2015, and their intersections with the movements of things. All cities were addressed as both sites

of departure and destination, which contributed to challenge dominant assumptions concerning relationships of power and migration trends between South American and European countries in general, but also present-day post-colonial relationships between Portugal and Brazil, in particular.

The presentation will focus on a very specific dimension – the role of media general, and of social media in particular, in generating and disseminating information and knowledge produced by Portuguese and Brazilian media corporations (major newspapers and news agencies) and how this information and knowledge contributed to shape these cities as attractive destinations for the Portuguese and Brazilian middle classes.

Fieldwork included, on a first stage, 100 interviews with people who had migrated to and from one of these four cities and, on a second stage, participant observation carried out with 5 families in each **setting**.

Comentado [mv1]: Inserir quadro com caracterização dos sujeitos.

Most of the subjects participating on the first stage of research in Sao Paulo and Rio are skilled young professionals, half of them married and with young children. Most of them had been in Brazil before, as students and/or tourists and claimed knowing the country k. They describe their migration experiences as *a decision resulting from choice rather than need*. In fact they resist to be defined as migrants and prefer to use terms as *expat, foreigner or traveller* to define them selves. Migration is, in their view, *an enriching experience a significant stage in the transition to adulthood*. All of them draw a clear dividing line between them and the other Portuguese migrants who have arrived in Brazil *many years ago to escape poverty*, as well as between them and all other migrants arriving from other non-European or non-north American origins. This dominant position is further reinforced by a second one, which pictures migration *as a highly invested and planed adventure*. Movement is, however, also described as a preventive mechanism to escape downward mobility, precariousness and loss caused by the economic crisis the country is facing since the end of the last decade. This aspect introduces a conservative note in how migration is pictured and experienced

which is often translated in the sentence: *I have decided to migrate before something bad happened to me or to my family.*

The subjects coming from Brazil to Lisbon and Oporto who integrated the first stage of research are also mostly young skilled workers and post-grad students. In clear contrast with the first group, they openly claim to be *migrants* in Portugal, even though some of them explicitly stress that this is a *temporary condition since they are planning to apply for citizenship, or/and that they live in constant transit*, between Brazil and Portugal. Their trajectories are also highly invested, even in the case of the students who came to Europe to continue their post-graduate studies. All of them spent a good amount of time gathering information about Portugal, Lisbon and Oporto and they claim having good knowledge of the country, even if for most of them this is their first time here.

The fact that both groups declared to have carefully planned their move called the attention to the importance of media as a research tool to gather information about key aspects of everyday life abroad. Also, media proved to be the most significant field for evaluate the potential of each city to match personal aspirations and accomplish present and future goals.

Comentado [mv2]: Inserir gráfico com fontes de informação

All subjects stated that they have used a variety of media to gather information and do research on their prospective destinations before making a final decision, even if most of them have declared that the most reliable source of information to them and the one they used more intensely were family, friends and friends of friends.

From all the media (TV, printed media, radio and the internet, webpages, blogs, social media) available, the most used source of information was the internet, followed by printed media. However, when asked about which sites were consulted, the online versions of the most prominent newspapers and magazines stood out.

The information gathered covered a wide range of topics: health system and services, job-market, security, housing, schools and school systems, arts and culture, leisure activities and cost of living, amongst others.

The fact that the information was somehow produced and displayed by a traditional and reputable newspaper or magazine had, according to the subjects, if not the same value as the information gathered from friends and family, at least a sign of quality and consistency that most of the other sources did not offer.

This was the main reason that justified the analysis of the online versions of printed newspapers and magazines, which was not at first included in the research plan. However, its recurrent presence in the subjects discourses as a significant source of information about the four cities as migration destinations, i.e. working and living conditions, receptivity towards migration and migrants, opportunities and constraints, histories of success and misfortune, as well as international migration in general, led to it.

The sample included the online edition of a large collection of Portuguese and Brazilian newspapers, from which we have collected pieces that focused on international migration, with a special focus on Portugal and Brazil migratory trends in general, and the movements between the four cities in particular. The time frame was, for the Portuguese press, July 2013/September 2014 and for the Brazilian press, April 2013/September 2014. The team gathered a total of 307 pieces: 213 from Portuguese and 94 from Brazilian newspapers. The sample included free access and restricted access press, and is representative of the most renowned newspapers and magazines in both countries.

Most discussed aspects of international migration

Articles were collected according to their relevance to the project. The analysis was based on 14 pre-defined general topics, which emerged from the interviews with subjects and literature research.

Topics	Portuguese Media 213(n)	Brazilian Media 94 (n)
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	Migration total	Port./Brazil Brazil/Port. flows	Migration total	Port./Brazil Brazil/Port. flows
Flows	52 (24,4%)	9 (17,0%)	32 (16,6%)	4 (17,39%)
Illegality	22 (10,3%)	7 (13,2%)	18 (9,38%)	----
Historical relationships	6 (2,8%)	2 (3,8%)	8 (4,7%)	1 (4,34%)
Employment (general)	8 (3,8%)	----	10 (5,21%)	1 (4,34%)
precariousness	8 (3,8%)	3 (5,7%)	8 (4,17%)	----
entrepreneurship	8 (3,8%)	3 (5,7%)	3 (1,56%)	----
unskilled labour	9 (4,2%)	1 (1,9%)	2 (1,04%)	----
skilled labour	42 (19,7%)	9 (17,0%)	13 (6,67%)	3 (13,04%)
remuneration	4 (1,9%)	2 (3,8%)	----	----
Crime	36 (16,9%)	13 (24,5%)	4 (2,08%)	2 (8,69%)
Integration	17 (8,0%)	1 (1,9%)	3 (1,56%)	2 (8,69%)
Return migration	7 (3,3%)	1 (1,9%)	1 (0,52%)	----
Economy (general)	7 (3,3%)	3 (5,7%)	----	----
crisis	24 (11,3%)	4 (7,5%)	11 (5,73%)	1 (4,34%)
social mobility	1 (0,5%)	1 (1,9%)	2 (1,04%)	----
remittances	8 (3,8%)	4 (7,5%)	5 (2,6%)	----
sectors/exports	1 (0,5%)	1 (1,9%)	----	----
public/private agreements	7 (3,3%)	3 (5,7%)	5 (2,6%)	2 (8,69%)
Cultural costs	1 (0,5%)	1 (1,9%)	4 (2,08)	1 (4,34%)
Cultural references	7 (3,3%)	3 (5,7%)	11 (5,73%)	4 (17,39%)
Migration policies	15 (7,0%)	3 (5,7%)	9 (4,69%)	----
attraction	26 (12,2%)	8 (15,1%)	6 (3,13%)	2 (8,69%)
containment	13 (6,1%)	----	1 (0,52%)	----
support	----	----	18 (9,38%)	----
Demography	24 (11,3%)	2 (3,8%)	9 (4,69%)	----
Xenophobia/discrimination			3 (1,56%)	----

Brazil

The most visible topic in the Brazilian press emerging from the sample is not the Atlantic Crossing flow, but Haitian migration to Brazil by land. The flows between Portugal and Brazil were however the second most significant theme (15).

The texts were varied and dealt with a great variety of topics, ranging from the maintenance of Portuguese cultural traditions in migrant communities (especially in Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro); the positive integration of Portuguese workers

in the skilled labor market and as entrepreneurs; the Portuguese economic crisis and immigrant attraction policies developed by the Portuguese government such as the "golden visa" program and the opening of vacancies for Brazilian students in Portuguese Universities. It is interesting to note that there were 5 articles devoted exclusively to the Portuguese economic crisis and its impact on Portuguese emigration rates. Brazilian immigration policy is also a significant topic. These contents particularly emphasize the new temporary and work visas programs, the policies for attracting foreign health professionals, and the excessive bureaucracy of the Brazilian law system concerning migration. The movements out of Brazil do not get the same attention. Some articles address the pros and cons of life abroad from a Brazilian point of view and others underline the strong movements of return migration of Brazilian out of Portugal as a consequence of the economic crisis. The existence of a dominant international representation of Brazil as an exotic and exciting destination and place to live also calls the attention of the Brazilian press.

Portugal

In the Portuguese press, there is a strong presence of articles addressing the high emigration rates in Portugal as a consequence of the crisis. The topic is often associated with others, such as the demographic implications of migration, the impacts of migration on skilled labor and national migration policies. There are also numerous references to the young age of present day migrants, which stresses the economic and demographic risks this new trend inflicts to the future of the country. The great majority of the articles are, however, dedicated to the emigration of skilled Portuguese and their lives abroad. And there are five articles, which directly address the Brazilian policies to attract foreign doctors and engineers (with a special focus on the Portuguese).

The crisis and its impacts on migration is also a highly addressed topic. Most articles stress this relationship enunciating migration as a solution for the economic insecurity, unemployment and lack of opportunities directly resulting from the financial crisis.

Regarding the movements across the Atlantic from Brazil to Portugal, it is noted a strong prevailing presence of articles which continue to address topics such as illegal labor immigration, drug trafficking and prostitution. The “golden visa” policy in Portugal also held the attention of the Portuguese press, which tends to criticize the policy for the pressure it imposes on the market and its negative economic impacts on the Portuguese population.

The analysis took into account the data concerning the number of times these articles were assessed, viewed and/or shared. This exercise was limited by the fact that some of the webpages did not allowed access to this data, while others provided us a large amount of information views, forwards, prints, comments and shares in social media. Many articles both in the Portuguese and Brazilian press had significant number of views, were shared on Facebook and Twitter and were intensively debated for more than a week.

Critical analysis and some tentative conclusions

The contents displayed by Portuguese and Brazilian media in their online versions are representative of the different positions the two countries experienced at the time. Brazilian economy was, at the time, booming and the country gained great visibility due to the organization of the World Cup and the Olympics. On the other hand, Portugal, which was strongly affected by the financial crisis, was dealing with the consequences of a rigid austerity policy and facing very high rates of unemployment and emigration. Even if unskilled workers were the most representative group exiting the country, and even if most of them headed to European countries such as the UK and Germany, the Portuguese Media strongly reported migration as highly skilled, young and heading to Europe, but also to post-colonial destinations such as Brazil and Angola.

A fine example of the visibility of this main representation are the *Portuguese at the heart of the Euro*, which portrays the personal stories of young Portuguese who work at the European Central Bank and live trendy lives in central Europe, and the multimedia series *Indubitably Portuguese*, produced by *Público*, which describes

the lives and migration experiences of young artists and highly skilled workers on online videos. Migration experiences are depicted as successful and the people involved as educated and qualified people who actively engage in community and political activities in order to defend their best interests.

Migration is addressed in Brazilian websites in two contrasting modalities. When focusing on Brazilian emigrants, the contents tend to stress both the advantages (such as security, higher wages) and disadvantages of migration (distance from family, lack of integration or precarious jobs). In any case, immigrants or prospective emigrants give their testimonies and are photographed. Brazil is almost always portrayed as a welcoming country, which accepts and fully integrates migrants in general, and Portuguese migrants in particular due to the historical and cultural bonds between the two countries.

To conclude, media had got a significant impact in both groups' migration experiences. This impact is particularly manifest at the level of migration planning. Media is a powerful information tool and was intensely used to gather a great diversity of data about the future destination, which was considered key to a successful integration. Its importance was only surpassed by information and knowledge provided by friends and family with previous migration experiences. The information gathered played another significant role: it provided the subjects an overall representation of how to present and evaluate their own ongoing migration experiences, based on the stories of other migrants with similar backgrounds and experiences. Both groups were highly pro active in gathering data in order to inform and justify their options. However, the sources explored were rather conservative. Both groups show a clear preference for mainstream newspapers and magazines. This choice is justified with arguments that stress the objectivity and quality of the information displayed, which in their view highly compensated for some lack of diversity and representativeness on how movement and those on the move were portrayed and their experiences problematized during this period of analysis.