The achievements and challenges of an unprecedented project for South-South migration



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Periferias 9, *Justice and rights in South-South migration* is launched following the MIDEQ Hub International Symposium in the city of Rio de Janeiro, held in September 2023. Migration between countries in the Global South — a term which brings together countries mostly in non-hegemonic positions in the world economic and politics system — is one of the most present and, paradoxically, most unseen, phenomenon of today. In effect, migration narratives are still dominated by the representations, interests, and logic of the Global North.

Within this context, holding an event of this scale in Rio de Janeiro carries two distinctive aspects with a strong symbolic and material weight: the first is the fact that UNIperiferias is hosting the MIDEQ Symposium — a think tank arising in the favela, and founded by peripheral intellectuals and activists. The second major aspect that marks the event is that it effectively contributes to strengthening an innovative and powerful network of researchers and activists from various peripheral countries. This network is dedicated to the construction of new epistemological, ethical, and political references, to address the migratory issue, which surpasses colonial, Eurocentric, and hegemonic logic. Since we believe it is the only way we will achieve the central objective that underpins our journey: effectively improving migrant communities' living conditions and expanding the possibilities of building a full humanity by overcoming the various forms of violence which are still present, dissolving national barriers, and celebrating new forms of living.

The conclusions, learning, and new questioning from the MIDEQ team in Brazil are plural, with productions that require different languages to be shared, with the urgency of further communication. In addition to this edition is publication of the book *Acesso à justiça: reafirmando direitos para as populações haitianas no Brasil* [Access to justice: reaffirming rights for Haitian populations in Brazil] — organised by Heloisa Melino and Ismane Desrosiers —, the documentary *Chache Lavi* — directed by Clementino Junior — and the animation *Unstoppable beat* — produced in partnership with Positive Negatives.

We must recognise that the Haitians' experience of migrating to Brazil is full of crossings and challenges. This is a common thread for Global South migrants, whether in the sphere of South-North or South-South displacement. These flows bring to light a series of complex questions which come into conflict: challenges (and opportunities) from a growing diversity of identities, ethnicities, nationalities, religions, and languages; various intolerances; racism and xenophobia; questions related to migrants' cultural and economic integration in the destination country; representations of migrant subjects and their countries of origin; and forms of compensating the country of origin for the loss of their population with a higher degree of educational and professional qualifications, among others.

The mass arrival of Haitians at Brazilian borders was not only a surprise, unprecedented flow but, above all, an opportunity for the country to reflect on the racism — institutional and every day — within its society and its migratory governance. It questioned which principles guide the country's project — either separation and criminalisation or welcoming, integration, and the guarantee of rights. There are many distinct resources which allow a migrant to feel at home, receive a warm welcome, and have access to the conditions necessary for a dignified life. Understanding these factors was one of our inquiries throughout the Access to Justice research.

As a starting point for the edition, Heaven Crawley, director of the MIDEQ Hub and United Nations University Centre for Policy Research, puts forward that the understanding and practice of justice and rights should not be restricted to the migration phenomenon, but rather integrated into larger systems.

In an interview, Pia Oberoi, Senior Advisor on Migration and Human Rights for the Asia Pacific Region for the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), reflects

on the cultural, ethnic, political, religious, and economic complexities present in migratory flows in Asia, and analyses the various ways human rights-related migration governance are accepted.

Paulo Abrão is currently the executive director of the Washington Brazil Office, and was national Secretary of Justice of Brazil between 2011 and 2014, when he chaired the National Refugee Council. In an interview from behind the scenes, Paulo shares the country's migratory governance, and the effects and consequences of Haitian migration on reformulating Brazil's migration policy.

From a legal perspective and institutional migration governance perspective, Caroline Nalule and Heaven Crawley reinforce the need for three dimensions of justice: redistribution, recognition, and representation in their essay "Rethinking access to justice for migrants in the Global South."

The Ghanaian, Gameli Tordzro, writes in an essay that music and songs, movement and dance, fabric and garments are elements through which we can explore the creativity within languages to communicate new artistic perspectives of MIDEQ's work on Access to Justice.

Zukiswa Wanner — a Zambian writer based in Nairobi — is the founder of the Afrolit Sans Frontieres Festival, and was guest editor in *Periferias 6* and *8* "Race, racism, territory and institutions (2021)" and "litafrika: artistic encounters (2023)". A central person in Periferias' connection with African literature, Zukiswa takes part in *Periferias 9,* with a section from her book *Men of the South* (Kwella books, 2010). In the book she addresses the Black masculinity of three African men from three completely distinct worlds. Mfundo is a musician and father; Mzi is a gay, married man, and Tinyae, the focus of this excerpt, is Zimbabwean in South Africa. We are publishing a section on Tinyae.

Frankétienne is one of the main Haitian intellectuals, principally recognised for his written work in Haitian Creole. He is a writer, poet, playwright, painter, musician, and activist in Haiti. In the published section, *Pyram's Monologue*, a play known nationally in Haiti, Frankétienne explores homesickness and Haitian belonging among the diaspora.

Afro-Colombian poet Rosa Chamorro delves into the intra-regional migration of Colombian migrants in Chile, who migrate for work in the copper mines in the north of Chile. She enters into dialogue with the poetry of Tawona Ganyamatopè Sitholè, a Namibian educator and poet, who explores the ancestral meanings of migration through nature.

Jailson de Souza e Silva and Richemond Dacilien, Uniperiferias researchers, recall the history of Haiti and call into question a radical, but logical and inherently just proposition that the Haitian Revolution — not the French Revolution — was the Republican milestone for the Global South. The Haiti-Brazil migratory corridor connects the first country to abolish slavery in the Americas with the last. At the time of the Haitian Revolution, the Brazilian elite feared that the revolution would cross borders, and the Haitian struggle for freedom would inspire the enslaved persons in Brazil.

Grassroots photography, above all from the perspective of Imagens do Povo — an Observatório de Favelas project in Rio de Janeiro — is a creative brand of Periferias magazine, mainly from Bira Carvalho's (1970 — 2021) participation as its photography editor, whose memory we celebrate. The path opened by Bira in 2018 was resumed in 2022, in a special, printed edition of *Crossroads of the Future*, and is now continued in this edition, with the photographic essays "One swallow doesn't a summer make, but two…," by Pablo Vergara, and "Angolan makamba in Maré", with photographs by Patrick Marinho and text by Rodolfo Teixeira Alves.

The Academia Pérolas Negras (APN, Black Pearl Academy) was established in the city of Rio de Janeiro as a professional football team formed by migrants and Haitians in particular. A long-term project, the organisation Viva Rio created APN in Porto Prince in 2009. Fourteen years later, the results are clear and professional football has become more accessible to migrants.

Haitian migration already meant Haitians to be the largest migrant community in Brazil. Currently, the largest migration flow in the country comes from Venezuela. Pia Riggirozzi, Natalia Cintra, Tallulah Lines and Bruna Curcio share, in "The visual is political", their field work — which became a photobook — in the northern capital Manaus with Venezuelan women and girls. To centralize the voices of displaced women in relation to challenges of

care and health, alongside combating violence, is a first and fundamental step to effectively formulate and improve public policies for migrant women in Brazil.

One of the most serious consequences of inequality produced by capitalism can be witnessed in the Darién Gap. Crossing the Colombian and Panamanian Darién jungle has become the only possible route for a significant number of South American migrants who seek to migrate to the Global North, as well as others. Although South-North migration does not constitute the focus of this current publication, the migrants and actors involved in the Darién are all from the Global South. Moreover, strategies to guarantee basic rights for people who are considering this crossing should come from the governments of Colombia, Panama, and other South American countries. Colombian activist and researcher, Yolanda Chois Rivera, shares her experience with the tragic story of five Ghanaians who selected this crossing in 2017.

The difficulty in obtaining documentation represents a major obstacle for accessing rights for Ethiopian migrants in South Africa, especially children, as Mackenzie Seaman and Henrietta Nyamnjoh share in "More expectations, less rights". Difficult housing conditions for Nepalese migrants are contrasted with them practising the right to leisure on Muslim religious holidays, such as *Eid* in Kuala Lumpur, as told in Seng-Guang and Sheril A. Bustamante's narratives.

In the Jordan Valley, *Kafala* is a system for sponsoring migrant workers in rural contexts. Ayman Halasa, Rawan Rbihat, and Hala Abu Taleb report how this system represents an enormous obstacle for the Egyptian community in Jordan to access basic rights.

Periferias 9 brings together a multifaceted and diverse collection of perspectives from across the Global South on access to rights and justice within migration landscapes. Uniperiferias would like to thank the MIDEQ Hub and its partner organisations for the shared journey: Fundação Tide Setubal, Unicef 1Mio, Fundação Heinrich Böll, and Instituto Unibanco. May the experiences, reflections, and proposals presented here contribute to ongoing movements, so that we consider the migratory process in all its potency, wealth, and beauty.