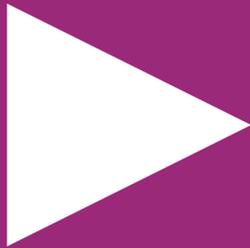


Maria Manuel Baptista
Rui Alexandre Grácio
Renata Castelo Branco Araujo
Thaís Azevedo
Francisco Welligton Barbosa Jr
(Org.)

Sexualities and Leisure





Maria Manuel Baptista
Rui Alexandre Grácio
Renata Castelo Branco Araujo
Tháís Azevedo
Francisco Welligton Barbosa Jr
(Ed.)

Sexualities and Leisure

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Editors

Maria Manuel Baptista
Rui Alexandre Grácio
Renata Castelo Branco Araujo
Thaís Azevedo
Francisco Wellington Barbosa Jr

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Travessa da Vila União, 16, 7.º dto 3030-217 COIMBRA

Telef.: 239 084 370

e-mail: editor@ruigracio.com

Site: www.ruigracio.com

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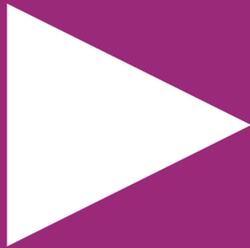
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PRESENTATION: SEXUALITIES AND LEISURE

As with previous initiatives, the VIII CIEC (Congresso Internacional em Estudos Culturais) has as its fundamental objectives the deepening of research in the area of Cultural Studies, promoting debate, the confrontation of perspectives and the exchange of ideas.

This is, among others, an initiative that has contributed not only to consolidate and internationalize the Doctoral Program in Cultural Studies, offered by the Department of Languages and Cultures of the University of Aveiro, but also to the construction of important networks of research chaired by Professor Maria Manuel Baptista — the RIEC (International Network in Cultural Studies) and the RNEC (National Network in Cultural Studies). Two other initiatives should also be highlighted: the edition of the *Género e Performance: Textos Essenciais* collection (accessible at <https://gece.estudosculturais.com>), a scientific and editorial project, with more than 1350 pages, resulting from the translation, for Portuguese, of 51 theoretical texts, without previous translation into Portuguese, originally written in different languages: English, Italian, French and German; the creation of the Virgínia Quaresma Prize (International Prize in Cultural Studies) to distinguish the best thesis in Cultural Studies. In addition to the support of the International Network in Cultural Studies (RIEC) and the National Network in Cultural Studies (RNEC), it has funding from the Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT) and it is sponsored by the Regional Directorate for Culture of the Center (DRCC) from Portugal.

It is, therefore, in the context of an intense promotion and development of Cultural Studies that this VIII CIEC is held.

Cultural Studies is a discipline which unfortunately still has not received the recognition from institutional evaluators that it deserves. This CIEC will try to right that wrong and we welcome you all to the forum.

In this edition of the congress we aim cross the lines of research of GECE (Grupo sobre Género e Performance) and NECO (Núcleo de Estudos em Cultura e Ócio), and to that end we propose the following theme: “Sexualities



and Leisure”. There is still a long way to go in the investigation of the articulation between these two topics, and it deserves further attention.

Indeed, academic research on the relationship between sexuality and leisure has its obstacles and both deserve to be highlighted: on the one hand, the biased way in which these research projects are seen by leisure scholars within the framework of academic moral orthodoxy; on the other hand, the methodological difficulties that arise in this context, starting with the data collection process, passing through its analysis and interpretation and culminating in the diversity and multidimensionality of situations in which sexuality and leisure intersect.

Seeking to find epistemological ways to deal with these obstacles in order to produce socially relevant and scientifically sound research is one of the aspects that is at the heart of this Congress on Sexualities and Leisure.

But the choice of this theme also aims to question the society in which we live and understand its metamorphoses in terms of cultural practices, values and mentalities.

Indeed, in contemporary capitalist society — increasingly hedonistic and individualistic, in which the body and image are valued, as well as the omnipresence of the internet, mobile devices and communication technologies that increasingly facilitate consumption — the articulation between sexuality and leisure assumes an increasing social and cultural relevance. In a society that generally assimilates social logic to the logic of the market — making idle the Kantian maxim according to which things have a price, people still have dignity — it is not difficult to see that condemnations and censures that hovered over certain practices considered deviant have come to be to transform and attenuate, being gradually faced in a more pragmatic and instrumental way.

On the other hand, the evolution towards the equal participation of women in society and the assumption of reciprocity between men and women as people who seek their own pleasure and leisure, led to the reconfiguration of sexual practices and their symbolic dimension.

It should also be added that, in the context of valuing the body and the preponderance of its importance in the configuration of identities — in a con-

text of a liquid mentality, averse to definitional fixity and open to experiences, to multiplicities and to the different - the way you display your own body is often associated with processes of emancipation and liberation from normative devices of power and veiled forms of domination and repression.

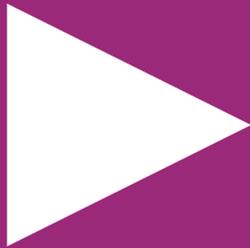
Finally, the practices in which sexuality and leisure are articulated are not without impact on sociability spaces, on group dynamics and on the configuration and reconfiguration of community networks.

Broad and polyhedral, Sexualities and Leisure is the theme proposed for the VIII International Congress on Cultural Studies. With it, we invite researchers to reflect on the proposed connection, to present their studies (whether they have a more empirical or more theoretical character) and to share their reflections in order to deepen an articulation still little versed in the field of Studies cultural. In this sense, some thematic axes were suggested for work proposals:

- Sexuality and leisure: a problematic nexus?
- Sex as/in leisure: which epistemologies?
- Taboos, inhibitions and transgressions in leisure-time sexual practices
- Forms of sexuality in periods of leisure and tourism
- Recreation and personal satisfaction in late modernity
- Sex, leisure and power relations
- The issue of identity and positionality in sexual practices in the context of leisure
- Sexuality as an intersectional set of social relationships
- The sex and leisure industries and the omnipresence of pornography, easily accessible by children
- The city and sex: leisure spaces and their communities
- Recreational sex in the digital world
- Other aspects related to the general theme.

The Organizing Committee

Maria Manuel Baptista
Rui Alexandre Grácio



EROTICISM AND SEXUALITY: PLACES AND TIMES OF LEISURE¹

| Catarina Nadais²

Summary

Erotic and sexual leisure practices are the central theme of this communication. The study of different historical moments leads us to consider the importance that these practices have for understanding the structure and what they reveal to us about social organization. In addition to being part of human experience, they suffer political and cultural influence, as well as impact on forms of occupation and exploration of spaces and times of consumption. Leisure has been asserting its central place in contemporary society, characterized by speed, instantaneity and risk, also associating the notions of norm and deviation, where erotic and sexual leisure practices are framed.

Keywords

Erotic and Sexual Leisure; Leisure; Eroticism; Sexuality; Consumption.

What we understand today as sexuality has always marked, defined and guided the way of life of different societies throughout history. The practices took different forms and expressions over time, registering expansions and contractions in different geographical spaces, in public and private domains, adjusting to the modes of social organization, cultures and beliefs, making this a topic so rich and complex.

Understanding sexuality is a way of getting to know individuals and their contexts, given the plasticity it assumes in relation to political, economic, social, religious and cultural influences (Nadais, 2018). At the same time, eroticism is responsible for the construction of stimulating images and a whole symbolic imagery that perpetuates and diversifies these practices.

The individual as circumstance of his body (Ortega y Gasset, 1963), the space and the notion we have of it depend on our bodily sensation, perspective

¹ Presented at VIII Congresso Internacional em Estudos Culturais: Sexualidades e Lazer.

² PhD Tourism, Leisure and Culture, Universidade de Coimbra. E-mail: catnadais@hotmail.com.

and our positioning in relation to something. Thus, the first way to get in touch with knowledge is through the body, through the sensation from which, later, the thought is organized.

We experience leisure time as time capsules of permissiveness, freedom and consented deviation from productivity, after fulfilling obligations (Nadais & Santos, 2012). For this reason, leisure time has assumed its preponderance and central place in the organization of social times. Leisure time is the time we dedicate to activities, to which we give ourselves of our own free will (Dumazedier, 1967).

There are many studies that show the transformations of society's values, which have been registered since the end of the modern period. From the new lifestyles (Featherstone, 2000) to which new consumptions contributed (Veblen, 1974; Dubois, 1993; Lipovetsky, 2006) and their importance (Baudrillard, 2011), which reinforced the prominence of leisure (Dumazedier, 1967), spectacle (Débord, 1991) and entertainment (Langman, 1992). Society has been increasingly marked by speed, the era of the instantaneous and the ephemeral (Baudelaire, 1964), of disorder and defragmentation (Rojek, 1995), which drastically accentuates individuality (Laermans, 1994; Bourdieu, 2007), which is increasingly experimented with in unpredictability, simulation (Bennet, 2008) and risk (Lash, 1984).

All this context reminds us of the words of Rubin (1984) that, almost four decades later, find a new moment of application:

It is precisely in times like these, when we live with the possibility of unthinkable destruction, that people are dangerously predisposed to being crazy about their sexuality. (Rubin, 1984, p. 143)

Sexual practices have been represented since the earliest records. Possibly the representations in paintings or figures of Venus of Willendorf dating from prehistory are the oldest we have access to. Mythology inspired and justified the presence of eroticism and sexuality in Egyptian culture, both in everyday objects, in art, in tombs, but also in parties and beauty care (Araújo, 2012). In Ancient Greece, pleasures were questioned, studied, the subject of medical concern, but also moral, where the body was a Greek work of projection and realization of the aesthetic model of the body, in gymnasiums as a space for physical worship, but also for the intellect, by debates they promoted (Foucault, 1984). On the other hand, the decline of the Athenian empire in the

6th century BC. C. led Solon, statesman and legislator, to create state brothels as a form of tax contribution in favor of the empire (Ullmann, 2007).

In Rome, social relations were based on love, making them stand out from the rest (Foucault, 1984a). From the moment the marriage gains this new orientation, it is no longer about economic interest and an adjustment is made to the statutes, attitudes and behaviors that could best serve this new condition. The hot springs and public spaces were the stage for practices that contributed to a healthy mind in a healthy body, even though they remained spaces for diverse pleasures, nudity and encounters. The Bacchae festivals, fertility cults such as the Matronalia, Bona Dea and the Nona Caprinas were religious manifestations with a strong erotic charge (Resende, 2009).

The ideological changes of the 6th century and the affirmation of Christianity profoundly shaped behaviors, becoming oriented towards chastity, monogamy and fidelity, encouraging the abandonment of carnal pleasures, associated with decadence and disorganized societies (Garton, 2009). Despite this deprivation order, clandestine practices were reinforced.

In the 18th century, sexuality was the subject of rational and scientific concern, of dichotomous distinction between men and women, and the discussion of the third gender, strongly persecuted and stigmatized (Garton, 2009). The Victorian period makes diversion an even more exacerbated practice, where prostitution multiplied, in cafes, baths, molly houses, when the control of venereal diseases was the main concern.

The period of imperial conquest gives space to the affirmation of race through force and violence, and a consequent appreciation of the sensual exotic as a new symbolic imagery. In the 19th and 20th centuries, the hedonistic lifestyle was associated with a new modern lifestyle, creating an environment for the hippie, underground and yuppie culture, which was guided by the ideal of free love, where sex was a form of its expression (Hagg, 1999).

The growing effect of globalization, the deregulation of capitalist economies, together with different socio-political events, led to the progressive discrediting of Enlightenment ideals and a crisis of the values of modernity (Lyotard, 2009). The postmodern era begins in the late 1950s, when the ideas of industrialized society begin to be questioned and translate into changes in group consciousness and the individuation process begins (Beck, 2000; Laermans, 1994).

This new sociocultural condition is also known as hypermodernity (Lipovetsky, 2004), liquid society (Bauman, 2006), or the era of emptiness (Li-

povetsky, 2014). In this context, personal experiences become more fluid and arbitrary, which materialize in thematic leisure spaces, which are so often nothing more than temporary realities, the stage for experiences in simulated contexts (Bennet, 2005).

The times, spaces and leisure practices become engines for the search for pleasure, for individual choice that causes a feeling of freedom, but also of compensation and a right after the mess. Pleasure becomes a guiding premise and an instrument for measuring satisfaction and happiness levels, used as an appeal and bonus in the promotion and dissemination of services and products.

In this way, the body also became an object of consumption, at the same time consumer and consumed by products, and guided by the hedonistic and erotic appeals of society (Nadaiis, 2018). Consumption has become a vehicle for self-satisfaction, in search of ideals, models and fashions that change over time.

In recent decades, sexuality has gained space for discussion in the public sphere, with changes in its approaches, to which Scoats, Joseph & Anderson (2017) associate a constant search for something new for sexual experiences and for the pluralism of practices. But it is not just about physical spaces: virtual space and telephone, internet, television and cinema services are available to the general population. The individualization of practices takes place at home, in a secret, confidential and comfortable way.

The spaces of these activities refer us to Foucault's concept of heterotopia (1967), which have characteristics that translate into the materialization of utopias that, despite being real, occupy a marginal place. Cohen & Taylor (1992) identify enclave, landscaping and mindscaping activities, while Stebbins (2008) distinguishes casual leisure from serious leisure. These are the time-spaces of alternation (Michel, 2009) or Green's Erotic Worlds (2008).

There are countless practices and consumption of erotic and sexual leisure (Nadaiis, 2018) that, with the exception of remote and online practices, always find similarities with those practiced in different societies and historical periods. What, at first glance, could seem to us to be the result of modern times, if we revisit history, we will see that many are recoveries and reinventions of activities from the past.

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THE FEMALE BODY, SEXUALITY AND LEISURE: AN ANALYSIS OF POSTERS FROM PORTUGUESE TEATRO DE REVISTA DURING THE ESTADO NOVO PERIOD¹

Helena Gonçalves Ferreira²

Maria Manuel Baptista³

Abstract

This investigation focuses both on the posters of the Portuguese Teatro de Revista⁴ plays presented in Parque Mayer during the Estado Novo⁵ regime and on the regime's definition of the concept "woman". We seek answers to the following questions: what representations and discourses concerning the feminine are communicated through this visual medium? Do these representations establish connection between sexuality and these leisure shows? What kind of connection? In order to obtain answers, we first approach the situation of women actors that worked on the Portuguese Teatro de Revista during the Estado Novo. Based on systematic research we explain their dynamics in the national context. The corpus that our empirical study is based upon consists of 25 images of posters from Teatro de Revista plays performed at Parque Mayer between 1957 and 1973. After a detailed analysis of this documentation, it is possible to understand how females were represented by the Portuguese Teatro de Revista for over 16 years. The visual representations used in the posters of this theatrical genre indicate that women were exploited as sexual objects and that there was an effort to associate sexuality with these leisure shows. We choose to approach the corpus using the semiotic analysis of media content, which allows, on the one hand, to deepen the reading of the images of the Portuguese Teatro de Revista posters and, on the other hand, to enrich it, trying to expose contents, forces and flows that allow a better understanding of the images and messages that underlie it.

Keywords

Portuguese Teatro de Revista; Visual Communication; Sexuality; Leisure Shows; Women; Sex Object.

¹ Paper presented during the VIII International Conference on Cultural Studies: Sexualities and Leisure.

² PhD candidate in Cultural Studies, University of Aveiro. E-mail: hcarla@ua.pt.

³ Professor of the Doctoral Program in Cultural Studies, University of Aveiro. Email: mbaptista@ua.pt.

⁴ The Portuguese variant of the revue, a theater genre that originates from vaudeville and holds some similarities to it – Trans. Note.

⁵ The period of dictatorship in Portugal that ruled the country for 41 years, from 1933 to 1974 – Trans. Note.

1. Introduction

An essential characteristic of the Portuguese Teatro de Revista is the social and political criticism that is implicit in its plays. Their posters are an essential part of the plays. They are the first thing that the population sees, hence they present the plays long before the first shows and contain their main information and characteristics, including political-social critique (Ferreira, 2014). A heterosexual white man is usually in control of the design of the poster and, therefore, of the gaze. He uses female bodies in the posters' visual discourse, and from a very particular perspective, in which women and the world at large are represented from a male point of view, because the dominant audience is understood to be male and heterosexual (Mulvey, 1999). Although it is female bodies that are in evidence in the posters, it is male sexuality that is at stake, and it is the male gaze that produces discourses and social practices that reflect the reality in which they are inserted and the norms and rules that define it (Mulvey, 1999). During the Estado Novo, women were either seen as angels who only existed socially inside a family. They were always seen in relation to and in function of a man, and it was to this man, to the family and to home that they had to dedicate themselves. Or they were seen as a demon, an object of erotic satisfaction that had materialized in a body with the sole intention of giving pleasure to men. This second narrative is the one that appears on the posters of Portuguese Teatro de Revista. It's the narrative that associates these leisure shows with sexuality as they invite male spectators to go to the theater with sexual stimuli, using women as sexual objects.

2. Portuguese Teatro de Revista Women Actors: an occupied space during Estado Novo

Beginning from the reign of D. Maria I, women began to appear in theater. In the first half of the 20th century, when stage plays had evolved into large productions and used a lot of choral groups, the number of women on stage increased considerably. Despite being most people on stage, they were an oppressed minority. The control of patriarchy and machismo becomes more than evident at various levels, especially in the context of Teatro de Revista. There are no plays written by women and, for the most part, they were created with a male audience in mind (Saraiva, 1980). This theatrical genre was constantly criticized due to its systematic exploitation of women and the excesses com-

mitted by the female sex on stage, something that broke the bonds of moral discipline perpetuated by the Estado Novo. Expressions such as “naked”, “flashing legs”, and “pornographic” are constant in texts criticizing the teatro de revista (Ferreira, 2014). In addition, there is no “chorus boy” in line dance, the “chorus line” is predominantly female, only very recently men began to appear on it, a fact that Saraiva (1980) justifies with the increase in the female and homosexual audience to this type of show. Within the teatro de revista, “the leg of a beautiful woman is equivalent to the leg of a roasted suckling pig” (Guimarães, 1940, p. 18). Only women strip down and exhibit themselves on stage, men never do. Bearing in mind that the Estado Novo defined the ideal woman as: “a good housewife that didn’t bothering others with household events, understanding of the tastes and needs of others, affectionate towards her husband’s family, punctual, discreet (...), cost-effective, sincere, with a good temper, docile, serious, confident, little chatty and never using lipstick” (Paço *et al.*, 2008), this seems peculiar, but it is not so much, because the spaces were divided into private and public and, in the latter, as Cixous (2018, p. 77) rightly states, “if we look for the woman — as they say in the stories...“Cherchez la femme” — we know what it means: we will find her in bed”.

At least, as far as the male imagination is concerned, because, as early as 1926, someone who signed M.me Mistério said that talking about a woman actor dressing room led one to imagine the most incredible scenes of immorality, and yet, after visiting one, he found that it was “a group of quiet and serious people, talking and sewing, during their work break”.

3. Building our *corpus*

Our study’s sample consists of 25 posters of Portuguese teatro de revista from plays presented on the stages of the Parque Mayer theaters between 1957 and 1973 and whose central figure is women, they were selected from a set of 71 posters that were possible to recover from this time period. As can be seen in Table 1, most of the images are from Teatro ABC and, apart from the year 1970 from which 4 posters are analyzed, between 1 or 2 images per year were analyzed.

Table 1. List of posters, whose central figure is a woman

Theater	Title	Year
Teatro ABC	- Casa da Sorte (Lucky House)	- 1957
	- O Trunfo é Espadas (Trump is Swords)	- 1961
	- Mini saias (Mini Skirts)	- 1966
	- Mulheres à Vela (Women Sailing)	- 1967
	- Arroz de miúdas (Girl Rice)	- 1968
	- Alto lá com elas (Careful with them)	- 1970
	- Pega de caras (Grab the Bull by the Horns)	- 1970
	- Frangas na Grelha (Chicks on the Grill)	- 1971
	- Saídas da casca (Out of their Shells)	- 1971
	- Tudo a nu (All Naked)	- 1973
Teatro Maria Vitória	- Sol e Dó (So and Do)	- 1962
	- De vento em popa (Full Wind)	- 1966
	- Grande poeta é o Zé (Zé ia a Great Poet)	- 1968
	- Esperteza Saloia (Saloia Cleverness)	- 1969
	- O prato do dia (Today's special)	- 1970
	- Pronto a despir (Ready to Undress)	- 1972
Teatro Variedades	- Ena, Tantas! (Wow, so many!)	- 1963
	- A Ponte a pé! (Footbridge!)	- 1965
	- Peço a palavra (May I have the floor?)	- 1969
	- E o Zé faz tudo (And Zé does everything)	- 1970
Teatro Capitólio	- A vida é bela (Life is Beautiful)	- 1960
	- O que é bom é para se ver (Show us the goods)	- 1963
	- As garotas são o Diabo! (Girls are the Devil!)	- 1964
	- Na Brasa! (Grilled!)	- 1964
	- Quem tem boca vai à Roma (If you have a mouth, you can get to Rome)	- 1967

The methodology we used is exploratory and descriptive, our sample consists of all the images used in the visual communication of the Teatros de Revista from Parque Mayer prior to 1974 that carry a woman as it's central figure. Those posters were obtained through the Theaters, the National Theater Museum and private individuals, collectors of show posters.

4. Methodology applied to the exploration and analysis of the material

Female objectification is a process of dehumanizing women that removes from them characteristics that make them human and places them as things, objects with much less hierarchical value than what is attributed to people. This dehumanization is related to the control of women's bodies and sexuality and tries to make them identify themselves as sexual objects which exist solely and simply with the aim of satisfying men, who are humanized and holds power (Heldman, 2013). Caroline Heldman (2012) developed a test to identify female sexual objectification in advertising, which consists on seven questions: 1. Does the image show only sexualized body parts?; 2. Does the image present sexualized people as if they were objects?; 3. Does the image display sexualized people as interchangeable? 4. Does the image convey the idea of violating the integrity of the bodies of sexualized people, without their consent? 5. Does the image suggest that sexual availability is the main defining characteristic of the portrayed person?; 6. Does the image present a sexualized person as a commodity?; 7. Does the image treat the sexualized body as a canvas?

It is on these seven points that we will focus to answer the questions proposed by our research, but before we start our interpretative analysis it is necessary to explain the methodological theory used in the exploration and analysis of the images. In this paper, considering that the analysis of images must consider cultural issues and power relations (Rose, 2002), we chose to use content analysis (Bardin, 1991) and the semiotic approach (Barthes, 1990), methods that focus on the way in which the elements of the images are present and combine with each other to form a set of significance that produce meaning.

The content analysis led to systematic and qualitative descriptions that made it possible to reinterpret the messages and understand them at a level that goes far beyond the common reading, because they were read in the light of the historical, political and social context that people lived at the time (Moraes, 1999). Here we see the spectators as active partners of the image, because they build it, filling the gaps in representation and allowing themselves to be built by it (Aumont, 1993).

Bearing in mind the objectives of this investigation, the posters of the Portuguese Teatros de Revista were then carefully observed and it was found that they present women as sexual objects, the demonize women, display their naked bodies and presents them as knickknacks and as food.

In an even more detailed analysis, the following data and themes were found: date of the Plays, colors used, what female body parts are highlighted, positions of their bodies, use of accessories that lead to the erotic/sexual, use of symbolic objects, use of popular symbols, size of people; and the following categories that seem to work in opposition to each other in the analyzed posters: passivity *versus* activity; angelic expression *versus* provocative expression, covered/mysterious women *versus* naked/accessible women. These categories were extremely important to help us determine the profiles of the women who are represented in the images of the analyzed posters.

After an exhaustive interpretation of the images one by one, a facet of patriarchal culture emerged, one which epitomizes all the content that gives meaning to the images. The facet of the female sexual objectification, since the images are composed of sexualized, dehumanized, commodified and passive women, constructed by the gaze and imagination of men, as shown in Table 2. Then, this facet provided references that allowed the creation of profiles of women, with particular characteristics of sexual objectification, their only apparent intention is to offer pleasure to the male audience. The first profile was named “Plate of food” because, literally, women appear as food and are served to men. The second profile is called “Demonic-sexual”, refers to a group of women who are presented to us in the images as demonic and, therefore, sexual. Then, a third profile emerged, “Nakedness”, which presents a series of images that focus solely and exclusively on the female nude body. Finally, a fourth profile: the “knickknack” type, in which the women are there just to be observed.

Table 2. Patriarchal Culture and Women’s Profiles

Patriarchal Culture	Women’s Profiles			
Female objectification	Plate of food	Demonic-sexual	Nakedness	knickknack

Deepening the analysis and articulating the visual elements with each other, it was found that each “Women Profile” has specific “Types of Women” with different characteristics, and which were represented on the posters as shown in Table 3:

Table 3. Profiles and types of women represented

Women's Profiles	Types of Women
Plate of food	On the menu, as appetizers Served as a snack
Demoniac-sexual	Devilish Manipulators Gold diggers Free and loose
Nakedness	Brazen Available right now
Knickknack	Attractive-flashy Entertainment Only legs

The profiles and types of women mentioned above were found in the visual context and on the only text present - the title of the plays guided the viewers' gaze towards these meanings, eliminating any ambiguity (Barthes, 1990). By choice, in this specific paper, the titles of the plays will not be analyzed in depth. However, it is opportune to mention that the interrelation between titles and images is one of anchoring or fixation, since these lead the receivers to the meanings of the images that interest them. They make the messages more intelligible, clearer.

We remind you that we analyzed posters that were, at the time, the main means of publicity for cultural events. It should also be remembered that, according to Barthes (1990), the advertising image is always intentional and emphatic, so that the message is easily identified by the public to which it is addressed.

5. Profiles of women represented in the visual images of Teatro de Revista

Plate of food:

a) On the menu, as appetizers

The titles of these two magazines – Figure 1 and Figure 2, “Na Brasa (Grilled)” and “Frangas na grelha (Chicks on the Grill)” have a double meaning. On the one hand, they inform the title of the Play, which is a denoted

message, and, on the other hand, they have a connoted message, “Na Brasa” refers to the grilled dishes, but also to the hot temperature, comparing the woman with food and the associated heat to something erotic, sexual. “Frangas na Grelha” refers to a typical dish in many restaurants at the time, although “frangas” also refers to young women. The images have few discontinuous significs, the central figures being women with accentuated curves, painted in red, a warm color, symbolizing heat, sensuality. In “Na Brasa” the woman confronts the spectator with an expression of defiance, she is provocative. She only wears a bra and covers herself with the curtain, conveying the idea that she is naked, so people can imagine her that way. The legs and breasts stand out. On her breast we can find a star, part of the scenery, to make it preminent. Her left side is covered by a shadow that makes it hard to see this part of her body and face. The shadow acts once again as a challenge the spectator’s imagination, subtly covering the woman’s body so that the spectator can imagine it uncovered. The woman has short blue hair, like she is ahead of her time, which may make viewers think of sexual freedom. In the poster for “Frangas na grelha” the woman appears with open arms showing availability and acceptance, inviting people to go and see her. She has feathers on her booty and head, symbolizing chickens, but also making it erotic with exoticism. Both women are the main snack on the menu of this Teatro de Revista.

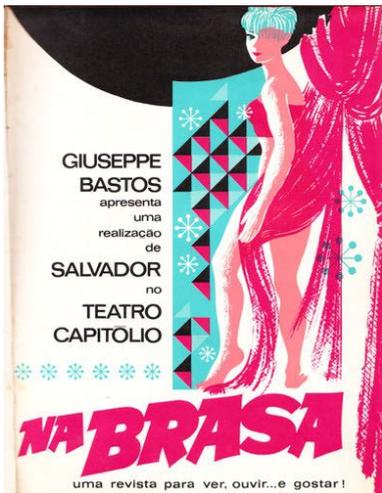


Figure 1 - Na Brasa (1964)



Figure 2 - Frangas na Grelha (1972)

b) Served as a snack

Once again, the titles of these two plays – Figure 3 and Figure 4, “Arroz de Miúdas” and “O Prato do Dia” - have a double meaning. “Arroz de Miúdas” is a pun on “Arroz de miúdos”⁶. The word “miúdos” refers to something small, insignificant and “pipis” which allude to the vagina, popularly called “pipi” in Portugal. It compares women to food, but also with something small. Reducing them to their vagina. “Prato do Dia” (today’s special) refers to the ready-to-serve dish, implying that the women on the show are ready to be served. The poster for “Arroz de Miúdas” features four young women dressed in skimpy bikinis, showing off their young and sculptural bodies. Three of them wear a red bikini. The artist uses here, once again, a warm color to symbolize warmth, sensuality. One of them uses a black bikini that highlights the curves of her female body. The woman in front wears a cook’s hat and the other three are inside a pan, indicating that the first one is there to serve and the other three to satisfy the “hunger” of the spectators. Some of the women draw attention to their breasts, covering them with their arms. In “O Prato do Dia”, a young woman is portrayed on her knees, on a plate that is on top of a white towel with red stripes, she is served along with a kind of red and white grain. The woman is presented with a short red bikini and looks at the male participant who is behind her with a seductive look. The woman is obviously something edible and one is even left with doubts whether this is a denoted or connoted message, because the woman is not effectively a dish, but she is on top of a plate, which is, in fact, a utensil that is used to put the food that is going to be ingested. The woman’s pose is one of sensuality, of provocation, of showing off her bodily gifts. The participant behind her is Zé Povinho, a character that represents the Portuguese people. It gives the impression that he is sitting at a table because only his torso can be seen. He holds a knife in his right hand and a fork in his left hand, he’s ready to use them. He is red-faced and with his tongue out, expressing gluttony, appetite, and at the same time already delighted and salivating at the sight of the dish. Zé Povinho symbolizes the masculine public with a voracious appetite for “today’s special”, which is a young, beautiful and sensual woman, who finds herself in the role of a snack on the menu.

⁶ They changed the gender of the word “miúdos”. The word miúdos means in this context offal meat, but when changed to its feminine it means young girls – Trans. Note.

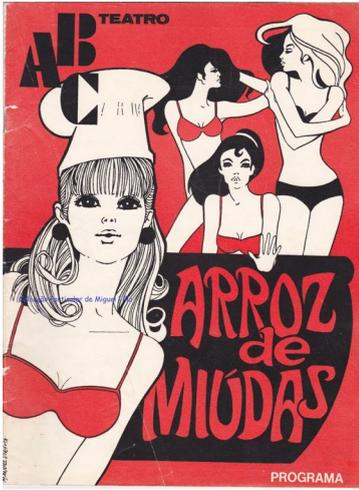


Figure 3 - Arroz de Miúdas (1968)



Figure 4 - O Prato do Dia (1970)

Demonic-sexual

a) Diabolical

“As garotas são o Diabo”, the title of this play (Figure 5) is a categorical statement that women are the Devil herself. The image shows a woman with makeup. Her lips are painted red, her face holds an angelic expression. She seems mysterious, shy and at the same time provocative, sensual. She wears a red cape, once again a warm color, which does not allow you to see whether she has anything on, in order to arouse curiosity and the desire to see more. She holds in her right hand a smiling devil mask, and in her left hand a trident reinforcing that she is the Devil. All of it refers to the universe of sexuality, transgression, fantasy, the diabolical and reprehensible.



Figure 5 - As Garotas são o Diabo (1964)

b) Manipulators

In Figures 6 and 7, the titles also have a new meaning. “Grande Poeta é o Zé” refers to a man who speaks very well and “... Zé does everything...” to a man of the people, who oversees everything. Figure 6 shows three full-size women, dressed in short, low-cut dresses. They carry a smaller man. The man is a “poet” and, therefore, they carry him, that means that they treat him very well, but the difference in size between them and Zé shows that the women are the ones who control and manipulate him. Figure 7 shows, in actual size, a woman and a man. He is Zé Povinho and, therefore, represents the Portuguese people. The woman wears black panties with feathers at the back and a white bandeau bra, which makes her body visible. She has an irritated, angry expression, looking at the man who hugs her and points with the index finger of her right hand at the puppets, as if conveying orders. She lets herself be embraced by Zé Povinho, who holds the strings of the puppets below in his left hand, while he gazes, enraptured, at the woman’s breasts. With a smile, his expression is one of satisfaction, pleasure, desire, passion. It shows that she dominates and manipulates him. The puppets are smaller compared to them. They refer to all the professions of society as demonstrated by their uniforms, tools, hats, instruments, etc. The sexist society is represented here. A society where the professional world belongs to men, who do everything to please and support women that, in turn, seduce and dominate them. Women command therefore all the puppets, thanks to their body features.



Figura 6 - Grande Poeta é o Zé (1968)

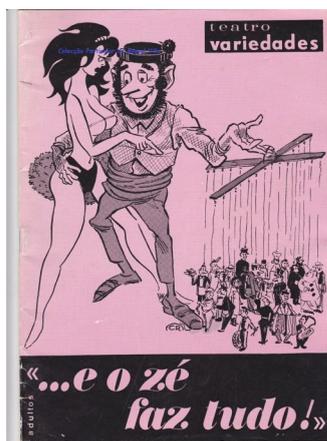


Figura 7 - "...e o Zé faz tudo!" (1970)

c) Gold diggers

The title of Figure 8 refers to an expression that means using an illegitimate advantage to overtake other people, usually without great economic and social impact. In this image we see, once again, the difference in size between a bigger female character and a smaller male one, demonstrating that the woman has an advantage over the man. The red-haired woman, practically naked, takes a man in her arms. His head rests on her breasts, he is delighted. By the look on his face, you can see that he is completely satisfied and happy. His clothes are drawn in such a way that you can see the reference to an erect penis, he is aroused. Meanwhile, the woman puts her hand in the man's back pocket and takes his wallet, her interest is in his money.



Figure 8 - Esperteza Saloia (1969)

d) Free and loose

From the titles of Figures 9, 10, 11 and 12 we infer that we found free and loose women. Transgressors, difficult to control. In fact, the images show women looking at the spectators, challenging them. Showing a lot of skin and some with exotic accessories, these women are confident and very comfortable with their sexuality, demonstrating that they no longer follow the rules of society. Something that means to men that they are open to sexual advances, as

evidenced by the flames, the stars and the hearts that come out of the eggshells, in figure 12, referring to a warm, romantic, seductive and sensual environment.

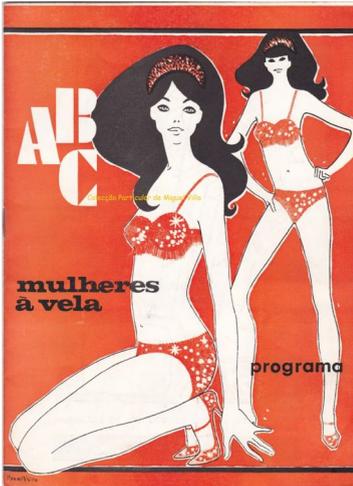


Figure 9 - Mulheres à Vela (1967)



Figure 10 - Alto lá com elas (1970)



Figure 11 - Pega de Caras (1970)



Figure 12 - Saídas da Casca (1971)

Nakedness

a) Brazen

Figures 13, 14 and 15 refer to the nude. The titles of the plays guarantee that the naked body will be a constant. The woman from the play “O que é bom é para se ver” (Showing the goods) is not completely naked, but she wears a skin-tight suit that lets you imagine her curves. There is a difference of 10 years between this image, which is from 1962 and the other two which are from 1972 and 1973, when the country was more open. Maybe that’s why these last women are already completely naked, showing off their breasts and ass. Figure 14 shows a woman, headless, naked, from the front, with the title of the Play strategically placed on top of her vagina. This headless body tells us that only the so-called sexual parts of a woman matter, even though in this same image the face of another woman is shown inviting us to the show. Figure 15 is the most daring, because it shows a real woman, no longer a drawing. She is completely naked despite having her back turned to the camera, her naked body reveals that, as the title says, they will be all naked.

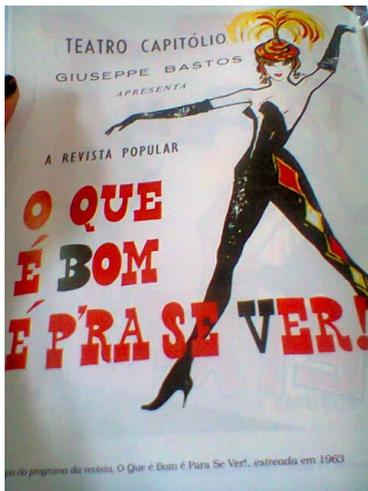


Figure 13 - O que é bom é para se ver (1963)



Figure 14 - Pronto a despir!...(1972)



Figure 15 - Tudo a Nu (1973)

b) Available right now

The titles of Figures 16, 17, 18 and 19 make us think, along with their images, that everything will be alright, and that life is beautiful. It is because there are young and beautiful women available. The women appear in poses and in movements that show availability and the men that appear in the image are there just to appreciate them, happy and frilly.



Figura 16 - Casa da Sorte (1957)



Figura 17 - O Trunfo é Espadas (1961)



Figure 18 - A Vida é Bela (1960)

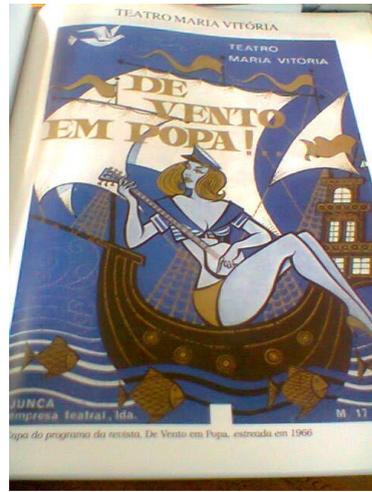


Figure 19 - De Vento em Popa! (1966)

Knickknack

a) Attractive-flashy

In Figures 20 and 21 the titles of the Plays do not indicate anything regarding the presence of women. “A Ponte a Pé” (Footbridge), from 1965, refers to the bridge over the Tejo, which in 1965 was in its final stage of construction and was inaugurated in 1966. The bridge that was a work of Salazar and to which was attributed his name: Salazar Bridge. That same year, on February 13th, 1965, Humberto Delgado and his secretary were murdered by the PIDE, a fact that shocked the country. The play’s title, “A ponte a pé”, read quickly sounds like “a pontapé”, so it could be said that the dictatorship regime in Portugal would only be solved “a pontapé”⁷. The bridge in this image, as well as the title of the play, were the subterfuges for political criticism. The women, half-naked and full of feathers, are just here as knickknacks. The same happens with “Peço a Palavra!” (May I have the floor?), which dates from 1969 and is a clear allusion to the 1969 legislative elections, when Marcelo Caetano assumes the Presidency of the Council: the title is a clear request for the opening of the regime. The woman, flamboyant, is just an object to be observed here.

⁷ “To solve something by kicking it” is an idiom that means to solve something through force or fight, any which way – Trans. Note.

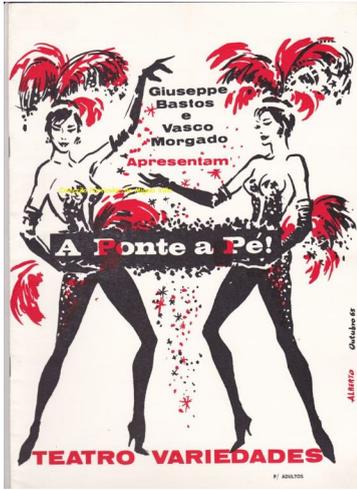


Figure 20 - A Ponte a pé! (1965)



Figure 21 - Peço a Palavra! (1969)

b) Entertainment

Figure 22 from the play “Sol e Dó” (So and do) presents a woman dressed in small clothes colored in shades of red. She is in a dancing position, demonstrating only that she is here just to be observed and to entertain.

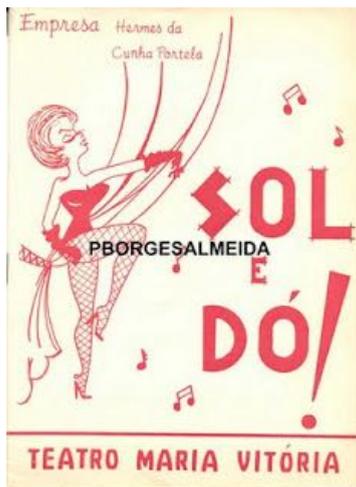


Figure 22 - Sol e Dó (1962)

c) Only legs

The titles of Figures 23 and 24 refer to the number of legs that appear in the images. “Quem tem boca vai a Roma”⁸ (If you have a mouth, you can get to Rome), in Figure 25 is completely dissociated from the legs that appear in the image. The legs separated from the body show that it is not the women who matter, but their body parts that are considered sexual. That’s why the legs are shown, and a lot of legs, to convey the message that there will be many to enjoy.



Figure 23 - Ena, tantas! (1963)

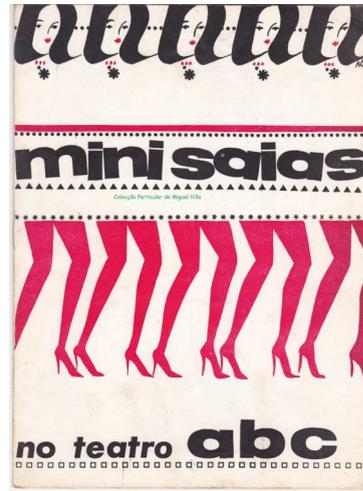


Figure 24 - Mini Saias (1966)



Figure 25 - Quem tem Boca vai a Roma (1967)

⁸ Idiom that means “if you can communicate you can get anywhere” – Trans. Note.

6. Discussing the Results

The discussion of results would not be complete if we did not question the images: Are the women in each of the profiles shown in an active or passive attitude? Do they have an angelic or provocative expression? Are they covered or naked? Deconstructing, in this way, the profiles of women, with the categories that built them. We can see on Table 4, that all women are portrait naked apart from the diabolical ones who cover themselves subtly, in an effort to seem mysterious. All women show some movement, except for the “entertainment” type. This may be because movement suggests enthusiasm. Because they are being observed by the male gaze, we can’t see the expressions of the women in the “only legs” type. The “diabolic”, “interesting”, “available right now” and “entertainment” types have an angelic expression, which makes sense since with a docile attitude they can better achieve their purposes. Lastly the women shown in the “on the menu, as appetizers”, “served as a snack”, “manipulative”, “free and loose”, “brazen” and “attractive-flashy” types have a provocative expression, the expression of someone that wants to have a good time.

These women tend to have an active attitude. They are naked and provocative, which contradicts the role that the Estado Novo regime assigned to women, that is the role of being submissive and guardians of morals and good customs. The ones on which the functional family depended upon. Single women should maintain modesty and chastity to be worthy of getting married and be good mothers. Married women should ensure the tranquility of their husband and children. The Teatro de Revista posters offered then an image of women who did not exist within the norm. They were transgressors.

Table 4. (de)construction of women’s profiles

Profiles	Type	Categories					
		passive	active	angelic	pro-vocative	covered	naked
Plate of food	On the menu, as appetizers		X		X		X
	Served as a snack		X		X		X
Demoniac-sexual	Devilish		X	X		X	
	Manipulators		X		X		X
	Gold diggers		X	X			X
	Free and loose		X		X		X
Nakedness	Brazen		X		X		X
	Available right now		X	X			X
Knick-knack	Attractive-flashy		X		X		X
	Entertainment	X		X			X
	Only legs		X				X

7. Final considerations

These results fail Caroline Heldman’s (2012) test of sexual objectification since we found that the posters contain and focus particularly on sexualized body parts of naked women, in erotic positions; they represent women as objects and food products, ready to be consumed; they present women and women’s bodies devoid of any personality trait or uniqueness other than their sexual availability; they reproduce the idea of submissive women, putting them in vulnerable situations, without a second thought, because the women here were dehumanized, they are just merchandise.

They fulfill the function for which they were made: to be seen by men and to contemplate themselves while they are being observed. The gaze is always masculine, and that’s how they assumed the role of visual sexual objects (Berger, 1982).

To establish the link that exists between sexuality and leisure shows, we consider Barthes' concepts: the *studium*, which encompasses the elements of the image as a field intentionally codified by their author and, in this case, it displays sexually objectified women in the posters we analyzed; the *punctum*, which refers to subjective association, it finds in the image a part of the object of desire that is not coded there, that is the thought that there will be naked and available women in theater shows that will arouse the public.

Bearing in mind that visual communication is crucial in the construction of discourses related to gender (Mota-Ribeiro, 2011), it is necessary to analyze and expose these situations, because, as Beauvoir (2018, p.56) rightly says, "the past does not prove anything against women's future, primarily because they never had their chance: but it clarifies the present.

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SEX AND THE CONFESSIONAL (1974): 10 COMMANDMENTS LINES OF FLIGHT TO DECOLONIZE AND RECLAIM OUR BODY(IES)¹

Fernanda de Castro²

Maria Manuel Baptista³

Abstract

Sex and the Confessional, a book published in 1974 in Portugal and Brazil, brings together a set of 636 confessions made in Italian churches in the early 1970s. The goal was to understand the church's position on sex in its various dimensions and at different stages of life. This is the third and final part of a study started on January 18, 2022, within the scope of the Seminar "Leisure and Sexuality: Pandemic Dialogues", an event organized by the Gender and Performance Group (GECE) and the Center of Studies in Culture and Leisure (NECO), at the University of Aveiro. It continued at the II Conference of the International Network in Cultural Studies (RIEC), at the Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG) and now, we aim to conclude it. *Sex and the Confessional* is the object of this study, constituting the empirical, theoretical and symbolic basis of social constructions and roles, especially regarding Gender Studies. Moreover, it engages with all works that analyze the interplay between leisure and the body, sexuality, and gender. At the conclusion of this study, we intend to trace lines of flight in favor of a decolonization and deterritorialization of precarious bodies, rescuing them from a space of power, operated by hegemonic devices, which, even in the womb, make them public-private property and enchain them to cisheteronormative and conservative norms, laws and conventions. This study revealed that sex is not considered, at any time, a leisure activity and when practiced for this purpose, without the intention of procreating, it is considered a sinful and reprehensible practice, because for the Catholic dogma the sexual body is a property of God

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² PhD candidate in the Doctoral Program in Cultural Studies at the University of Aveiro. Researcher and collaborator at the Center for Lusophone and European Literatures and Cultures (CLEPUL) at the University of Lisbon, and at the Center for Languages, Literatures and Cultures (CLLC) at the University of Aveiro. Researcher and member of the Gender and Performance Studies Group (GECE) of the Center for Languages, Literatures and Cultures (CLLC) of the University of Aveiro. Email: castrofernanda@ua.pt.

³ Full Professor of the Doctoral Program in Cultural Studies from the Department of Languages and Cultures (DLC), and researcher at the Center for Languages, Literatures and Cultures (CLLC) at the University of Aveiro. Email: mbaptista@ua.pt.

and therefore a (re)productive tool. These bodies are culturally and socially constructed and crossed symbolically and physically by crystallizing hegemonic thoughts. Over those bodies, especially those of women, fall mechanisms and discourses of power. This study considers a number of questions that are varied and considered uncomfortable when articulated with the theories advocated by Cultural Studies. Throughout this study, these questions were developed to think and reflect deeply on the naturalized and crystallized discourses and practices that inflict several forms of violence on bodies, limiting their performances and making them capable of (re)producing violence. What lines of flight are possible in a contextual and conjectural framework composed of harsh, violent and deterministic lines of segmentation built on rigid norms, cisheteronormative laws and conservatism? Inspired by the subversion of dogma and eternal and immutable laws, in this paper we propose 10 ~~commandments~~ lines of flight that, in line with Butler, Deleuze and Guattari, guide us to resistance to precariousness and to the right and duty to claim and humanize our body(ies).

Keywords

Body(ies); Leisure; Sex; Religion; Power.

From discipline...

Body, Sex and Religion are guiding categories articulated in an oppressive and disciplinary Catholic matrix that has been around for hundreds of years. A theoretical and concrete matrix of symbolic violence which continues to have its repercussions on the minds and bodies of subjects. The simulated ‘confessions’ collected by Valentini and di Meglio show the same thing as the Catholic theory: sex is never, at any time, considered a leisure activity, in fact, quite the opposite, when not practiced for reproductive and procreation purposes (and without the essential matrimonial stamp) is considered a source and way of sin, an immoral, bestial activity, and a state of human misery that makes humans unruly and naturally wicked. For Foucault, there is a more rigid and inflexible Christianity that conceives human nature by the way of the fall and, in this sense, sexual relations are always given a “negative cast” (2021, p. 65).

When one claims their own body, it constitutes the first revolutionary act to subvert a deterministic and phallogocentric order instituted by patriarchy that works for the benefit of a parasitic structure that places the precarious and exploited female body on the periphery of power, on the marginality of the power/knowledge strategy (Foucault, 2006). We are in a state of violence, constructed through religion and society from a biological matrix that is both determinist and cisheteronormative. A matrix that has been favored by the

political rise of the extreme right, which has worked hard to retain female bodies in places (both concrete and symbolic) that discipline, docile and shape us right from the womb. What lines of flight can we imagine in this context?

... to lines of flight:

1st line: do not love God above all else; **2nd line:** do not sanctify the body; **3rd line:** the body is a (de)construct; **4th line:** mortality and vulnerability are inherent to the body; **5th line:** the body is (not) a property; **6th line:** agency and humanity are inherent to the body; **7th line:** love (thy) body above all else; **8th line:** do not keep the law of chastity in thoughts and desires; **9th route:** denaturalize the body; **10th line:** undo the culture of surveillance, guilty and punishment in us.

According to Catholicism, God is the absolute Creator, and in this sense, supreme and absolute love must be destined to him, loving him “above all else”. Catholic dogmatism sowed in the minds of the people that “truth” implied an absolute, eternal and immutable certainty. Neither time nor experience can change or question these absolute “truths” or “laws”. Not even the symbolic, hegemonic, and eurocentric idea and projection that God and Christ are white and fair-haired, and they should be loved and revered “above all else”, including all other mortals. It is in the name of this God and Christ that His children, the men, those who hold the symbolic and non-symbolic powers, created mechanisms of hegemonic thought and the phenomena of power that over time resulted in the naturalization of symbolic and physical violence over precarious bodies. Blind subservience and submission for centuries to a male God and Christ created a patriarchal system based on ‘love’ strategies that produce violence which has become structural because, deep down, naturalizing gender violence is “a [convenient] formula to dominate and maintain privileges” (Redondo, 2021) and the male power over Other bodies.

The children of God created moral values that disciplined and regulated bodies, especially female bodies. With the active contribution of women and hegemonic apparatuses (Gramsci, 2008). They controlled, disciplined and punished, for centuries, the bodies of others. Today, capitalism and neoliberalism, aided by technology, potentiate the control of bodies by establishing a standard type of bodies that allied to an unbridled and idealistic consumerist gear foster insecurities in a parasitical manner on the bodies. Hygienist

and aesthetic discourses fall on the bodies of women, maintaining an eternal battle marked by a double conflict: the demand for consumption by an aesthetic controlled by the capitalist and neoliberal market, and the conservative social expectation that though guilt demands modesty and decorum from female bodies. The Catholic Church has always associated sex, desire and touch with the idea of shame and guilt, inciting in humanity, especially women, to a perpetual state of (self)surveillance, fear, repulsion and disgust over their own body and the desires that emanate from it. The body is more than a biological existence, it is a social and historical construct. It is burdened with all the classical and religious archetypes that predetermine and stipulate its social place and role.

For Catholicism, the body sins, “often through thoughts and words, acts and omissions” (Rocha, 1989, p. 13), it sins through the brain, eyes, mouth, gestures. It sins by performing its own existence, within the inevitable possibility of sin. Prohibition and moral laws act over desire itself and the way desire acts ‘dangerously’ on the body and mind, even though society, according to Deleuze and Guattari, is “invested by desire” (2009, p. 29). According to Catholic theory, we are permanently prone to committing sin, since a body that does not discipline its desires is a body that permits moral decay and perversion. To protect humanity, Catholic theory has developed theoretical and hegemonic ‘ethical’ guides to sexuality, which act in public – private spaces and determine how the body (especially female ones) should perform, instituting catechetical thinking and Christian morality over how human relationships should be, especially male-female relationships.

The control of desire seems to be an effective regulating and disciplining strategy that results in lives and bodies with a repressed sexuality, closed to new opportunities, where the body, a desiring-machine, is impeded and dispossessed of its possibilities, although, as we will see later, not completely since it is in a state of prohibition that the body most desires and craves (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009). According to Foucault, the issue is not the norms. It is not a matter of imposing the prohibitive acts of a certain and elaborated sexual code or ‘ethics’ but of a strategy to monitor the thought: “a suspicion that must be directed everywhere and at every moment against oneself (...) in a manner that will ferret out all the secret forms of «fornication» that may be hiding in the deepest recesses of the soul” (2021, p. 198).

According to Deleuze and Guattari “Pleasure is an affection of a person or a subject; it is the only way for persons to “find themselves” in the process

of desire that exceeds them; pleasures, even the most artificial, are reterritorializations” (2004, p. 488). It is in the reterritorialization of desire, since “becoming is the process of desire” (2004, p. 825), that lurks the danger of leaving ‘regulated’ behaviors, to trespass the hard lines or segmentarity (Deleuze, 2000) established by the divine and moral law.

The confessions recorded by Valentini & Di Meglio constitute lines of flight from the thick fences of segmentarity presented by Catholic rhetoric and put into practice in the confessional. This is the locus of an abstract machine that produces binarisms, from archetypes, conducts, sins to decision and damnation, that is, the penitent’s ultimate fate, theoretically. It is in the lines of flight - the desiring becoming - which escape the hard lines of segmentarity that we can witness to not a suspension of the norm, but to a kind of desiring rhizomatic flow that allow a ‘temporary’ escape from the “social codes that want to canalize them, block them” (Deleuze, 1992, p. 30). These are the lines that, according to Deleuze, lead “to desire, to the desire-machines and to the organization of a social field of desire: it is not a question of each one fleeing “personally”, but of making one flee” (1992, p. 30).

The data collected by Valentini and di Meglio - which is in line with the Catholic theoretical bibliography consulted - shows that the moral norm and the Catholic views seek to create celibate machine-bodies that express purity, grace and passivity, while deeming desire and sex for the pure purpose of pleasure something that is illegitimate, immoral, irregular, bestial. Desire and sex for pleasure are seen as acts that reveal weakness and lack of self-control. When legitimized and permitted by marriage, sex is an act that grants the right to property over marital bodies, making them into one flesh, depriving them of any individuality or subjectivity. This is with particular attention to the female body. Censoring and repressing desire, cutting off the flow of the desiring-machine, is trying to cut off the flow and smother potentialities and possibilities.

Deleuze and Guattari (2004) believe that desire is both a power and the possibility of machinic agency. In the abstract machine as well as in the managed desire, flight lines emerge that express non-deterministic, limited, and reductive flows: they are, in the case under study, possibilities for becoming outside the fixed boundaries authorized by the church. These are not phenomena of resistance to the norm or the standard, but peaks of creation and deterritorialization. Although desire is captured from the start and is itself socially and culturally produced (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004), to desire outside the norm, in this context of castration, is to elevate to the max the possibility

of escaping the established norm, the regulation and oppression of society and the standard bodily and sexual existence associated with it. According to Deleuze e Guattari, “Every time desire is betrayed, cursed, uprooted from its field of immanence, a priest is behind it” (2004, p. 481) to represent the institution and operate, through manipulation, a judgment where the power to forgive and punish is unilateral.

The Catholic Church has associated sexuality with the idea of shame and guilt, sowing in the believer the fear of their own body, especially in the bodies of women, making us believe that an alleged morality and purity can be achieved through repression, oppression and sacrifice of the body and of all of our desiring possibilities (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004). Thus, sex, pleasure and desire are only consented and “authorized” when they serve only the naturalized purpose of procreation and inside the establishment of a heterosexual marriage and family. Marriage being a process that confers the right to property over the body.

For Foucault, marriage triggers the principle of mutual transfer of ownership over human bodies, and in this instance, it is “the model of slavery [that we are subject to] (...) [it is] an appropriation [that] of a debt: one whose body has become another’s property owes them something – namely the use of their body” (2021, p. 222): “Those who hand over the body to someone who does not yet have the right to possess it. For a Christian, only the sacrament of marriage gives the right to dispose of their own body and all that relates to it” (Valentini & Meglio, 1974, p. 83), add the confessors.

Author of treatises on virginity and marriage, Saint Chrysostom (1966) believes this sacrament appears as a consequence of the fall and carnal weakness, that is, it is a way of imposing, according to Foucault, limits to what the body desires: “a barrier against the excesses which the fall unleashed”, being, therefore, a “servitude garment”, a “limitation” (2021, p. 397). After an in-depth study on marriage and virginity in the Christian universe, Foucault concludes that marriage, an indissoluble sacrament, ultimately constitutes a way of domesticating and virginizing the (non-virgin) body. Catholic marriage is indissoluble, monogamous, heterosexual/heteronormative and, in this sense, establishes absolute and immutable laws: “(...) marriage is an obligation for all who cannot reach the perfection of the virginal state. Marriage is in itself a law” (Foucault, 2021, p. 399).

It is in the cultural imaginary that the phallus is produced and sustained by institutions such as the Church, State and Family (Gramsci, 2008). They

maintain a certain form of economic, social and cultural production: bodies make culture and culture make the bodies. The ‘property’ - the bodies of women - is culturally constructed, defined and established by Catholicism, in a phallogentric, patriarchal, paternal and feudal regime. It is the religious law that defines a woman’s humanity and establishes her within requirements that discipline and regulate her sexuality. They are an instrument, a property of God, of a father, later given to a husband through marriage and then property of their children. Motherhood, like marriage, can also constitute a power structure that implies a social role for women dictated by disciplinary precepts that amplify, to a greater or lesser degree, the oppression and desexualization of their bodies in an effort to remove pleasure and desire from them.

It is required from female bodies to perform according to discipline and to discipline others: women should be in a permanent state of grace, they should overcome desire when not with procreative purpose, chastity, virginity, self-control of the body and the senses, the sacrifice of desire and the annulment of its subjectivity and individuality in exchange for a supposed and promised admission to paradise. The salvation of the soul through the sacrifice of body and (critical) thought. The chastity and virginity of bodies constitute superior and essential values to repress the potency of desire (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004) and of pleasure, to repress the possibility of agency, the flows of desire, lines of flight (Deleuze, 2000) and dangerous becomings, just as the 6th commandment warns us: “To keep chastity in thoughts and desires”. For the Catholic worldview it is possible to grow in purity, because chastity allows the purification of the body and sins. As a religious and cultural concept, virginity is not limited to the chastity of the body and in Catholic theory it should not be limited to the physical world. Virginity extends beyond the renunciation of fornication and requires that “even desires and lusts be rooted out” (2021, p. 143), because the body sins “often through thoughts and words, acts and omissions” (Rocha, 1989, p. 13). It is about loving with righteousness and discipline of the senses (demand of modesty) and of thought (repulsion of impure thoughts).

It seems to us that we are facing a hygienist view of both the body and desire. They are not seen as independent concepts, rather they are linked: there is no desire without a body and there is no body without desire. The 6th, 9th and 10th commandments of God’s law suggest, in spite of the free will of the subjects, to keep chastity in words, works, thoughts and desires, in addition to strongly recommending not to covet thy neighbor’s wife and things. The 10th commandment unfolds and complements the 9th. Exodus

20:17 forbids coveting the possessions of others as well as a woman's body. As an object - an objectified property - it is included in the commandment: "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house." You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male or female servants, nor his ox or donkey, nor anything that belongs to him." Man is, therefore, the owner of bodies and meat.

A woman's body is regulated by the presence or absence of her virginity. Her chastity is a historical, religious, cultural concept and a concrete and carnal prize to be consumed as a commodity by the children of the man-God. Women are possessed as property (as a wife and mother) and, in this sense, they do not have the same right to the self-determination of their body as men do. According to Butler, "the very bodies for which we struggle are not quite ever only our own" (Butler, 2004, p. 26). It is an objectified and instrumentalized body to (re)produce in the economic structure, to be managed and oppressed and even act as an oppressor or a little soldier (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004; hooks, 1989) capable of effectively oppressing. Fettered to a system of subordination by the "Absolute" (Beauvoir, 1967, p. 10) - the subject who is given the legitimacy to objectify and instrumentalize.

In Christian mysticism, virginity contemplates the approximation of the body to the spiritual reality and in this sense it is defined as "sanctification" (Foucault, 2021). For Saint Cyprian, virginity is the maximum expression of God and is related to the purification provided by baptism, which defines the body as the temple of God, or, to be clearer, as the property of God: "When you remain chaste and virgin, you are equal to the angels of the Father" (Cypriano, 249, p. 22). Virgins combine the purity of the beginning of the world and the gift of incorruptibility. This is because they maintain, according to Saint Cyprian, the 'seal' of Creation and, for this reason, they maintain a privileged relationship with God and the divine. Also for Gregory of Nyssa (1966), virginity symbolizes a return to paradise, beyond the fall. For Foucault, the mystique of "virginity opens the door to [the possibility of an] angelic existence" (Foucault, 2021, p. 157) and it salvific, insofar as it is articulated to a conception of world history and meta-history of salvation (Foucault, 2021). Virginity, even as an ascetic practice, lacks the "intervention of a director" (2021, p. 165), that is a power capable of regulating and disciplining bodies and minds (Foucault, 1998), because the "purity of the soul [and the body] cannot be ensured without constant vigilance" (Foucault, 2021, p. 174).

In addition to the virginal and maternal function assigned to women's bodies, the priests advise penitents, for example, to assume a slavish role at

home. In addition, they advise penitents to improve and embellish their bodies to please the husband and, consequently, contribute to the greater good of maintaining and preserving marriage. Patriarchal strategies, such as keeping housework in the hands of women and the idea that their bodies must satisfy men aesthetically and functionally, continue to hold women hostage. Often with their own consent and encouragement not only in relation to the control of their bodies but also in relation to the control, discipline and right of ownership over the bodies of other women.

Capitalism is Eurocentered and heterosexualist (Lugones, 2007). Throughout the 20th century and into the present, both it and the wild market associated with it have benefited and still benefit from representations, from the social role of women and a certain body and beauty standard. This feeds, along with religion, the conception of a so-called romantic love: “They say it is love. We say it is unwage work. They call it frigidity (...) Every miscarriage is a work accident (...) Neuroses, suicides, desexualization: occupational diseases of the housewife” (Federici, 2020, p. 32).

The family as an institution, that is recognizable as white, westernized, heterosexual and monogamous, by the standardized way that we know it and it is presented to us, constitutes a productive and reproductive source, using women’s bodies as incubators and caretakers for the working class that later will feed the capitalist gear (Čakardić, 2020) and the production system. Silvia Federici (Federici, 2020) believes that women’s bodies produce the labor force for the capitalist machinery but not only that, women are also the caregivers who perform the invisible and ‘natural’ activities of daily maintenance. They tend the working class so that the next day the strength of the working class can be extracted. In addition to the devaluation of activities related to the care of the family, this dynamic perpetuates the division of public private spaces and produces submissive and dependent subjectivities.

For Ochy Curiel (2018), heterosexuality, in addition to being compulsory, is mythically produced and is linked to forms of capitalist production that relegate primarily to women the tasks of care,

Assigning (...) inferior positions in the division of labor such as maids, secretaries, nannies, educators, waitresses, giving rise to a sexualization of the work itself (...) It is an institutionalized imposition (...) to ensure men’s right to physical, economic and emotional access to women (Curiel, 2018, p. 226).

For Federici, it is in this invisible, naturalized and parasitic work that capitalism finds conditions for survival – in the double exploitation, domination and objectification of women’s bodies:

Housework was transformed into a natural attribute, rather than being recognized as work, because it was destined to be unwaged. Capital had to convince us that it is a natural, unavoidable, and even fulfilling activity to make us accept working without a wage (Federici, 2020, pp. 33–34).

If there is any abstraction with effects as concrete as they are nefarious, it is the concept of ‘romantic love’. It is with it that, according to Federici (2020), we naturalize the functions determined for women’s bodies. There is even some satisfaction, passion and idealism in the performance of these functions (maternal – domestic) that are not considered valuable work. Catholic theory and the dialogues between priests and journalists expose a kind of blackmail that is linked to the concept of romantic love: if you are not a good wife (exploitation of the body) and housewife (exploitation of the workforce) it is because you don’t love your husband and your family, for example. Therefore, domestic and reproductive work is, according to Catholic theory and the priests in *Sex and the Confessional*, a form of love, and love cannot be paid for.

Romantic love is a key mechanism for the maintenance of the oppression and precarity of women’s bodies and for the institution of the traditional and canonical family to be preserved, always at the service of the interests of the Catholic Church and the State, in an insidious and seductive articulation, because, according to Frei Carlos Schmitt, “every girlfriend’s dream is to see a wedding ring on her finger one day” (1949, p. 27). Romantic love is a precarious bond, a regime of truth and a patriarchal device, enforced by heteronormative marriage, which promotes sexual hierarchies, sacrifice and privatization nationalization of female bodies.

Women’s bodies were compulsively confined to the home and to a regime of public-private function and use. Women’s bodies are continually subjected to consented androcentric aggression (supported and stimulated by women themselves), as their bodies are culturally and socially constructed. According to Puleo, women find themselves subject to a very particular violence due to their association with Nature, with the inferior and sub-human (2021). It is in the defense of the natural/nature and of the biological-reproductive that the argument of Catholic theory resides. It has always stimulated the idealization of the female figure, the stereotype of the woman-mother and the vir-

tues of care. The treatment of women's bodies is engendered from an androcentric perspective of oppression with multiple implications for the creation of stereotypes that represent women. To Patricia Redondo,

the responsibility for the care and maintenance of the family continues to fall ideologically and symbolically on the female figure (...) At the base of this is the naturalization of motherhood (...) We understand that we women are naturally prepared for this work (...) (2021, p. 261)

The logic of androcentric and phallogentric oppression and violence is built from a framework of precariousness and vulnerability that is symbolic and concrete. This vulnerability we are talking about does not concern the concept of 'female vulnerability' constructed by literary, scientific and religious archetypes, but the concept of vulnerability constructed, critically and politically, by Judith Butler. Talking about the dehumanization of the Other implies the idea of taking away a certain subject's humanity. In the end, who counts as human? According to the way Butler thinks, the process of derealization is linked to dehumanization and consequently to precariousness and violence. Dehumanizing someone always presupposes violating them and making them precarious. To sanctify, virginize, instrumentalize and objectify the bodies of women is to submit them to precariousness and violence: it is the same as to dehumanize women. In this process, there is a double vulnerability: the naturalization and internalization of the processes of violence either by the oppressive bodies or by the oppressed bodies. It is at the intersection and articulation of various forms of violence that systems of domination, exploitation and oppression are (re)produced. They structure and strengthen the typically neoliberal, patriarchal and phallogentric capitalist system.

Judith Butler says that "The body implies mortality, vulnerability, agency: the skin and the flesh expose us to the gaze of others, but also to touch, and to violence, and it can be the agency and instrument of all these as well" (Butler, 2004). To Butler we are politically constructed from the "social vulnerability of our bodies" (2004, p. 26) and inevitably exposed to others in a permanent "risk of violence by virtue of that exposure" (2004, p. 26), gender being a fundamental category to determine exposure to violence and precariousness. In our century the bodies that are objectified, colonized and precarious are those of cis women and trans men and women. They are colonized stages upon which property and the right to exercise violence are disputed and, in this sense, it is imperative to decolonize the agency and institute it as

desire, resistance and critical and political action. In response, we must reclaim our bodies (Butler, 2004, 2017).

According to María Lugones (2007) e Ankica Čakardić (2021), It is impossible to think on gender without taking into account other factors that contribute to symbolic violence and that complicate the formation of gender. These factors contribute to the construction of discourses of power within a capitalist, colonial and patriarchal matrix:

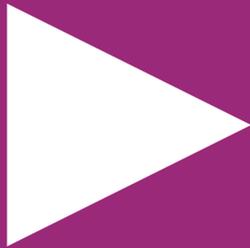
To understand the relation of the birth of the colonial/modern gender system to the birth of global colonial capitalism - with the centrality of the coloniality of power to that system of global power - is to understand our present organization of life anew (Lugones, 2007, p. 187).

According to Derrida, “there is no nature, only the effects of nature: denaturalization or naturalization” (1991, p. 216). It remains for us to deconstruct and denaturalize archetypes and representations that relegate women to various forms of violence: physical and symbolic, as evidenced by the number of fatal and non-fatal victims of domestic violence and how most of these same victims are women, marked since the womb by biological and social determinism. A woman’s body is not hers. She can only disobey and contest the discipline, within the dynamics of discipline and punishment, imposed on her body (Foucault, 1998, 2010) for, in the wake of bell hooks, “(...) silence is evoked as a signifier, a marker of exploitation, oppression, dehumanization. Silence is the condition of one who has been dominated, made an object; talk is the mark of freeing, of making one subject” (1989, p. 129).

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CAMALEOA. FROM THE BODY TO THE MANIFEST¹

| Rita Pinheiro²

Abstract

Having the opportunity to tell a story to attentive listeners is unique. Creating a story from other stories is fascinating. Creating a show and sharing the body and soul is something transcendent. A monologue is one of the great challenges of an actress' work. A remarkable experience, which before being savored, can be tremendously frightening. A naked and stripped body on stage is overwhelmingly genuineness, yet it slakes every pore of our body like a tattoo of vivid emotions. The scene writing took place during the research from testimonies of sex workers. Which results in a solitary staging and sincere interpretation of a real journey throughout the universe of invisibility. There are talks about lives, dreams, society, emotions, legislation, and sex. The play gives the public the opportunity to being enlightened and to unravel some mysteries of the oldest careers in the world to narrow those gaps concerning questions about the invisibility and marginality to which sex workers are subject to. Also, to provoke and tease them to consider the type of prejudice and discrimination they exert. In the end, which is the face of violence?

Keywords

Structural violence; Sex Workers; Social Stigma; Marginality; Invisibility; Scene Writing.

CHAPTER I – CONTEXTUALIZATION

Concerns

“Violence, however, it manifests itself, is always a defeat.” (Sartre, 1948)

The present project result from a research process on the universe of sex workers, the structural violence to which they are subjected and the way in which

¹ Work resulting from the Master's Dissertation in Performing Arts at ESMAE and name of the play. A summary of the research will be presented at the VIII International Congress on Cultural Studies: Sexualities and Leisure.

² Actress and director. Email: pinheiorita@hotmail.com

this violence contributes to their invisibility and marginalization. The research was based on the analysis of several studies, articles, books and on interviews carried out with different sex workers. Then the scene writing took place, resulting in the creation of the play “Camaleoa. From the Body to the Manifest”.

Camaleoa was born out of my ambition to use my artistic work to foster collective reflection: what is our role and what place do we occupy in society. In my view, theater is a transforming element, capable of making people think. Therefore, the choice of theme does not arise in an innocent way and is also closely linked to my particular interest in minorities. My “activist” vein extends to several causes, but the long path of research and investigation, namely, on the specter of violence led me to the group of those who live on the sidelines. After arriving in this universe, the decision to work on sex workers came about due to numerous factors. Understanding the relationship of sex workers with society, the management of their professional and family life, work carried out on a large scale by women, the very taboo of sex, among other issues that raised many reflections. At the same time, there was an inexplicable feeling results of some violent events against sex workers, such as the case of the death of Gisberta 2006, which took place in Portugal, which caused shock and consternation, admitting that these workers do not have any rights or protection in what is one of the oldest careers. There are many professionals who are sentenced to pimping, suffer discrimination and structural prejudice. However, given the current legal situation, they are completely unprotected. If, on the one hand, they provide services in high demand, on the other, their existence is denied by society. They are the so-called invisible workers, to whom Camaleoa intends to give a voice.

Thus, aware that sex workers are not marginal, but live on the sidelines and are marginalized by society, an artistic project was developed with the aim of bringing this universe together.

Beliefs

I started this investigation with the purpose of understanding how the collective of sex workers, suffered from structural violence and were made invisible by society. Being a group that suffers marginalization, I wanted to give them a voice. I would also like to know more about sex work itself, the entire universe that surrounds it and the current situation in Portugal.

Although the sex taboo was something that incited me to talk about it, from the beginning of the investigation I wondered if people would be in this career by choice and what were the motivations that led them to continue this path. I also had some preconceived ideas: most sex workers are forced to work, come from poor backgrounds, live in dramatic situations, have little training, and sex work always involves sex. During the investigation, I became aware that I was wrong and that, somehow, I had a prejudiced view.

Naturally, these beliefs are the result of my socialization and acculturation, but I realized that I had never really looked at this reality. Furthermore, almost everything about this reality was unknown since is something that society tries so hard to hide. However, after months of research, I can say that I have more knowledge about the universe of sex work, the different categories in the exercise of the career, the current situation in Portugal, the difficulties they daily face, the legislation and what has been done to change the working conditions of sex workers who currently work in Portugal.

Goals of this project

Main Goals	Specifics
Raise awareness of current and disruptive issues in society	Originate the debate about sex work
Promoting tolerance (giving voice to marginalized and invisible groups)	Give visibility to workers in the sector
Foster collective reflection and critical thinking	Disseminate the characteristics and scope of the universe of sex work
Contribute to the construction and mediation of publics;	Publicize the current situation of sex workers in view of the lack of a legal framework in Portugal
Deliver Values.	Encourage reflection and questioning about how structural violence conditions the lives of these professionals

Figure 1 – Board with the objectives

CHAPTER II - UNIVERSE OF SEX

Concept of Prostitution - Historical evolution

“Prostitution³ is as old as the world.”⁴

Professional activity, often reduced to prostitution, dates to ancient Greece. Several centuries before Christ, instead of being seen as an immoral act, it was considered a career with the highest remuneration for women.

At a time when women held another type of power, protected by the strength of the goddesses, prostitution was a component of daily life, considered even necessary, since it was an economic activity with considerable profits (Salles, 1987).

Many centuries later, with the spread of the church power and marriage assuming an increasingly prominent position in societies, patriarchal predominance was reached. In this way, the women prominence disappears, and dragged into the shadow of man who often assumes himself as their owner. Therefore, a huge division is created between legitimate women and women who prostituted themselves, causing a continuous stigmatization of those who prostituted themselves, something that remains until today, making the career a target of systemic prejudices that marginalize those involved (Bassermann, 1968).

Sex workers and the sex industry

With the structuring of societies, what was understood by prostitution began to be the object of analysis by sociology. However, due to its strong presence, its study by other sciences became inevitable. For this reason, several interpretations and conceptions of prostitution have been considered. Ideas are very divergent: those who fight for the rights of sex workers, and those who spread abolitionist ideas, since they consider sex work an unworthy com-

³ Prostitution: the term prostitution will be used to present the evolution of sex work, however, as it is a designation that many of the sex workers interviewed consider derogatory, and I feel the same, it will only be used when strictly necessary.

⁴ Cruz, F. I. dos S. (1984). *Da Prostituição na cidade de Lisboa*. Lisboa: Publicações Dom Quixote, coleção Portugal de Perto, N.º5, p.53-69. Access on 20 sep. 2021. Available in <https://books.open-edition.org/etnograficapress/4698>

modification of the body and sexuality of women, which is an affront to women's rights.

According to Lopes (2006) this moralizing discourse against sex work is justified with adjectives such as degrading and traumatizing for women, as if only women did it. But it is quickly realized that this only happens because it's assumed that woman's body is a sexual "place", meaning, is understood that it's in sexual experiences and in the sexual organs themselves that women self-esteem resides. And while it may be true for some people, it's certainly not for everyone. Many women see nothing disturbing in the commercial transaction Agustin (2005, cit. in Lopes, 2006). In fact, bodily experiences are very particular, and it's urgent to recognize and respect them.

The vision that Lopes (2006) brings us with her book defends not only the use of the term sex worker, first used by activist Carol Leigh⁵ in the 70s, but also reveals that the sex industry, often confused with prostitution, is a path chosen by many and for these professionals it is essential to develop their career without discrimination. In addition, she tries to contest the idea of selling the body, very recurrent in the feminist discourse that places women as victims without control of their lives.

Professor at Porto University, Alexandra Oliveira has developed a dense and relevant research on sex work. She describes it as a commercial activity of services providing, in exchange for a remuneration, which only differs from other activities because there is a behavior linked to sexuality and eroticism, always safeguarding that workers are of legal age freely choose and knowingly without any coercion, engage in the practice of prostitution.

According to Oliveira, the vast offer can be practiced by different actors, in different contexts depending on culture, economic power, supply and demand. It is an activity with various specifications such as pornography, strip-tease shows, luxury escorts, among others. It can happen in different places, namely the street, private apartments, hotels, massage spaces, bars, clubs and even online through services such as erotic lines, personalized webcam services, leaving room for other possibilities. In this sense, sex work goes beyond the limitations of street prostitution, but provides remuneration for the provision of a service to the client whose objective is,

“Provide pleasure through a sexual experience.” (Pinheiro (2021): Camaleoa).

⁵ Carol Leigh is an American artist, ex. sex worker and activist.

Among sex work researchers, there is a consensus that there are significant differences between forced and voluntary prostitution and that sex work, trafficking, and sexual exploitation, despite complex issues, should not be confused. Something that Oliveira (2011) insists on constantly reinforcing in his work.

Since the 1990s, the UN and the International Labor Organization have used the expression work/sex worker, with the aim of dignifying and combating stigma. Even in 1998, the International Labor Organization called for economic recognition of the sector, with duly taxed activity and defense of workers' rights.⁶

Despite prostitution being more easily identified, after extensive research, it is concluded that the designations, sex worker and sex industry, are more comprehensive and inclusive since they do not carry the prejudice of other terms. In addition, its scope makes it possible to encompass the different actors that may be part of the sex industry, namely, women, men, trans, transsexuals, transvestites, queer, among other designations.

Unfortunately, there are still those who believe that perpetuating stigma, criminalizing, and disabling those who see sex as a career, is the best way to defend the rights of sex workers and for this reason, works like this project can prove to be important.

Sex work considered a career

Although the literature on activism in defense of the rights of sex workers is limited, and across the world there continues to be strong resistance to the dignification of sex work, according to Lopes (2006), with the publication of

Sex Work from Delacoste and Alexander (1987), the concept of sex work as normal work has been central to the movement to defend the rights of sex workers. (Lopes 2006, p. 103)

We can say that it is a career because people who develop this activity do it to obtain remuneration to meet their economic expenses. Naturally, it is not a job equal to the others, because they have different characteristics, however it must be equated in terms of rights. Stigma, violence, and diseases are

⁶ Cândia, F. (2018). *A guerra do trabalho sexual*. Access on 27 sep. 2021. Available in <https://www.dn.pt/edicao-dodia/25-nov-2018/a-guerra-do-trabalho-sexual-10232020.html>

the biggest difficulties and risks they daily face, essentially because societies do not offer conditions for the career to be exercised with due security. Although my purpose with this project was not to discuss or raise questions about the professionalization, advantages, or characteristics of the work, I felt it was necessary to contextualize the situation of the sex industry.

In this sense, I present the timeline I developed for the flyer that presents some historical milestones and achievements that sex workers have achieved around the world.

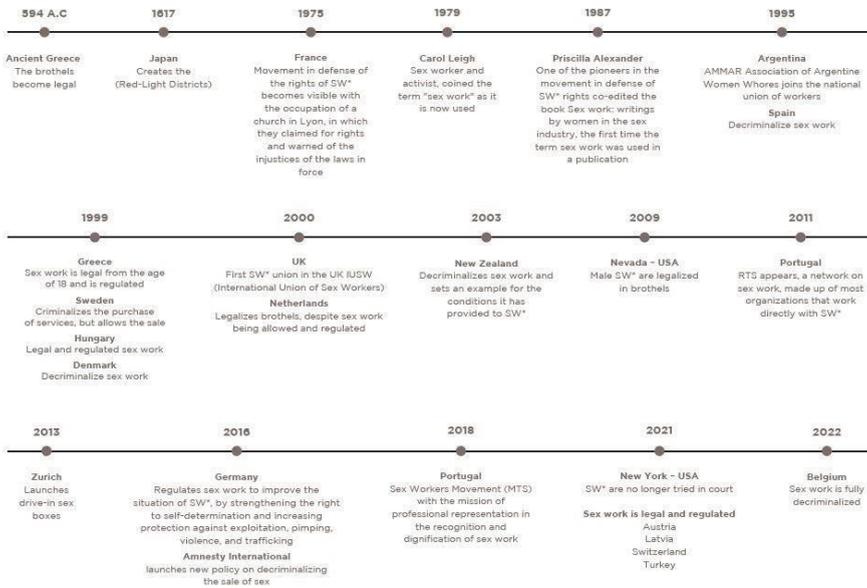


Figure 2 - Timeline prepared for the flyer with relevant dates

Sex work in Portugal

The situation in Portugal is the total absence of sex work regulation, which is reflected in the lack of rights and duties for people whose livelihood comes from the sale of sexual services. The legislation is in a limbo that puts workers in a place of lack of protection that only perpetuates the stigma and violence to which they are the target. One of the blatant examples is the fact that it is allowed to exercise, that is, the worker is not punished, however the workers

are haunted by the crime of simple pimping which, in short, consists of: “Whoever, professionally or with a lucrative intention, promotes, favors or facilitates the exercise by another person of prostitution is punished with imprisonment from six months to five years”. The article can be consulted here⁷.

In practice, simple pimping makes it impossible for workers to, for example, share transport, rent spaces, which is not the case in any other career. And this becomes dangerous because it forces them to work clandestinely.

It is the legal systems that, by criminalizing sex work, deny sex workers legal and police protection, leading them to seek alternative, rather than ideal, forms of protection. (Lopes, 2006, p. 39)

Several countries have been taking a stance of persecution towards sex work, nevertheless they have shown that this type of stance does not prevent the work, and on the contrary, contributes to the increase of stigma,

In countries where it was partially or completely criminalized it didn't end. And the worst is that it contributes for an increasing in the discrimination and marginalization. The result: more vulnerable groups, more exploration and violence. (Pinheiro [Camaleoa], 2021)

For this reason, more and more studies point to decriminalization as the best scenario for the defense of the human rights of those who work with sex.

To defend the interests of sex workers, decriminalization and recognition as a career, different groups and collectives were emerging across the country. In particular the *GIITS - Grupo Interdisciplinar de Investigadores sobre Trabalho Sexual*⁸, the *MTS - Movimento dxs Trabalhadorxs do sexo*⁹, the *Porto G*¹⁰ and others.

It's urgent the creation of a model aimed at decriminalization of the sex work and the legitimization as a career (Pinheiro [Camaleoa], 2021)

⁷ Crime of simple pimping (lenocínio simples). Access on 17 oct. 2020. Available <https://dre.pt/web/guest/legislacao-consolidada/-/lc/107981223/201708230200/73474079/di- ploma/indice>

⁸ GIITS. Access on 20 jul. 2021. Available in <https://www.facebook.com/groups/658571561008739/>

⁹ MTS. Access on 20 jul. 2021. Available in <https://mts.parafuso.net>

¹⁰ Porto G. Access on 20 jul. 2021. Available in <https://www.portog.org/oquefazemos>

CHAPTER III – METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH

Methodology

This research is a research-creation with a qualitative methodology by case study. Scene writing was developed which culminated in a play and analytical reflection of the process.

1. Fighting the sex worker stereotype

- Medium level of education

Within my sample, only one did not reveal his education and one has only 7th grade. The rest are in the 12th grade. Some cases even entered college, however, due to various situations they had to drop out. One of the sample elements is licensed.

- Doesn't have life stories full of problems and disorders

In general, the references to childhood and life situations, revealed to be dealing with normal situations, with losses and natural dramas that any human being can go through.

I don't really know how but my mother, a seamstress with four children, was always able to make us feel like we were the best in the world. And looking back, we really were. She was a very special person. (Pineiro [Camaleoa], 2021)

2. They like what they do

There are workers who like to work with sex, who are competent, and fulfill their obligations, despite having to live in hiding. Who seek to fight for decent conditions and present several valid arguments for the fact of staying in the sex industry.

I decided to use my body as an armor and to stop being a victim of the system! That's what happen. (Pineiro [Camaleoa], 2021)

I remember perfectly the first time I was with a client. Curiously it was also the first time I felt truly empowered. It's amazing, right? People just can't understand that because they don't see my work with the same eyes, but I was finally in control. I had the power. I demanded and lead. I was being paid to dominate and use my capabilities to provide pleasure. And I didn't feel shame at all. It was wonderful. My self-esteem changed. (Pinheiro [Camaleoa], 2021)

3. Work in the industry by choice

I think that what led me to start working in the sex industry was ambition. I wanted to earn more, and I wanted to have my own stuff. (Pinheiro [Camaleoa], 2021)

Some found in the sex work the confidence and motivation they needed to feel complete. Others like to please. Some of those interviewed feel that with sex work they are helping other people. The arguments are numerous, but the financial issue was undoubtedly unanimous.

The sex industry and, in particular, prostitution, are often understood as the last alternative for those who practice it. This is far from the truth. It's another baseless generalization. (...) The media and the speech of abolitionist feminists are largely responsible for this reductive vision, as they seek out the most vulnerable sectors and use these situations as an argument to condemn the industry. (Lopes, 2006, p. 29)

4. Above average remuneration

It was the sex work that allowed me to reach financial independency and have a life. (Pinheiro [Camaleoa], 2021)

CHAPTER IV – CREATIVE PROCESS

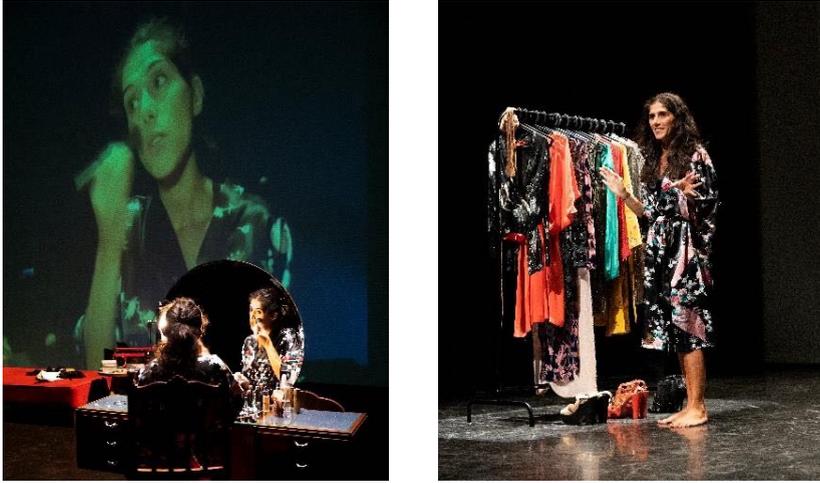


Figure 3 – Images of the performance

Synopsis

A chameleoa changes colors to camouflage itself, depending on its environment or emotional state. But many times, this change happens to defend her territory and to become visible. Camaleoa is based on sex workers’ testimonies and intends to give voice to those who have been living on the sidelines. In a poetic journey, it talks about paths and trajectories introducing the audience to a universe camouflaged by beliefs. “But who set the parameters of dignity? I decided to use my body as an armor and to stop being a victim of the system. That’s what happened.”

Final Notes

I always had the intention of developing an artistic project, starting from something urgent and real, that could contribute to reflection, given that I wanted to use my work to change the world. Two years after the beginning of this project I managed to achieve most of my goals and therefore the balance is very positive. Furthermore, it was possible to find answers to some of my concerns and explain some of my convictions, namely: understanding the invisibility and marginalization that sex workers are subject to; understand how

stigma and prejudice condition the lives of these workers; putting into perspective different types of violence that each of us ends up exercising socially; know and make known the universe of those who live from sex; to confront the spectator with the reality of sex work in Portugal; raising awareness of the importance of legalizing sex work in Portugal; use my artwork to give voice to people living on the side lines.

I set out to analyze structural violence, and, according to my sample, the existence of various behaviors of violence, namely stigma and prejudice, was identified, in view of the work they perform. At the same time, an increasingly organized career class was found, which fights for its objectives, with well-defined goals, well paid and who enjoy what they do.

There is another side that has not been investigated, more associated with crime, sexually transmitted diseases, degradation, and extreme poverty. However, despite knowing that this universe exists, as I haven't had any contact with it, therefore, I will not comment.

My proposal to develop an artistic creation and scene writing based on testimonies of sex workers, came to fruition, and resulted in the development of a monologue, *Camaleoa*, presented on September 19, 2021, at Teatro Helena Sá and Costa. A play, with a manifesto attitude, that intended to give voice to sex workers, with which I intend to circulate and, in this way, make my work reach more people.

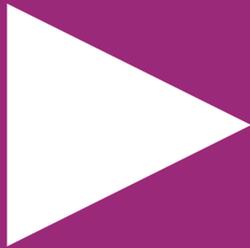
After the presentation, the feedback has been very positive and encouraging, so I believe that *Camaleoa* will continue to manifest and make itself heard.

(...) I intend to contribute to the emancipation of these voices and to the recognition of the mobilization of this group of people (Lopes, 2006, p. 44).

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NOTES ABOUT LEISURE AND DESIRE: SCHIZOANALYTIC PERSPECTIVE¹

Francisco Welligton Barbosa Jr²

Maria Manuel Baptista³

Abstract

Schizoanalysis is a way of thinking developed by Deleuze and Guattari. In this way of thinking, the authors seek to understand how individuals have their desires captured and colonized, in order to serve the culture; and, on the other hand, how it is possible for the individual to produce practices in which the flows of his desires are made possible, how and where these flows go along, which other flows are possible and which are barred when they happen. These are processes that occur from our daily practices. And as an example of such practices, we can mention leisure, which, although it is a necessary element in our lives, is currently still very permeated by prejudices in our cultures, which is expressed in popular phrases such as “empty mind, devil’s workshop”, contributing to difficulties in living possible leisure. Knowing this, the present text, of an essayistic character, aims to reflect on leisure and desire in the light of schizoanalysis, based on a Deleuzian point of view. This is another perspective on the studies of leisure. In this sense, we carried out a narrative review based on literature referred to the theme in question: leisure, desire and schizoanalysis. This led us to develop three topics for dialogue: leisure and desire; leisure between segmentarities and escapes; and “minor leisure”. These topics allow us to think of leisure as a performance, a practice in which flows of desire barred in our bodies can be released. Of desires captured in our cultures. Captured by capital, which produces other desires. Desires that we internalize in our daily lives. It is a leisure traversed and produced from hard and flexible lines of segmentarity. A leisure traversed and produced from elements and practices established in our cultures, permeating the history of each body. A leisure that is also produced and produces lines of flight. Lines that are born, emerge, escape towards the new, towards life. To the production of life. Promoting deterritorializations. It is a “minor leisure”. A leisure for minorities. A leisure in which flows of desire for bodies on the sidelines are arranged. It is, therefore, a leisure that is produced from a tension between desires in each body. A field of tensions. Evidencing, in this way, a leisure in its politi-

¹ Paper presented during the VIII International Conference on Cultural Studies: Sexualities and Leisure.

² PhD candidate in the Doctoral Program in Cultural Studies, University of Aveiro. E-mail: francisowbjr@gmail.com.

³ Professor of the Doctoral Program in Cultural Studies, University of Aveiro. E-mail: mbaptista@ua.pt.

cal aspect. A political performance. A performance that contributes to processes of production of subjectivities. A performance that can contribute to cultural productions.

Keywords

Leisure; flow; desire; schizoanalysis; Deleuze and Guattari.

Introduction

Schizoanalysis is a way of thinking developed by Deleuze and Guattari. In this way of thinking, the authors seek to think about life based on the relationship between the flows of desire and culture, understanding how individuals have their desires captured and colonized, in order to serve culture; and how it is possible for the individual to produce practices in which the flows of his desires are made possible, how and where these flows occur, which other flows are possible and which are barred when they flow (Deleuze, 2013). Flows of individuals, desiring machines, desiring machines, whose flows of desires organize their bodies. Machines that couple and decouple with other machines, with objects, with all the possibility of what exists. Desires and flows that are produced and produce (Deleuze & Guattari, 2010). These are processes that occur throughout history, since the history of the species. Processes that occur in our practices, in our daily lives.

And as an example of such practices, we can mention leisure. A central element in our lives. A practice carried out since ancient Greece – as far as is known (Amigo, 2008; Aquino & Martins, 2007). But since the industrial revolution has been permeated by prejudices in our cultures, which is expressed in popular phrases such as “empty mind, devil’s workshop”, “leisure is the father of all addictions” (Aquino & Martins, 2007), among others, contributing to a devaluation and prejudice in relation to leisure and, consequently, difficulties in living possible leisure in our days.

Knowing this, the present text, of an essayistic character, aims to reflect on leisure and desire in the light of schizoanalysis, based on a Deleuzian point of view. In this sense, we carried out a narrative review based on literature referred to the theme in question: leisure, desire and schizoanalysis. Literature by authors referring to leisure, such as Aquino and Martins (2007), Baptista (2016) and Cuenca (2016); and works by authors referring to schizoanalysis, such as *Conversations* (2003), by Deleuze, *Anti-Oedipus* (2010), *A Thousand*

Plateaus, vols. 2., 3 and 4 (2011, 2012a, 2012b) and *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature* (2017), by Deleuze and Guattari, and *Dialogues* (1998), by Deleuze and Parnet. This led us to develop three topics for thinking about leisure: leisure and desire; leisure between segmentarities and escapes; and “minor leisure”. It is, therefore, another perspective on the studies of leisure. A different perspective from recent studies on the subject.

Leisure and desire

In order to think about leisure in a schizoanalytic perspective, it is necessary to consider three important concepts: schizoanalysis (which we mentioned briefly), desire and the body.

Schizoanalysis seeks to understand about desire and its flows, that is, about what moves life. Life in nature, as well as the life of every human being. Because the human being, according to this way of thinking, is not understood as a superior species or even outside nature. Otherwise: the human being is also a species that makes up nature. A species in which each individual has desires, desires of his own and which, at the same time, are crossed by desires of the culture. A culture that is guided by capitalism.

And this notion of desire that the authors discuss is different from that commonly presented by psychoanalysis or common sense (Deleuze, 2013; Deleuze & Guattari, 2010). According to schizoanalysis, desire is not about a lack and its relationship to the Oedipus complex and castration (contrary to what Freudian psychoanalysis suggests, for example); but rather to a possibility of intensity that can lead to the production of reality, to the “production of productions, actions and passions; productions of records, distributions and markings; productions of consumption, voluptuousness, anguish and pain” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2010, p. 14).

According to the authors, “there are only machines everywhere” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2010, p. 11). Bodies are machines. Organs are machines. “The breast is a machine that produces milk, and the mouth is a machine coupled to it” (p. 11). And each individual is a kind of machine that desires. A desiring machine. If an electronic machine has wires through which electricity is conducted, carrying out the commands of its owners, the individual, as a desiring machine, presents flows that run. Flows of desires that go in one direction or another, that cut and are intersected by other flows of other desires.

It is from our daily practices that desires run in their own flows. Or, using one of the authors terms: that desires are arranged. The desires of each individual, as well as the desires of culture, because, once culture crosses us and constitutes us, the desires of culture also cross us, constitute our ways of desiring and much of what we desire - although we may not perceive it. After all, culture, usually in a subtle way, contributes to the production of desires and ways of desiring. So, when I say “I want this”, is it really my desire? Or a desire of the culture that made itself mine, and I claim it as mine?

In this relationship between desires, between the desires of culture and the desires of the individual, a body is produced. A body that is contemplate from the physical aspect to postures, sounds, tones, expressions of each one, facial expressions, thoughts, feelings, including clothes. These are processes that the authors call facefication (Deleuze & Guattari, 2012a). On the body fell a face, which enveloped it, which organized it, which organized its organs, attributing functions to them. On the body before culture, that is, on the body without organs, the disorganized body, a face has fallen. A face that, in some way, belongs to an individual, but also belongs to others (Deleuze & Guattari, 2012a). It is enough that we observe common characteristics between people of a same community, for example. In other words: they are processes of production of subjectivity in these individuals crossed by the cultures of their places.

It is a body that never ceases to be produced. A constantly faced body. A body constantly in tensions. After all, the tensions between the individual and the culture occur all the time, from what seems explicit to the most implicit. These tensions seem to run from before his birth to his death. Because before being born, the individual was already a project. A project oriented from the perspectives of a culture: whether it will be a boy or a girl, what colors to wear, what roles, practices and gestures to perform, even what profession to exercise. There is no individual, practice or memory, without culture crossing.

It is in this relationship between tensions that leisure is situated, because leisure is an individual and cultural practice. Leisure is produced from the desires of the individual and the desires of the culture. When one begins and when the other ends is unknown. They are intertwined, between running flows. If the writer is writing a poem, he uses language, the alphabet. A whole system of codes established in his culture and learned generation after generation. And at the same time, he uses them, he can produce writings in which he creates a kind of new language, new meanings for words, for sentences, as Deleuze (2011) points out. That's what poets do.

Desire and leisure, as well as desires that are sheltered in leisure, cannot be measured either. We can cite two reasons: first, the flows of desire are not stopped, static; they run all the time in our practices, in our bodies. Second, there aren't metrics to measure leisure or desire - although instruments for this purpose are still produced today, such as psychometric scales of attitude towards leisure, used by Freire and Fonte (2007), which present different levels of response, to be processed by software, translated from standard deviations, factor structures and correlations between scales. This idea of measurement is a perspective still derived from positivism, from the 19th century, and which does not reach desire. It does not reach leisure or desire.

Leisure also safeguards a kind of becoming. And what is becoming, after all? How does it happen? This is another schizoanalytic concept. The becoming occurs in a meeting between two blocks. It's about what's in between. Neither one nor the other. A zone of indiscernibility. It's like the meeting between the bee and the orchid. In the contact between the two, there is a zone in which one seems to be in the other; the bee is not just the bee, and the orchid is not just the orchid. Although both are bees and orchids (Deleuze & Guattari, 2012b).

In leisure, in its becoming, a man sings, for example. Imagine a man singing. When singing, he seems not to be just a man. He also appears not to be a bird. But something that is in between. Or the writer, who, in telling a story, in writing a character, is not just a writer. Somehow, he becomes the character who writes. But he is also not just the character who writes (Deleuze & Guattari, 2012b, 2017).

In leisure, like on the becoming, occurs in the field of immanence. In the land. Or here and now, as pointed out by Aquino and Martins (2007) when referring to leisure. It is not a thought dimension. We can even try to describe it and produce concepts for it. However, the truth is that in words we do not reach leisure, just as we do not reach becoming. Both cannot be reached in words or in thoughts or theories. Because to think about both is to miss them. They just follow as flows, which are not guided by a rationality. They occur in a practice that allows us to experience multiplicity.

This leisure, is not purely individual, for, once again: what can we say that is purely individual? What does not protect a face? The face shape the body. Thus, unlike Cuenca (2016), we cannot think of an autotelic leisure, a leisure with an end in itself. It is possible to say that leisure can, at a certain point, have an end in itself; however, it also has an external end. It perpetuates some

cultural practice, while reproducing and modifying it. Leisure is autotelic and heterotelic (Barbosa Jr & Baptista, 2022).

Leisure, in this perspective, is not a practice whose emphasis is placed on enjoyment, another dimension defended by Cuenca (2016). But something that is beyond. Leisure safeguards enjoyment. And it protects a repetition of a cultural practice and its face. A repetition of culture. A repetition that does not occur through pure repetition and its enjoyment. But a repetition that, by repeating itself, produces a difference (Deleuze, 2018). Something escapes. Something new escapes. Even if a trace. And when that happens, the individual is no longer the same. Something changed.

By escaping, we can say that a process of deterritorialization occurs. Another Deleuzian concept, according to the individual leaves a territory (Deleuze & Guattari, 2012a). Here we mention a subjective territory. He leaves a reference that he once took to assert himself. Reference already built, offered by culture (Guattari & Rolnik, 1998). And the individual leaves in search of other territories, of new references. A deterritorialization can occur in a subtle, in a sublime way: an idea changes; a perception changes. Sometimes you don't even notice. The poem that, when written or read, contributes to some new perception on the part of the individual.

It is about territorializing in a new territory, producing a difference that contributes to the production of culture, while new possibilities are produced in this individual. A production that is not just of the individual or just of culture. But produced and loaded from the tensions between flows of desires of both in this body. A production where some flows blocked on this individual are now released. And others, who were released, are now barred.

Such flows released from leisure can question the face. And leisure, while questioning the face, also allows for its reaffirmation. Leisure carries the face and cannot be separated from it. Here is a paradox concerning leisure. Something similar to what Deleuze and Guattari (2012b) affirm in relation to becoming.

Of leisure between segmentarities and escapes

Still according to schizoanalysis, the species, groups, individuals and their practices are crossed and produced from lines: lines of hard segmentarity, lines of flexible segmentarity and escape line (Deleuze & Parnet, 1998). The first refer to conventions throughout the social body. It is about following what is

presented by the culture and its discourses. The “natural” order of life. The “natural” order of things from a macro character, from our passage through institutions, which Deleuze and Guattari (2012a) call “abstract machines”. Among some of these conventions are definitions of: woman and man; young and old; or what would be the supposed course of a life, like being born, going to school, going to college, having a job, getting married, reproducing, getting old, dying. This line, therefore, protects the face and the capitalism that crosses it. Its purpose is to reproduce the desires of the face and its flows. After all, each of these lines carries flows.

As for leisure, it is permeated and produced from this line, although it is not restricted to this one – because it is crossed by all lines. Leisure is born from what is established in our cultures. Leisure is born from what is encoded. Flows that are barred. This is the case with the alphabet. The alphabet, reading and writing are cultural constructions. And in leisure in which a poem is written, these constructions are used.

The second line, the flexible segmentarity line, is related to a microscope, to the history of each individual. And although it is the story of each individual, it is, in some way, the story of everyone. This is because the lines of flexible segmentarity are crossed by the lines of hard segmentarity, by conventions. They are crossed by the face. It is a microscope crossed by a macro. A kind of molecule in the middle of a large spring. “(...) A whole molecular life (...)” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2012a, p. 74). And “(...) the two lines do not stop interfering, reacting to each other, and introducing each one into the other a current of malleability or even a point of rigidity” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2012a, p. 75).

Once again, when it comes to leisure, it can only be thought about the history of each one in their relationship with culture. There is no leisure that is the own line of conventions. But there is also no individual without his story. Writers, for example, are children of a time, but they are not all the same nor do they write in the same way. Each is one. Although they may have some similar characteristics.

And from the encounters between these two lines a third can be born: the escape line. A line that escapes, that flees in search of life. A line that follows in search of creation. That’s what artists do, for example. A line that “is not about each person fleeing ‘personally’, but about making them flee, as when a pipe bursts or an abscess burst. Making flows pass under the social codes that want to canalize them, bar them” (Deleuze, 2013, p. 30).

This line, although escaping, is crossed by the other two: the lines of hard segmentarity and those of flexible segmentarity. It is a line where a new flow is released. A flow of other desires, desires of this body that were once barred by flows of desires of the face, in its lines of hard and flexible segmentarity. At the same time, the escape line, this new line, also carries the face, desires and flows. And it will be faced again.

Therefore, leisure is also permeated and produced from the escape line. Leisure seeks the life production, carrying a new flow. A flow that is released from desires and flows barred in the individual. Leisure carries these flows. It carries all these and others, the flows of the other lines, which cross it. Leisure flees, is born, escapes from the instituted, although it is born from what is instituted and, again, is crossed by the instituted, captured.

Leisure, like the escape line, also promotes deterritorializations, as it sets out in search of the unknown. The search for other territories, for new couplings, releasing powers suffocated by the face. A desiring machine defying the face, at the same moment it carries it. A desiring machine walking to undo the face. Although undoing it is impossible (Deleuze & Guattari, 2012a). A machine that creates. Escape. And repeat your practices. It reproduces and produces culture. This is the case of the emergence of writing, the transmission of culture from this, the creation of a poem in which new meanings are produced for words. A poem that will be studied in books of schools, forming part of the knowledge of a place. And so, through the bodies of students, of generations. They are lines crossing and producing themselves.

“Minor leisure”

From the flows of desires arranged in escape lines, leisure makes it possible to tell a story. A history of these once-barrred flows. History that is born on the shores of the one who idles. Taking what Deleuze and Guattari (2017) say about the writer⁴, we can mention that the one who idles does so from his margins and becomes a foreigner of himself. On margins that belong to him, but also to others. After all, it is crossed by lines of hard segmentarity.

These histories produced on the margins of the leisure are not official histories, for official histories are not born of leisure. They are taught from the face in school, in the family, in the church. From our facialization processes.

⁴ According to the authors, the writer writes from his margins. And, when writing, he becomes a stranger to himself.

These official histories are the histories of the masses. Told to the masses and reproduced. Macro stories. The stories produced at the margins, on the other hand, are micro stories, micro stories, “minor” stories. Stories from a “minor leisure”.

It is in this sense that it can be said that minor leisure is configured as a kind of machine. A war machine, as Deleuze and Guattari (2012a) claim. A machine that destroys and creates itself. This is what happens in art. What happens in poetic creation, for example. To produce a poem, it is necessary to challenge, question rules and even destroy meanings and correlations between terms expressed by grammar, terms taught in school. And from this disarticulation a new possibility can be produced. Destroy and create.

Minor leisure expedites stories of minorities. Stories that were hidden, suffocated. Stories whose flows were barred by flows from the larger stories, these territories and the desires of their face. It is about releasing contained flows of an untold story in everyday life. An unsaid. The untold according to Baptista (2016) when talking about weak leisure. A subtle leisure, present in the subtleties of our daily practices. It is about the untold that questions the face and its desires. And its orders. Its watchwords. Those that aim at obedience (Deleuze & Guattari, 2011). Orders that carry colonialism, subservience, fascism, bolsonarism, in the Brazilian case.

And in this liberation, not only does this leisure allow the flows of these individual desires to flow, but it also highlights tensions between the desires of the individual and the face, as the stories expedite from the minor leisure tell, more subtly or not, about how these flows operate, on how these flows are contained, how they are barred and how the face and its flows run, how and where they flow, how facialization processes occur.

It is a leisure that organizes flows of desires, evidencing stories of a tension between desires. Among the desires of the face, which feeds the micro-fascist that exists in us, these desires that protect colonialism and bolsonarism, for example; and the desires of what is hidden, the barred flows of the body without organs – as if it were a kind of bird trapped in a cage. A bird that wants to fly.

For this and for more leisure should be avoided. And avoiding leisure is a desire of the face. Desire of capitalism, along with colonialism, fascism, bolsonarism. Flows that bar others that need to run in us. “Leisure must be avoided” – this is what we learn. That’s what we are taught: “empty mind, devil’s workshop”. For leisure mediates flows of desires, as in the smaller stories, which are born as escape lines and contribute to the production of other es-

cape lines. This leisure contributes to man's destiny: to unmake the face. Although it does not dissolve (Deleuze & Guattari, 2012a).

Conclusions

The present text aimed to reflect on leisure and desire in the light of schizoanalysis, based on a Deleuzian point of view. In this sense, we start from a narrative review based on literature on the subject, allowing us a new perspective on the studies of leisure, in which we interpret leisure in its relationship with desire and its flows. Flows that run, cross, block each other's flows. Flows that meet and are produced between the body without organs and the face.

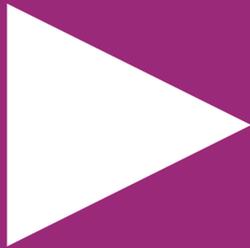
It is a leisure crossed by lines and in which lines are produced. Furthermore, in each story, in each individual, this leisure can reproduce the face, the culture, at the same time it can escape and question it. And by questioning culture, like minor leisure and its minor stories, a practice that is born from the margins of each individual, this leisure can question fascism, micro fascism, at the same time that, in some way, it carries it. A leisure that becomes a micro-resistance to hegemonic discourses, such as fascist discourses, which contribute to feeding capitalism. This contributes to leisure being frowned upon in our capitalist cultures. A leisure to be avoided. Then being threatened.

From this perspective on leisure, a political point of view is highlighted, as tensions between desires and flows related to culture and to the individual are evident, between what is said and what is not said in their daily practices. Tensions related to what would be processes of production of subjectivity, that is, how a body can be produced and how this body can contribute or not to the maintenance of processes of a culture, as well as to produce new processes. It is, therefore, leisure as a political practice that carries possibilities of intervention in and from culture.

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COMIC PORNOTOPIA: THE THEATRICALIZED FICTION OF SEXUALITY IN *MAGDA*, *DEUS AOS DOMINGOS* AND *GAROTA SILAT*¹

| Edmilson Miranda Jr²

Abstract

This paper employs Paul B. Preciado's concept of pornotopia, along with Theresa Tensuan's critical approach to comics, to analyze the representation of the characters Magda, Deus and Garota Silat, created by the comics artist Rafael Campos Rocha. The investigation also employs the perspective of Marlucy Paraíso, in which the three characters are protagonists in cultural texts oriented to leisure and entertainment. Based on the content analysis methodology outlined by Bardin, pornotopias are posited as models of masculinity invented for the production and consumption of pleasure by way of their presence in comics simultaneously reproductive and critical of that very masculinity. In this view, the representation of the female body reproduces Preciado's theatricalized fiction of sexuality and, at the same time, challenges this fiction through presenting discourses that interface with discourses of decoloniality, questioning hegemonic patriarchal symbolic structures. In this sense, the characters confirm Tensuan's reading of the comics, offering a vision of performative practices, family rituals and cultural conventions that articulate individual and collective differences in the context in which they are inserted, the context of a Brazil permeated by complex disputes over the culturally constructed concept of gender.

Keywords

Comics; Decoloniality; Entertainment; Leisure; Pornotopia.

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² PhD student in Cultural Studies, University of Aveiro. Email: edmilson.miranda@ua.pt.

Intentions

Rafael Campos Rocha is a comic book artist, screenwriter, writer, and visual artist. His production as a comic artist came to prominence with the character “Deus, essa gostosa”, which began in the pages of *Ilustríssima*, the cultural supplement of the newspaper *Folha de São Paulo*, and was published in 2012, by the Quadrinhos e Cia imprint of the publisher Companhia das Letras. Since then, the character has been published again in the issue *Deus aos Domingos* (Rocha, 2018) by Veneta. I propose the analysis of the character Deus in the work *Deus aos domingos* (Rocha, 2018), together with two other publications by the same author, in which the protagonists are also non-white women: *Garota Silat* (Rocha, 2022), initially published in the author’s Instagram profile and *Magda* (Rocha, 2016) published by the Quadrinhos e Cia imprint of the publisher Companhia das Letras.

Deus aos Domingos (Rocha, 2018) features the creator of the universe, omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent, black woman, football fan, and sexually uninhibited. In *Magda* (Rocha, 2016) is an adventure that mixes science fiction and terror, starring a black woman, born in Paraíba – a state in northeast Brazil – and endowed with powers obtained by fusing with an alien in the shape of a giant cockroach. *Garota Silat* (Rocha, 2022) is a transgender woman, Indonesian, an expert martial arts fighter and inserted in pornographic plots. This text focuses on how the three works address identity issues – specifically feminist issues linked to racism and xenophobia –, supported by the idea that comics can reproduce symbolic structures that guide certain subjectivities, while challenging the reader to question these structures (Tensuan, 2020).

Therefore, to understand cultural transformations marked in comics, I use Tensuan’s approach (2020), which relates aesthetic formulations of subjectivity and practices of social transformation in comics. It is added the Afro-futurist perspective – assumed here as an analytical filter – to discuss how the works present cultural differences and issues related to gender, race, and sexuality, expressed in the imagistic representation of the protagonists.

Comics register difference

Tensuan (2020) investigates how comics register difference in their productions, “in particular how the represented *bodies* in comics manifest hierarchies of difference” (Tensuan, 2020, p. 140). In this sense, the three

characters analysed and the plot in which they are inserted manifest the patriarchal logic about the female body, at the same time as they challenge such logic, placing non-white women in a position of power in front of the other characters in the plot. From an Afrofuturist perspective, the works register differences when they propose alternatives to the power relations instituted for women in hegemonic culture. Specifically: for a Black woman, as happens with the character Deus; for a Brazilian northeastern woman, as happens with Magda; and for a transgender Indonesian woman, as is the case of the character Kali in *Garota Silat*.

By Afrofuturism I refer to aesthetic expressions marked by a blunt criticism of the racial issue, whose term is coined in the United States (Dery, 1994) and is spreading as a culture of resistance in different countries. It is a “global aesthetic movement that encompasses art, film, literature, music and scholarship”. (Yaszek, 2013, p. 1). Afrofuturism is understood as “speculative fiction or science fiction written by Afrodiasporic and African authors” (Yaszek, 2013, p. 1) who dramatized the racial issue by inventing a bright future for people of colour living in a technocultural world.

To guide the elements that structure the analysis of the works I seek to obtain by content description “indicators (quantitative or not) that allow the inference of knowledge regarding the conditions of production/reception” of the messages (Bardin, 2011, p. 48). That is, the content analysis, conducts this investigation to explore “other realities *through the* messages”. (Bardin, 2011, p. 50). For this, the analysis describes specific details contained in the works seeking to answer the following questions: To what extent can ideas that reinforce the theatricalised fiction of sexuality, or images produced by these ideas – which reproduce this biased and loaded fiction of patriarchal macho imagery – serve to produce a critique of these very images? Would it be possible to perceive these pornographic images – from the way they are presented, in an almost caricatural way –, as a criticism of the patriarchal tropes they reproduce?

When analysing the context built for the narratives of the three characters: Magda, God, and Kali, it is possible to realize that they are involved by a content that flirts with caricature, by exaggerating the eroticization of the female figure. While it also approaches the decolonial proposal, criticizing symbols of Western capitalism printed in the “imaginary of the modern/colonial world” (Mignolo, 2012, p. 3).

In *Magda* (Rocha, 2016) the role occupied by the protagonist – whose name gives the work its title – is aligned with Afrofuturism because it is about a black woman in a dystopian future, a position that presents deeper layers in the Brazilian cultural context. This is because Magda is a northeaster immigrant, coming from outside the Rio-São Paulo axis, established in the Brazilian imaginary as a concentrator axis of political and economic power in the country.

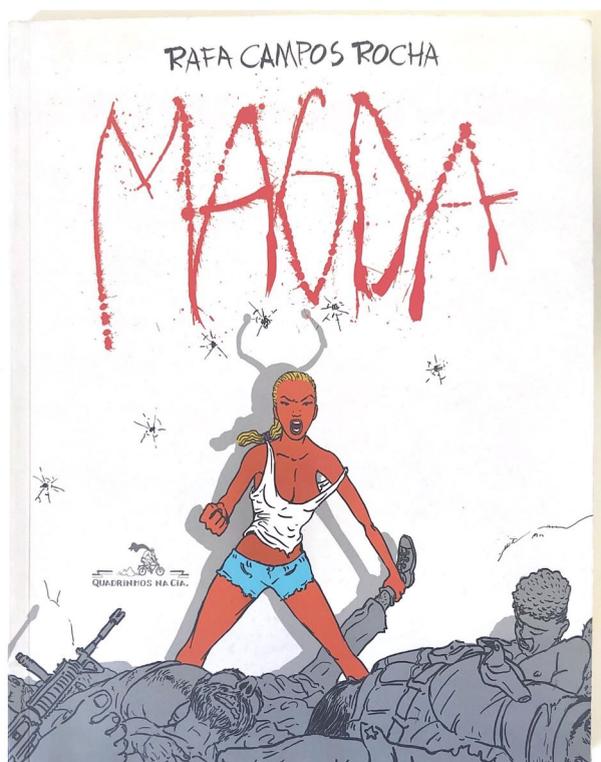


Figure 1 – Magda

Another Afrofuturist aspect is the environment created for the narrative: a future in which the cities of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo are plagued by an infection that turns people into zombies. In this future, Rocha imagines the consequences of contemporary Brazilian inequality. We see how the work questions established representations of power by proposing to imagine them in an alternative environment. As Tensuan explains, comics are capable of renegotiating dichotomies produced in the hegemonic imaginary:

Comics renegotiate the dichotomies created between high and low, news and entertainment, self and other as a means of tracing circulations of power and reverberations of violence and of recasting a reader's understanding of how certain narratives and visions gain cultural currency while others are cast to the margins. (Tensuan, 2020, p. 141)

The narrative of a collapse of the Brazilian economic centre presents an alternative to the project instituted by the “modern European / Euro-North American / colonial capitalist / patriarchal world system” (Grosfoguel, 2009, p. 1) and does so when it imagines a deviation in the expected direction for the state of the historically constructed concentration of resources in Brazil. This type of deviation guides the decolonial perspective.

Decolonial thinking emerges as reflections proposed by authors sensitive to Latin American realities and emerging from the set of productions within the field of Cultural and PostColonial Studies. Decolonisation is a diagnosis and a prognosis removed and not claimed by the *mainstream* of postcolonialism, involving several dimensions related to the colonality of being, knowing and power. To explore these dimensions, we can trace a path from Cultural Studies through the South Asian Subaltern Studies Group to the Latin American Subaltern Studies Group.³ Between the Asian and the Latin American groups lies the postcolonial critique, which “characterises the capitalist system as a cultural system” (Grosfoguel, 2009, p. 60). It is from this critique that the questions discussed by the Subaltern Studies Groups, which nourish decolonial thought, are established. The point of debate that leads to the decolonial perspective is the privileging of the “Western epistemic canon by the South Asian subaltern school”. (Grosfoguel, 2009, p. 43). It is Mignolo (2012) who uses the concept of colonial difference to expose this process. As he describes it, colonial difference began when “Spanish missionaries judged and ranked human intelligence and civilization”. (Mignolo, 2012, p. 3) this “was an initial moment in the configuration of the colonial difference and the building of the Atlantic imaginary; which will become the imaginary of the modern/colonial world.” (Mignolo, 2012, p. 3) It is even in this difference that the imposition of a racial structure of domination is installed, what Aníbal Quijano

³ Based on the organization made by Ramón Grosfoguel (2009), according to him “With very few exceptions, most postcolonial theorists come from the humanities, from areas such as literature, rhetoric and cultural studies. Only a small proportion of scholars in the field of postcoloniality come from the social sciences, notably anthropology.” (Grosfoguel, 2009, p. 59)

called the coloniality of power: the “imposition of the idea of race as an instrument of domination” (Quijano, 2005, p. 136).

In *Deus aos Domingos* (Rocha, 2018), the character is omnipresent, omnipotent, and omniscient, as she is the creator of the universe. Her narrative proposal directly challenges the Western Christian imaginary by presenting an opposition to the image of God as a white man. This is because the idea of God represented as a black woman confronts the “coloniality of power” (Quijano, 2005, p. 136) in the sense of exposing the hegemonic logic as a constructed imaginary that can be reimagined. Thus, if for the colonial logic the idea of race subjugates certain groups, placing a representative of this group as the image of the Christian God subverts this logic, pointing out its contradictions.

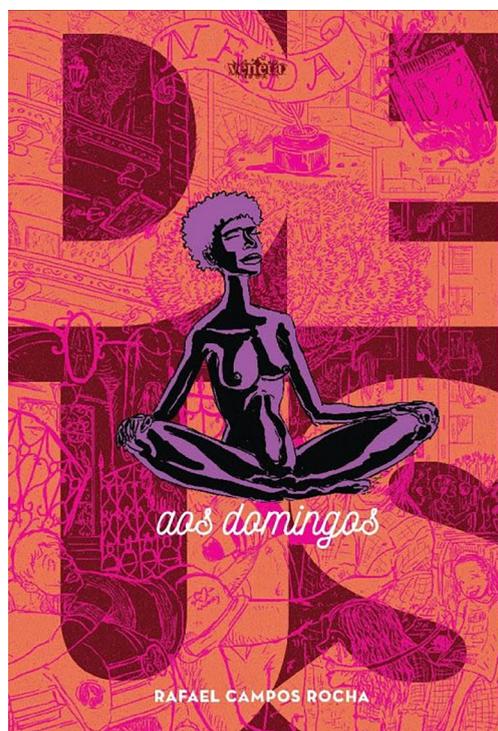


Figure 2 – Cover of *Deus aos Domingos* (Rocha, 2018)

At another point in the narrative, Afrofuturist elements stand out. God is in a future in which Eurocentrism has given way to a world in which Europe does not represent an economic and cultural centre. We see the protagonist

arguing with her girlfriend about the Swiss, who in this reality are “the only humans who still work as security guards! They say they can even use violence” (Rocha, 2018, p. 28). What seems to be prejudice against white people – an ironic inversion of the “coloniality of power” (Quijano, 2005, p. 136) – is presented, and the conversation goes on to explain that in that future capitalism has been replaced by another system, demonstrating a world that has undergone profound cultural changes. On that page we read:

(...) this symbol they have on their foreheads... / It is a euro... the last European currency before the “final crisis of capitalism” / Every Swiss, when born, receives this tattoo, a reminder of their great past, when they were called “the guardians of capitalism”. (Rocha, 2018, p. 28).



Figure 3 – God appears in a future without Eurocentrism

In the pages of the issue, one sees other moments of the infinite existence of God, in which it is possible to identify the decolonial discourse. The text inverts currently hegemonic logics, such as the idea of submissive black women, and imagines future possibilities in which currently marginalised groups assume the dominant position. It presents a power dispute fought in the field of the imaginary.

In *Magda* (Rocha, 2016) the decolonial discourse also presents itself. The narrative choices for the composition of the argument of the work contribute to observe a discourse that seeks to combat the “world system” (Grosfoguel, (2009, p. 1) proposing a critique of the prejudice against northeasterners by a southeastern economic elite. Prejudice connected to the racism instituted in contemporary Brazilian society.

According to Lélia Gonzalez, we live with the result of a sophisticated procedure of denial of racism in Brazilian society, something that serves in a “disguised” way (Gonzalez, 1988, p. 72) to the country’s “whitening” project, “the Latin American racism, sufficiently refined to maintain blacks and Indians in the condition of subordinate segments within the most exploited classes”. (Gonzalez, 1988, p. 73). Gonzalez (1988) agrees with postcolonial and decolonial critical reviews by questioning power relations that remain still operating in tune with colonial logic and revealing the presence of groups that, although officially free, remain “subaltern” in discourse; “defined as a difference from the elite.” (Spivak, 2010, p. 60). In *Magda* (Rocha, 2016) this conflict is in the protagonist’s discourse:

(...) you couldn’t crush me before when I arrived from Paraíba. You could not do it when you had the diploma bought by Dad and the clothes bought by the diploma. And you won’t succeed now that you are nothing but meat. White meat, soft and spoiled from the South-East, that’s what you are. (Rocha, 2016, p. 84)

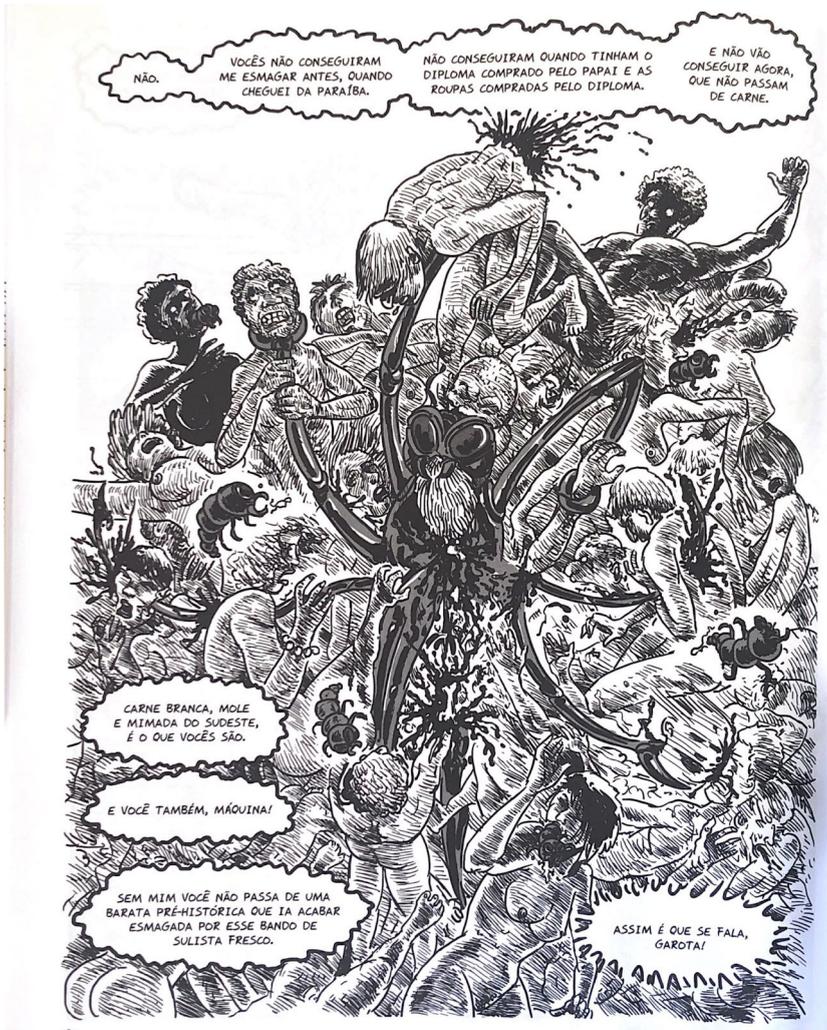


Figure 4 – Northeast resists

Magda challenges the concentration of resources in the southeast of Brazil, vociferating her indignation at the climax of the adventure. This speech also challenges the predominance of white protagonists in comics. In this sense, the text claims a voice for a subalternized group in Brazil: the northeasterners. This group, not by chance, is mostly black and carries with it aspects of the epistemologies spread by the African diaspora in the country (Gonzalez, 1988).

However, while it discusses the prejudice against northeasterners in Brazil, the iconography chosen for Magda echoes patriarchal voices, when it places the protagonist in graphic positions that reproduce the discourse of the theatricalized fiction of sexuality discussed by Preciado (2020). The protagonist's poses echo the imagery constructed in the US by *Playboy*, which appeals “directly to the sexual desire of the readers” (Preciado, 2020, p. 27). This is an imaginary produced in a specific historical context, which is established as the *Playboy* pornotopia of the 1950s and conditions “the current proliferation of other multimedia pornotopias that assert themselves as the future forms of sexual commerce” (Preciado, 2020, pp. 218-219).

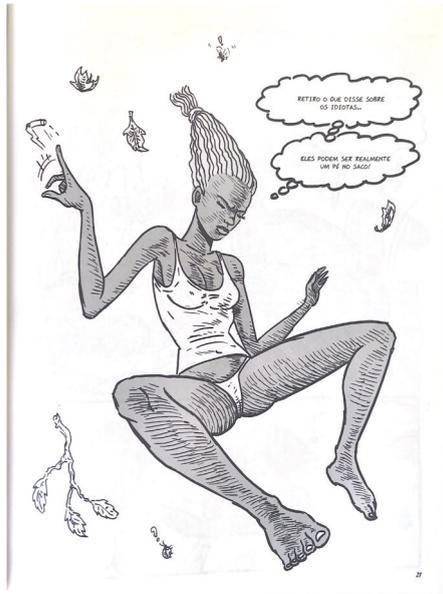


Figure 5 – Theatricalised fiction of sexuality

The concept of Pornotopia (Preciado, 2020) concerns the construction of a model of masculinity. It is about the fabrication of “a mythical masculinity capable of withstanding the crisis of heterosexuality in the twentieth century and of standing up to the threats of female liberation and transgender utopia” (Preciado, 2020, p. 217). To elaborate what pornotopia would be, Preciado resorts to Foucault’s concept of heterotopia: “provisional counter-spaces, where moral rules are suspended and where another temporality is in force” (Facioli, 2011, p. 218), for example brothels, in which morality gives way to

other customs, instituted specifically for that environment. Thus, the pornotopia establishes singular relations between a space, sexuality, pleasure, and technology, implying a change of sexual and gender conventions, which, in turn, produces sexual subjectivities derived from this change.

Therefore, what we see as a choice of representation in the image of Magda, is also present in the representations of God and Kali, the *Silat Girl*, demonstrating the presence of pornotopia, recurrent in the work of the creator of the characters. If in *Magda*, this aspect of the theatricalized fiction of sexuality is shown in the poses and highlights chosen for the character, this sexuality is more direct in God's stories, and assumedly pornographic in *Silat Girl*.



Figure 6 – Exposure of sexuality of the character God



Figure 7 – *Garota Silat* is an assumedly pornographic story. Available at <https://www.instagram.com/p/CdbhY8lOmjA/> Accessed on 12 October 2022

In *Girl Silat* (Rocha, 2022), we have the story of an “enchanted being with both female and male characteristics.”⁴ The author mixes elements of Indonesian culture, with clichés of spy stories and fantasy, to elaborate the adventures of a transgender woman. Rocha chooses to present her stories in short pornographic tales, focusing on the virility of Kali, the name of the character who was initially presented only with the generic pseudonym that titles her series. However, the simplistic character of this premise is articulated with the critical stance of the text. This is because references to decolonial thought are evident in the themes and characters that make up the narrative. For example, in the image that parodies Delacroix’s painting, *Liberty leading the people*, from 1830. The phrase that fills the flag raised by the protagonist stands out: “The revolution will be Latin, African, Asian & Transvestite!”

⁴ As described by the author in a post on his Instagram profile. Available at <https://www.instagram.com/p/CerOTWSOB-v/> Accessed on 12 October 2022.

nolo, 2012, p. 3). Subversion that happens from the extrapolation of customs and normalized relations. The decolonial critique appears, therefore, in the caricature.

The caricatured exaggeration can be exemplified by the villains of *Garota Silat* (Rocha, 2022) They are: an organization called NATO, a clear reference to the Atlantic Alliance created against the Soviet Union at the beginning of the Cold War; Biden, a direct reference to the current US president; and Daniel Créu, a parody of Daniel Craig, the actor who plays James Bond, a symbol of masculinity in the cinema of the 1980s and 1990s.



Figure 9 – Parody of James Bond. Available at <https://www.instagram.com/p/CfrPswCIP-2/>
 Accessed on 12 October 2022

In the last narrative arc posted on Instagram, the James Bond parody is represented as a submissive character dominated by the protagonist Kali. In this sense, the caricature proposed in this choice of approach for the characters seems to argue against the *status quo*, inverting the sense of narratives guided by patriarchal narrative tropes, that is, placing a symbol of masculinity in the place of submission in relation to the protagonist. This episode shows that Kali's mission would be to seduce the manly spy, that is, despite her evident physical power as a martial artist, the protagonist uses a sensual dance to achieve her goal.



Figure 10 – Sensual dance. Available at <https://www.instagram.com/p/Ce6QbHquJQp/> - Accessed on 12 October 2022

Thus, it should be noted that *Garota Silat* repeats the dynamic presented in *Deus aos Domingos* and *Magda*, this because, unlike the episodes in which Kali performs as a heroine of action – whose strength and skill are greater than that of her opponents – in this episode, her power is limited to her sexuality. It is demonstrated, therefore, the dichotomy between the critical aspects exposed in the narratives and the reaffirmation of a stereotypical female sexuality, mainly when it refers to the figure of the black woman, “represented by the macho and racist iconography as freer and more liberated”. (hooks, 2019, p. 134). In this sense, Rocha’s comics articulate representations of power. This is because, “they renegotiate dichotomies (...) as a means of reformulating the reader’s understanding” (Tensuan, 2020, p. 141). That is, the stories oscillate between decolonial criticism and exaggeration in the reproduction of patriarchal concepts, using this reproduction as a caricature that exposes these concepts and questions their validity.

Leisure and difference

Culture exerts an epistemological weight that guides the organization of leisure activities, even acting in the languages and postures used by institutions, groups and individuals that promote leisure practices or that practice them (Paradise, 2010). Thus, approaching a leisure activity as a cultural text can help to understand the effects that certain leisure practices have on the bodies of individuals subjected to their expressions.

Magda (Rocha, 2016) plays with the effects of leisure practices in her narrative when she proposes a dialogue of resistance with Brazilian northeastern women, who are sensitive to her reading in a different way than would be male readers, especially if original from other regions of Brazil.

It's immediate. I see everything. The life of that building and the life of my kidnapper. And of the nest. And of the machine. Your enormous life, all at once. Not as we tell our lives to each other. A slow conversation, full of coyness and respect. It's not a conversation. It's a rape. Like when men talk. No modesty, no interest in the listener. It's a rape, but I'll resist. Like I resisted university, school, and work. I will resist. And then I'm going to kill all of you. (Rocha, 2016, p. 97)



Figure 11 – Magda resists

The author shares his perception about an intimacy he does not know. We read the story from inside Magda's head; therefore, we see the universe that is presented to us under what, according to the author, would be the look of a black Brazilian northeastern woman. To do so, Rocha touches on the issue of aggressions done to women from the Northeast and how, for these women,

to exist means to constantly resist, from childhood to adulthood. With this approach, we can observe an example of a comic strip that extrapolates to reveal shared visual codes. This is because, according to Tensuan, by over-exposing cultural conventions, “comics can show how narrative tropes and visual codes both assemble a recognizable world and challenge assumptions about the world beyond the comic frame” (Tensuan, 2020, p. 141). That is, comics not only expose cultural conventions, but also challenge those conventions, as seen when the work addresses the issue of racism:

Your João Pessoa birth certificate, I know! A delicious historical irony, don't you think? Remember Alessandro? That racist biologist who wanted to test his DNA because he didn't believe a northeasterner could have the “science gene”? Voilá! Alessandro here! Contaminated and serving as a guinea pig for us to analyse his DNA, blood and whatever else his body can handle to provide us with! / I have to admit. It tastes good, yes. (Rocha, 2016, p. 74)

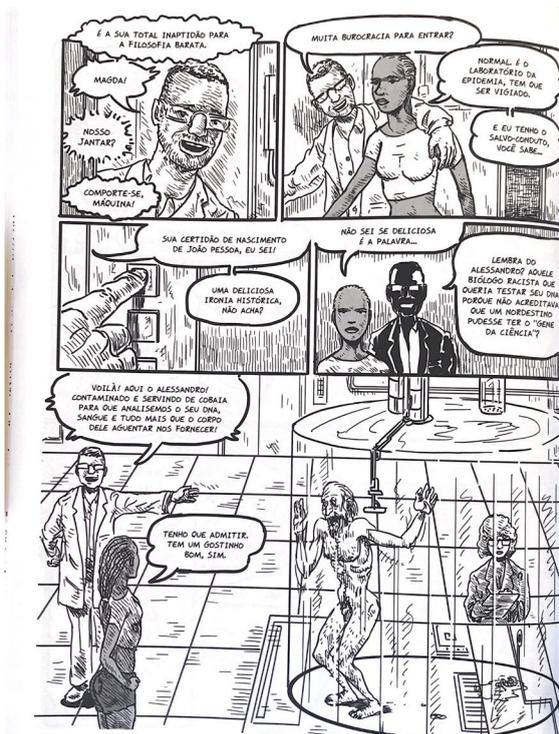


Figure 12 – Structural racism

Therefore, although comics act within a process of reaffirmation of what Audre Lorde defined as “mythical norm (...) generally defined as white, thin, male, young, heterosexual, Christian [sic], and financially secure” (Lorde, 1984, p. 116), there are comics that fall outside this norm. Or, as Tensuan explains, “Comics, through the juxtapositions embedded in their very form, can convey the complexities and unexpected congruences revealed by a located politics of difference” (Tensuan, 2020, p. 146).

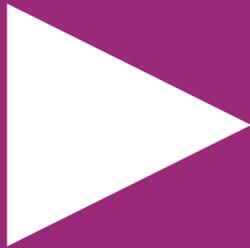
Thus, guided by the Afrofuturist perspective, I align *Magda* (Rocha, 2016) *Deus aos Domingos* (Rocha, 2018) and *Girl Silat* (Rocha, 2022) through the eyes of Marlucy Paraíso (2015) as cultural texts that contribute to think curricular forms turned to leisure and entertainment. Texts that, instead of imprisoning, reactivate forces, in the sense of commitment to ethnic-racial relations and other identity issues that constitute “the problematic of difference”, in which we are inserted. (Paraíso, 2015, p. 50) in which we are inserted. For this, I start from the understanding that the cultural text is a practice of productive signification directly involved with power relations, which generates behaviours and guides processes of subjectivation (Paraíso, 2010). This thought is assumed here to be in line with Tensuan’s approach (2020) regarding Comics. That is, comics carry the potential for a politics of difference, “they challenge a reader to see the world differently in a better sense” (Tensuan, 2020, p. 148).

Magda (Rocha, 2016), *Deus aos Domingos* (Rocha, 2018) and *Girl Silat* (Rocha, 2022), act on both fronts: both echoing the protocols that structure the life of the modern middle class and challenging them. This is because they are works that are also inserted in the same heteronormative space as other comics “thus showing how practices of representation both arise from and contribute to ideological frameworks as well as aesthetic traditions” (Tensuan, 2020, p. 144). They are, therefore, valid examples of comics that contribute to “give shape and form to emerging subjectivities” (Tensuan, 2020, p. 148) and, from these, propose alternatives for the future of those who express these subjectivities.

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HAIR CARE AS AESTHETICS OF EXISTENCE IN BLACK WOMEN¹

Renata Castelo Branco Araujo²

Maria Manuel Baptista³

*Você ri do meu cabelo
Você ri da minha pele
A verdade é que você
Tem sangue crioulo
Tem cabelo duro
Sarará crioulo
(Sandra de Sá)*

Summary

It is understood that hair care goes beyond the individual and superficial spheres, and may come to configure political practices of self-care understood as resistance to power structures. This idea is articulated with the concept of leisure as a time in which values that contribute to moral and cultural changes are experienced. This paper aims to analyze the care of one's own hair as a practice of self-care by African migrant women students living in Brazil, based on the notion of aesthetics of existence and the reflections of black and decolonial feminism. The participants of this qualitative research are women of African origin linked to UNILAB. A relationship between leisure and practices of freedom is proposed. Sexuality also stands out in the relationship that the text proposes between the subject of desire and care of the self, established by Michel Foucault, therefore, the main theories articulated for this research are the notion of care of the self Foucaultian, the idea of leisure of Marcellino, the reflections about the self-esteem of black women of bell hooks, the studies on racial consciousness of Grada Kilomba and research on the care of black hair of Nilma Lino Gomes. It was illustrated with the statements of a 27-year-old Guinean student who indicated the care of her own hair as a practice of self-care, a statement that challenges the notion that black hair is bad hair, a symbol of primitiveness

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² PhD student in Cultural Studies at Aveiro University and Psychologist at UNILAB. E-mail: renatacba@ua.pt.

³ Professor of the Doctoral Programme in Cultural Studies, University of Aveiro. E-mail: mbaptista@ua.pt.

and non-civilization, a racist conception to be overcome, as explained by Grada Kilomba. The research deals with the care of the self, thought by Foucault, taken to the daily context of a leisure practice, reaching the materiality of the experience of a black woman, dialoguing with the idea of celebrating the black bodies discussed by bell hooks. The work reinforces the appreciation of a black aesthetic and can contribute to anti-racist affirmative policies aimed at the migrant student public.

Keywords:

Self-care; UNILAB; hair; black women; aesthetics of existence

Introduction

As part of a doctoral research project in the field of Cultural Studies, which deals with the context of African migrant women students, the present text aims at thinking about practices of self-care that can be understood as resistance to power structures.

This paper intends to articulate the idea of care of the self as an aspect linked to sexuality, as stated by Michel Foucault, relating this idea to the materiality of the context of black women, bringing to discussion the thought of authors of black and decolonial feminisms, such as bell hooks (2005), Grada Kilomba (2019) and Nilma Lino Gomes (2003a, 2003b, 2005, 2008). In this way, the care of one's own hair is also discussed. Therefore, the care of one's hair is analyzed beyond the individual and superficial, within the context of the racial relations of African women in the diaspora, relations which are tense, conflictive and complex (Gomes, 2008).

This idea is articulated with the concept of leisure by Marcellino (2002), who understands it as a time in which values that contribute to moral and cultural changes are experienced. In this case, such practices collaborate to the affirmation of a black aesthetics, transforming the history of oppression, domination and racial stereotypes related to the black subject.

About the category "black subject", Grada Kilomba (2019) states that it refers to a colonial classification that proclaims a hierarchy. This idea is complemented by the writings of Nilma Gomes, when she states that «being black in the world is related to an aesthetic dimension, to a body, to an appearance that may or may not rescue in a positive way our ancestral African references recreated in Brazil.» (Gomes, 2003a, p. 12)

The question that guides this text is: how does the care of black women's hair relate to an aesthetics of existence? We sought in Michel Foucault (1984, 2004, 2005, 2006) the care of the self thought in a political way, circumstantiated in the collectivity and, in this sense, we bring the notion of aesthetics of existence.

The student interviewed for this work experiences racism after migrating to Brazil place with the purpose of attending higher education at the University of Afro-Brazilian Lusophony Integration (UNILAB), in Ceará.⁴ In her speeches, it is recurrent the discourse that, in her country of origin, she did not have to deal with racial conflicts and tensions, but in Brazil she recognized herself as a black woman and began to see herself involved in the complex cultural context of Brazilian society - whose history involves miscegenation and the myth of racial equality.

This work is added to the professional practice of one of the authors, as a technical servant in the field of health, at the university where the interviewee studies. This double position, of researcher and servant who researches the reality of the institution in which she works, encourages reflection on the student public policies aimed at the foreigners, namely, those of African origin at UNILAB. This is because it allows a close observation of the details of daily life in meeting the demands of students.

Methodology

This qualitative research is part of a wider research which uses as methodology semi-structured interviews to students (Batista *et al.*, 2017) and to students and employees of UNILAB, as well as focus groups in association with the *photovoice* technique (Wang *et al.*, 1998) in remote mode.⁵ For the present work, a cut was made from an interview with a student - also a participant of a focus group - whose statements proved relevant to the theme. The student is 27 years old, was born in Guinea Bissau, has been in Brazil since early 2018 and said she recognized herself as a black woman only after migrating to Brazil to attend higher education.

⁴ UNILAB has campuses in two Brazilian states (Ceará and Bahia). It is a federal public university created in 2010, with the aim of fostering the cooperation between Brazil and the African Portuguese-speaking Countries (PALOP). See more at: www.unilab.edu.br.

⁵ Content analysis will be used to treat the data collected in this work.

The interviews were interested in hearing about self-care in general, focusing on the context experienced by the students. Hair care, specifically, was something that emerged from that particular student's speech, mentioned in the report of the daily practices of occupation with herself.

Self-care, aesthetics of existence and practices of freedom

In volumes 2 and 3 of *History of Sexuality* (Foucault, 1984, 2005) and in the courses at the Collège de France (2006), Foucault dealt with questions about ethics, aesthetics of existence, truth and the subject of action. The author was, at that time, interested in reflecting on what would be the best way to conduct life, for which purpose he proposes life as a work of art, an aesthetics of existence. From these reflections, the notion of care of the self emerges.

To explore the genealogy of the subject of desire, this was his objective when making an investigative journey on the History of Sexuality. The author asked the ancient philosophers how and why sexual activity came to be problematized in the moral field, seeking the history of the desiring subject in the midst of the organization of Western societies. His interest in Greek antiquity consisted in analyzing ways of living away from the normalization of modern society. The intention was to look at the history of sexuality as an experience, that is, a correlation, in a culture, between knowledge, norms and forms of subjectivity (Foucault, 1984).

The author focused on the problematizations in which sexual activity and pleasures were central, as well as on the practices and the formation of subjectivities that arose from such problematizations, finding in the Greco-Roman societies a stylized way of living, as an aesthetic of existence. There was a relation with the truth which was imposed in the constitution of oneself, through exercises and technologies of self, permeated by an ethics interested in building life as a work of art.

Foucault relies on the ancients to speak of a way of living prior to restrictive institutional codes, which suggests an ethical-political subject who dodges the power and turns to himself to connect to what happens around him, present in the lived moment and aware of his potentialities, able to act on the contingencies of life and respond to the bad weather. The art of living would be, then, that which is not marked by the moral repression of rules and regulations. The author states that there was a relationship with the truth which im-

plied the reformulation of rules and techniques according to oneself, based on self-responsibility in composing a beautiful life, that is, with a style of its own (Foucault, 2004).

In this thought, the author considers that it is through the practices of the self that individuals become subjects and the arts of living are technologies of the self that imply artifices «reflected, elaborated, systematized, which are taught to individuals so that they can, by the management of their own lives, by the control and transformation of themselves by themselves, achieve a certain way of being.» (Foucault, 2016, p. 34). Thus, from the arts of living emerge the practices of self-care.

Self-care would be, in this perspective, a way of knowing oneself and the norms, and thus escaping from these norms, approaching practices of freedom. Such practices of freedom are those that enable moments of escape from power, entering the realm of pleasure.

Still about freedom, it is important to explain that the author states that it is not naturally given to the human being, but it is possible to identify practices of self-care capable of limiting the power of external actions. Such practices configure exercises of freedom, ways of governing oneself and resisting the government of others and the control of the bodies (Foucault, 2006). We identify these practices of freedom in the Guinean student's account on hair care.

Hair care: the affirmation of black aesthetics, racial and political consciousness

In this work, body and hair are analyzed through the lens of culture. Brazilian researcher Nilma Gomes (2003b) reinforces that black body and hair need to be thought within the set of racial relations historically built in Brazil, this being the social-historical and cultural context from which emerge the negative representations and subversions about the black body. Hair, in particular, is considered an ethnic identity symbol (Gomes, 2003b).

We agree with Gomes (2003b) when she says that the black aesthetic dimension is inseparable from the political dimension, since it is constructed as a representation of inferiority, demarcated by the ideal standard of beauty which is white, taking into account the racism historically instituted in Brazil. In this same perspective speaks the interviewee F. when she says that «I realize

that the hair carries several things like the black body»⁶. To better understand «these things» that black hair carries, we listen to what the authors of black and decolonial feminisms say.

In line with this view, bell hooks (2005) articulates aesthetics, gender and race when talking about how she and black American women experienced the process of hair straightening as a rite of passage from childhood to the beginning of adulthood. The straightening demarcated the entry into being a woman, it was the symbol of the construction of a generified subjectivity built on the internalization of racism. The author emphasizes that:

Within capitalist patriarchy - the social and political context in which the custom among blacks of straightening our hair arises -, this posture represents an imitation of the appearance of the dominant white group and often indicates an internalized racism, a self-hatred that can be added to a low self-esteem (hooks, 2005, p. 2)

We can infer from this process that, while the idea of a dominant aesthetic is exalted - the one that carries traits of white people - the idea that the appearance of black people is something inferior is reinforced, resulting in insecurities, self-rejection and damaged self-esteem. In the speech of the student interviewed, she says: «*black and black bodies have always been considered ugly or ugly, especially the curly hair.*» (F., 27 years old). It is worth noting that concerns with aesthetics occurred and still occur especially with women, because the aesthetic pressure on them is infinitely greater than on men.

Straightening is also related to sexual repression, as bell hooks (2005) states. Straightening, controlling, taming the hair is, according to the scholar, closely related to the moral control of the bodies, a logic that considers natural black hair as disordered and, therefore, unacceptable, undesirable. Being that the relationship established with one's own hair reflects the general feelings one has with one's own body (bell hooks, 2005).

Grada Kilomba (2019) redeems the historical aspects that were involved with the straightening of black hair, which became the representation of attempts to control and erase the «repulsive signs» of blackness:

More than skin color, hair became the most powerful mark of servitude during the period of enslavement. Once enslaved, Africans' skin color

⁶ Speech given in an interview conducted on 25 April 2022 via Google Meet.

became tolerated by white masters, but hair was not, which eventually became a symbol of «primitiveness», disorder, inferiority and uncivilization. African hair was then classified as «bad hair». (Kilomba, 2019, pp. 126-127).

In this context, according to Kilomba, hair became an icon of the struggle and affirmation of black identity. Confronting the imposition of straightening and the marks of whiteness came to mean political consciousness amidst the tangled negotiations of identity politics and racism.

During the interview, the student said that she arrived in Brazil with straightened hair and stated that: «*There in Guinea, it's not that I didn't take care of my hair, but it wasn't that way. And, arriving here in Brazil, realizing that my hair is not just a simple hair, it is a history, so it is a process learning to love hair.*» (F., 27 years old). This speech is directly linked to what bell hooks says about the importance that is given culturally to the time dedicated to the care of the self by black women:

perhaps spending time on ourselves by taking care of our bodies is also a reflection of a sense that it is not important or that we do not deserve such care. In this group and others, black women spoke of being raised in families that ridiculed or considered it wasteful to spend too much time on appearance (bell hooks, 2005, p.7).

In F.'s statement she tells about taking care of herself, currently dedicating up to two hours a week to treating her hair:

When I wash my hair, I always put on some music, sometimes I wash and dance and sing because I have learnt to treat my hair with love. I learned, because I didn't treat it before. I started to do this here in Brazil (F., 27 years old).

The act of women choosing to wear natural curly hair or African hairstyles, as well as taking the time to care for their own hair, creating intimacy with themselves, denotes self-worth and black aesthetics, following the example of the interviewed Guinean student and «[...] can thus be seen as a political statement of racial consciousness through which it redefines dominant standards of beauty. [...] signs of independence and decolonization from white norms» (Kilomba, 2019, p. 127). It denotes an autonomous stance, of

appropriation of truths about rules and prescriptions reflected in the care of the self, approaching the thought of the French philosopher (Foucault, 2004). From the student's speech above, it is also perceptible the pleasure involved. Therefore, taking care of her own hair is, for her, a pleasurable exercise of self that came with migration.

The practices of caring for one's own hair are part of a process of racial consciousness (Kilomba, 2019) resembling practices of freedom (Foucault, 2004) in a culture of domination and anti-intimacy (hooks, 2005). Such practices are achieved through tensions and struggles, immersed in an ideology that alienates, demeans, belittles, humiliates and mutilates the bodies of black men and women (hooks, 2005).

F's story shows that the practices of caring for her own hair, and the closeness that she created with herself in this exercise of self, can stand up to racial oppression and reaffirm the black aesthetic. As she develops knowledge and perceptions about the elements involved in racial issues, she stops submitting to straightening and perceives herself as a woman free to be who she wants to be. As bell hooks says: «by celebrating our bodies, we participate in a liberating struggle that liberates the mind and the heart» (hooks, 2005, p. 8).

Final considerations

The manipulation of body and hair reveals tensions, conflicts and awareness around power issues in the dynamics of racial hierarchies. Hair is understood here as an identity symbol which represents ethnic political struggles. In this sense, the practice of taking care of one's own hair, which emerged in this research, can be understood as a care-leisure-time-for-itself for celebrating black bodies, a practice of freedom capable of challenging racism and dismantling the ways of acting of the supremacy of white aesthetics.

Among the African students in Brazil, an autonomous posture of appropriation of truths about rules and prescriptions reflected in the care of the self is identified, approaching what Foucault wrote. Presenting racial awareness, the students undertake a political care that takes place in the individual daily life and has roots in the critical collectivity of black women and, thus, find ways to exalt their bodies and black hair in the context of migration.

Reflecting on black aesthetics helps to rethink aspects of Brazilian culture that were forged in the colonization process from an idea of racism, and which are the origins of stigmas about black women's bodies and hair.

The work reinforces the valorization of a black aesthetic and can contribute to anti-racist affirmative policies aimed at UNILAB's migrant students' community.

In this sense, we pose two questions about the relationship between power mechanisms and the care of the self: 1. what other structures of coloniality may be revealed in the observation of the practice of self-care by African migrant women? 2. what epistemologies, outside the academic canon, would be articulated with the aesthetics of existence and with the other Foucauldian concepts worked on here? These are questions we intend to develop in the follow-up research from which the extract presented here emerges.

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DEFORMATTING COLONIALITIES IN FEMALE BODIES: DIALOGUES WITH DANCE AND CAPOEIRA¹

Débora Campos de Paula²

Renata Giovana de Almeida Martiello³

Abstract

Starting from hip, leg and foot movements, which engage in a dialogue with African philosophical heritages, elements that represent our forms of relationship with the world and that are culturally and socially interdicted, seen as vulgar and inappropriate, we point out anti-racist and decolonial paths. The present text presents some bases for the work developed at the Núcleo de Pesquisa em Filosofias do Corpo,⁴ which is constituted as a space for experimentation of bodies in movement through Afro dance and capoeira, understood as triggers for the danced and encapoeirada discussion about the uses and abuse of our bodies, beyond this debate/experience, we advance in the possibilities of understanding the dimension of moving as a provider of pleasure and expression and a disruptor of conditioning through the bias of the body as a toy and play. Capoeira, the referenced Afro dance, as well as other bodily expressions of African origin, bring in their epistemological corpus the body as a political agenda, in this way, deformatting the interdictions and silencing of the movements in us is to confront colonialities. Moving is a political act, Afrocentering your movement and reconnecting with first gestures is walking towards the construction of plural subjectivities, just as our African origins are plural. The formats caused by the interdictions of the movements are daily violence that add up and are crossed by issues of gender, race and class, and this marks our bodies silently and continuously throughout life.

Keywords

Body; Philosophies; Capoeira; Afro Dance.

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² Doctoral Student in Philosophy PPGF- Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, email: debcampos2222@gmail.com .

³ Master's student in Philosophy PPGF- Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, email: renatacapoeira@gmail.com .

⁴ The Research Center on Philosophy of the Body was founded by the authors and is housed in the OUSIA Laboratory - PPGF/UFRJ

Dialogues with african civilization values

The methodological understanding that underlies capoeira as the pedagogical root of capoeira itself — “to say that capoeira is our pedagogical root implies taking it as a primordial source of knowledge.”⁵ And it is based on two movements of the capoeira circle: (1) in the *ginga*, which is language and dialogue, it is the digital that individualizes, it is feminine, but it is also the whole body, “the *ginga* is not merely a choreography, but the very noun that enables the weaving of communicative repertoires in the diaspora, *ginga* is language and does not merely say about forms, but about existences themselves” (Oliveira, Rufino, Peçanha, 2018, p. 78); (2) and in “the return of the world”, which symbolizes the strategic change and the possibility of renewal, the return of the world that capoeira has given and will continue to give without stopping, represents the movement of decolonization of our thinking and needs to be a catalyst for the deformation of the our bodies.

We present here the call for a step-⁶ by-step through reflection on this power that is capoeira as a cultural expression of African origin, capable of serving as a basis for the (re)construction of male and female identities subjected to environments of extreme violence, and based on the philosophical understanding of capoeira.

“*Capoeira is everything the mouth eats*”: Mestre Pastinha was already showing us philosophical paths to understand capoeira. As much as the masters were driven by bureaucratization in the search for access and possibilities of permanence in the territories, “this world remains enchanted, guarding subtle connections and secrets that, although defying the common sense of hegemonic scientific materialism, maintain close relationships with other forms of description of reality” (Magalhães, 2020, p. 6).

Research carried out by the Center for Research in Philosophies of the Body suggests that, through the movements of Afro dance and capoeira, we understand the expression and communicability of our presences; This is what

⁵ In: <https://capoeiraibce.com/>. Access on: 10 Oct. 2022

⁶ “During the game, calls may occur, movements that serve to test the partner with whom he is playing. When making a call, the partner must be very careful, because the call is a trap where the aim is to surprise the partner. The more experienced Masters make calls as a way to distract the companion and hit him by surprise. There are several types of call: front, back, thrush and others. If the partner does not want to answer the call, he must go to the foot of the berimbau and call his comrade for a new exit”. In: <https://capoeiraexports.blogspot.com/2011/01/capoeira-anglo-e-mestre-pastinha.html>. Access on: 10 Oct. 2022

makes it possible for us to face our vulnerabilities to exist and rewrite our histories, rebuilding identities through the re-elaboration of subjectivities.

It should be clarified that what we take here as Afro dance encompasses a space of investigation of principles that permeate different referenced Afro danced manifestations that are part of the repertoire shared in the meetings. I say this because, what we call Afro dance or black dance, can designate a huge range of expressions and practices in the field of dance⁷. What interests us is to dialogue with the enormous diversity of danced propositions that are based on listening to ancestral elements perpetuated, reinvested, invented, from the black presence in our lands.

We believe that our body formation is impregnated, from a very early age, by values that dictate what and how we can move, as well as, which bodies can transit and exist in different spaces. This policy of exclusion and body formatting is encrusted in our flesh/thought, diminishing our body power and existence. It is necessary to think from the women's bodies, which are the bodies most targeted for the exercise of control carried out by colonialities. "When a black woman moves, the entire structure of society moves with her" (Davis, 2017).

In the proposal developed at the Nucleus, we take the movement in an Afro perspective, seeking more fluid and generous relationships of the body expressed by the countless possibilities of its parts, by the inseparability between the inside and the outside, activating the participation of organs, fluids, muscles, bones, skin, thoughts, memories and spirituality as non-hierarchical matters. Everything speaks in the body, silence screams, immobility creates invisible but extremely intense plots.

In this way, dancing and capoeiraizing the crystallized thoughts and values, expressed in our corporeal existence, we seek subjective and collective

⁷ Black dances are grouped with a great diversity of popular or traditional manifestations that had their origin in the black presence in Brazil and in the intersections of this with European and indigenous cultures such as: Coco, Caboclinho, Caninha Verde, Maracatu, Samba, Lundu, Frevo, Tambor Creole, Capoeira, Cacuriá, among others. The dances called Afro dance and its variants (Afro Brazilian dance, Afro contemporary, black dance, among others), understood as those that developed from the arrival and permanence of blacks from the African continent in diasporic flow both in the historical period that comprised the abduction and enslavement, as in other migratory processes and that produced in new lands, collective artistic manifestations that were perpetuated and were transmitted and reconfigured for generations, not being included in the repertoire of folk, popular or traditional manifestations. And yet, the dances that are part of the ritual processes of different religious expressions such as Candomblé, Umbanda, Tambor-de-mina, Xangô do Nordeste, among others.

paths to reconfigure hierarchical and polarized relations of thought, proposing escapes from logocentrism.⁸

It is worth investing in the Afroperspectivist philosophy, which, according to Nogueira, defines thought as the movement of embodied ideas, because it is only possible to think through the body. This one, in turn, uses dribbling and choreography as elements that produce concepts and arguments.”⁹

We then suggest a close relationship between capoeira and Afro dance and the Afro-Brazilian civilizing values elaborated by Trindade (2013). The values are intended to register similarities in the ways of being, thinking and acting of Africans before, during and after the diaspora, and to demonstrate the immense status of humanity of those who were considered soulless. The contradiction of colonization jumps from paper when we make the first contacts with these values and when we observe their relationship with diasporic African cultural expressions. To base existence on affection, cooperation, axé, musicality, is revolutionary in the colonialist environment and offers the identities built in the diaspora a loving cradle and a breath for the harsh and cruel experiences of enslaved Africans in Brazil.

AFFECTIVITY - In affectivity, we can connect with the other and think about how he affects us. In the game of capoeira, in that space of the roda where the bodies dialogue with each other and with all the present ancestry, we realize how much affection is realized in the bodies. All civilizational values need to affect us and cause us to move. We need to understand our bodies as a heritage of our memories and philosophical experiences. Affectivity is the basis for body expression through an Afrocentered understanding of existing. The movement that arises during the game of capoeira is like a possession, a state of relative consciousness and at the same time a strong ancestral presence. Our demands and prayers are always answered at the foot of the berimbau,¹⁰ in one way or another, in the roda we don't invent any movement, they just exist, they appear.

⁸ “Logocentrism is an ethnocentric metaphysics, in an original and not a “relativistic” sense. It is linked to the history of the West” (Derrida, 1973 p. 98).

⁹ Nogueira, R. “Afroperspectivity: for a philosophy that decolonizes” Tomaz Amorim Do Negro Belchior. Available at: <https://www.geledes.org.br/afroperspectividade-por-uma-filosofia-que-descoloniza/> Accessed on 03/15/2019.

¹⁰ A place of ancestral connections, of prayer, of making demands on the opponent, of asking, of giving thanks. The foot of the berimbau is a place of strength, if a capoeirista is challenged in the call of angola and wants to refuse the call, there is only one way out, go to the foot of the berimbau and invite his opponent to restart the game.

In dance, by providing a welcoming, provocative and generous environment, separated from the conception of right and wrong, we open a field for our own and collective expression. A meeting space with the many women who inhabit us, our memories of mothers and grandmothers and also, our limits and traits, imprisonments cultivated for years.

CIRCULARITY - In the circularity of the capoeira wheel, we learn to spiral life, everything can change at any time. In a circle we have an equality of bodies, all are seen and present; in a circle, each one can be playing different roles, which can be changed at any time and we perceive and are permeated by *axé*, the vital energy present in everything that has life.

AXÉ - The capoeira roda allows us to feel several connections with the *axé*, which is sometimes in the song, sometimes in the singer who causes us to move. In this way, the *axé* of one can interfere with the *axé* of the other. A game of capoeira can produce so much vital energy that it changes people's state of consciousness (Decanio, 2002).

The roda, the gira, are also present in the turns and rolls of the hips, in the circulars of the shoulders and head, in the spirals that propagate energies in flows between the body and the environment, in the real or imaginary skirts that contour the bodies expanding the movement.

With head turns, we experience vertigo and decentralization of vision, bringing other perspectives of images and balance.

The body, our philosophical expression, informs us about each one's life, about our history and our memories, our ancestral connections. This perspective of understanding capoeira as a philosophy is perceived through listening to the old mestres, "ideas are on the ground, I stumble and find solutions" (Canji-quinha, 1989, p.4) The body in capoeira is the expression of pluriversality (Ramose, 2011) and Afro-perspectivism (Noguera, 2011). Understanding the body from an Afro-perspectivist perspective is to dialogue with:

melanodermic conceptual characters ... such as: the griot, the mother of saint, the pai de santo, the angoleiro, the witch (o), the bamba, the jongueiro, the zé malandro, the vagabond, orixás (Exu, Ogum, Oxóssi, Oxum, Iemanjá, Oxalá etc.) iniquices (Ingira, Inkosi, Mutacalambô, Gongobira etc.), voduns (Dambirá, Sapatá, Heviossô etc.) (Noguera, 2011, p. 4)

Therefore, corporeality is one of the values that embodies several other values in this network of connections in which they are elaborated. For

example, we cannot think of capoeira and black dance separately from musicality, which, in turn, is an expression of African existence that, once again, takes place through bodies.

MUSICALITY - Musicality is present in the African diaspora and can be seen in the richness of cultural expressions of African origin to which we are heirs: in addition to capoeira, jongo, samba chula, coco de roda, creole drum, among many others. There is no learning in capoeira and dance without musicality, so it is necessary to re-signify the sounds in our lives for our constitution as subjects and our subjectivities.

The rhythm of the drums and the percussion of all the instruments echo in the performative reminiscence of the body, making the radiance of time itself resonate, in a contiguous expressive syntax that fertilizes the kinship between the living, the ancestors and those yet to be born (Martins, 2021, p. 92).

The body that dances and vibrates in reaction to sounds is an ancestral and living body. In the capoeira roda, the circularity of the axé makes the game of capoeira, the rhythm, the capoeira drums, the musicality, feed each other in such a way that the mismatch of one can cause interference in the other. A game flowing well can be interfered by a change of player on the berimbau, for example.

ANCESTRALITY - Understanding ancestry is one of the most important values that connects us to everything that has axé, to the entire environment, to animals, to plants, it is what connects us with our elders who have passed away from physical and that exist in our lives due to the presence of their axé in us, an expression of our ancestry. Ancestors dwell. Noguera and Barreto speak of an ecobiotic cosmogony as “a philosophy in which cosmology, ecology and the analysis of the place of living beings are kept on the same plane. The cosmos, the environment and living beings are interdependent” (Noguera; Barreto, 2018, p. 9). In capoeira, we have the memory of our old masters as a reference and also as griots of knowledge. Hearing them tell the stories of their existence in capoeira and outside it is fundamental for the existence of capoeira over the generations. Here we see a connection of orality with ancestry.

ORALITY - In capoeira, at all times of its existence, we have the teachings being passed on for generations through long hours of conversation between and with the older mestres. Knowing how to listen to these moments is part of

respecting our ancestry. Our knowledge comes from far away, and orality is also carried out in the body and is part of knowing how to speak and knowing how to listen. Through orality, we transmit knowledge and also practice affection.

LUDICITY - The playfulness of capoeira games is in the sense that each capoeirista gives to their movement, playing with their own body and with the body of the other, which leads bodies to a state of expression of culture, to the rescue of their inner child, of childhood games, of loitering. In fact, *vadiação* is a concept that capoeira understands very well, “to give way to a vagrant, you have to step on it, dig through the gaps and remember that the small makes a big one, but the big one doesn’t make a small one” (Simas, Rufino, Haddock-Lobo, 2020, p. 78). The playfulness is in the expression of the body game that has fun not reaching the other, but for showing what it could have done, “in the circle, waddling in front of the partner, he usually gives a *corrupio* (going around the world about himself same) ... new corruption. He stops, looks up. The audience applauds. *Canjiquinha* is the king. *Canjiquinha* is a happy boy.” (Canjiquinha, 1989, p. 5)

The confrontation of bodies in the capoeira circle, the game, knowing how to play brings playfulness as a means of being and being in capoeira. This playfulness remains after the *roda* as if it were part of the way of being and being in the world of capoeira practitioners, as if it constituted the very identity of capoeiristas.

Finding pleasure in movement is an investment in the practice of dance with the body as a toy, perceiving/feeling/thinking/imagining our flesh space as a playful possibility and resuming the memory of discovery and creativity of the first movements experienced, this is a path that puts us in touch with other perspectives of ourselves.

Deformed female bodies

The use of African Civilizing Values as a reference has been a point of help for us to develop our danced / hooded thinking expressed in words, other practical / theoretical influences see us provoking and supporting us. In the first place, the provocation takes place in our own bodies, territories of referenced Afro women, so we weave our meetings and writings.

Our concerns came from the experience embodied as black women in a deeply racialized and sexist society, where the complexity and subtlety of violence causes distorted perceptions of an apparent and equivocal equity. We

are heirs of a history of violations and destitution of our powers and the non-recognition of our own ways of knowing the world/body.

The great distance between the ways of perceiving and experiencing the body in black cultures and in European cultures, in the same period, engendered a stigmatizing look of the hegemonic culture on the so-called inferiors, conferring the status of animality, hyper sexuality to bodies that they exercised, according to their cultural heritage, a relationship between sexuality and the expression and maintenance of *axé*¹¹.

According to Fernanda Carneiro, black religions

[...] do not want to tear us from the body or from relationships with living beings. They do not forbid the body, on the contrary, they live in it the transcendent relationship that values the ludic, the complicity of the fur-tive encounter, the intertwining. The body is open to the world and there-fore vulnerable to it. The sacred is not something external to the body, giving it negativity, it is not reduced to objects and is not achieved by re-nouncing the body and the things of the world. The body has sex and goes into a trance. It relates and fights (Carneiro, 2006, pp. 28-29).

For the author, slavery generated “distorted practices in everyday relationships. A subjectivity of an enslaved woman and a violent master, repeating itself in contemporary erotic relationships” (Carneiro, 2006, p. 37). Also:

Black women were prevented from choosing partners or staying with them. They were prevented from having amorous encounters, from ful-filling their rites and often forced to serve their masters, with or without an erotic disposition. [...] The bodily translation of affective gestures, seduction and the feeling of tenderness spontaneously emerging in black cultures did not manifest itself in an explicit, free and sincere way. Has the kindness of touching the body with *axé* been buried through-out Brazilian social formation? (Carneiro, 2006, p. 37)

In this sense, what we intend with our meetings to move in dance and capoeira is to seek paths, understanding that these are multiple, to formulate questions, sew understandings, dialogue, play, enchant, seduce, share our bodies and others, creating spaces of re-existence, writing bodily, politically our stories and the women who came before us.

¹¹ Life force, energy that is in all things

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PRODUCTIVE BODIES AND BODIES AT LEISURE: REFLECTIONS ON SEXUALITY, POWER RELATIONS AND LEISURE ON BOARD CRUISE SHIPS¹

Telma Medeiros Brito²

Maria Manuel Baptista³

Abstract

A maritime voyage on a large ocean liner can be quite pleasant and poetic for many. However, there is a parallel world on board cruise ships, with insurmountable borders, which is composed of bodies that are dedicated to maximizing the leisure of other bodies to the detriment of their own leisure. To produce and offer such leisure on board, dedicated bodies are needed. These bodies belong to the crew members, who are subjected to a multicultural environment in a semiosphere of their own, surrounded by quasimilitary rules, some limited to certain spaces and actions, always watched and often punished. Crew bodies are productive and act in the “real world” as a useful and generally submissive force. They are “docile” bodies, which can be manipulated, used, transformed so that they exert movements, gestures and attitudes with speed, elegance and a smile on their faces. They are disciplined bodies, whose strength is used economically, obediently, but which also oppose the rules, breaking the boundaries of power on board. These bodies have feelings, they need to enjoy rest and leisure, in addition to being susceptible to relationships, which, like the reality on board, can be quite intense. The bodies at leisure are those of guests who embark for their moments of leisure, in a “fantasy world”, enjoying all the spaces and activities offered by cruise ships. The purpose of this work is to reflect on the issues of power relations and sexuality of the dedicated bodies of crew members who work on cruise ships and who produce leisure for other bodies on board. In this exploratory study, the chosen methodology was the qualitative analysis of the work “Todos a bordo: incríveis histórias vividas pelos tripulantes de cruzeiros”, published in Brazil, based on experience reports of 22 current and former Brazilian crew members. The book presents the backstage of the work on board, carried out in the “real world” and offered in the “fantasy world”, as well as the experiences, anxieties and revelations of the crew, which address, among other topics, sexuality and power relations. The netnographic research was also used to collect reports from other crew members who also exposed their experi-

¹ Work presented during the VIII International Congress on Cultural Studies: Sexualities and Leisure.

² PhD student in Tourism, University of Aveiro. E-mail: telma.brito@ua.pt; telmabri39@gmail.com

³ Professor at the Doctoral Program in Cultural Studies, University of Aveiro, email: mbaptista@ua.pt

ences related to the subject of this reflection. The theoretical foundation is based on the concepts of power relations, multiculturalism and sexuality.

Keywords:

Cruises; leisure; crew; power relations; sexuality.

Introduction

Product of contemporary globalization, cruise ships are dominated by North American companies, focused on economic results and rely heavily on the bodies of professionals who, for the most part, come from the countries of the global south to serve guests who, for the most part, are from the global north. These two subjects, guests and crew members, form a parallel world on board, as the former escape the routine in search of leisure and the latter give up their leisure to maximize guest experience, living in a real world on at least 272 ships (CLIA & Craighead, 2022) cruising the oceans.

The crew members' bodies are disciplined and often used exhaustively, economically, to achieve positive financial results, in a hierarchical power relationship, divided into categories to discipline the confined space. The crew, who must always smile, form a veritable army of "docile bodies", disciplined and constantly monitored.

In order to enter this world of cruise crew members, a qualitative analysis was carried out on the book *Todos a bordo: incríveis histórias vividas pelos tripulantes de cruzeiros*⁴ (Santos *et al.*, 2021), published in Brazil. The book presents reports of experiences of 22 current and former Brazilian crew members, with the aim of reflecting on issues of power relations and sexuality. The reports show how these power, social and affective relations occur behind the scenes of the ships. Reports from other crew members, obtained through netnography, were also used.

Although the stories are from individuals of Brazilian nationality, they can be understood as part of a maritime semiosphere and can take place on other ships, since the onboard environment is multicultural.

⁴ "All on board: incredible stories lived by cruise ship crew members" in a free translation.

Methodology

In this qualitative exploratory research (Collis & Hussey, 2005), we analyzed the work *Todos a bordo: incríveis histórias vividas pelos tripulantes de cruzeiros* (Santos *et al.*, 2021), published in Brazil. The book, based on reports from 22 current and former crew members, presents the backstage of work on board cruise ships. The crew members were identified by the letter “T” followed by a number, to preserve their identities. After reading the book, the themes were identified for proper analysis of the reports and their content, as well as the independent variables and characteristics of the sample, using the Excel spreadsheet as a tool. The central themes for the analysis of this research were “power relations” and “sexuality”.

All crew members are Brazilian. Although women represent less than 20% of the workforce on cruise ships (Chin, 2008; Theotokas & Tsalichi, 2021), the book shows a greater representation of female reports: thirteen were women (59.09%) and nine were men. (40.91%).

With regards to their work sectors, 95.45% (21 individuals) were in the hospitality sector (entertainment, accommodation and food), an area that holds the majority of professionals on board ships (Brito & Baptista, 2021; Chin, 2008), and one individual worked in the medical field. Of those who worked in the entertainment area, 72.72% (sixteen individuals) were part of the staff, a category that has direct contact with guests and access to their common areas. They acted as officers and crew, three individuals in each category (13.64% of the sample), respectively.

Regarding cruise ship companies, sixteen individuals (72.73%) were from companies that are no longer in operation⁵, three (13.64%) from Italian companies and three (13.64%) did not mention or did not submit photos to make identification possible.

In addition to bibliographic research, other reports were obtained through netnography (Hine, 2005; Kozinets, 2014). The internet is a representation of our social practices and needs new forms of observation. It is proposed that social researchers make their own lenses, looking for instruments and methods that enable new ways of seeing (Fragoso *et al.*, 2011).

This work is an integral part of a research of the Doctoral Program in Tourism, currently underway, at the University of Aveiro.

⁵ Some companies, such as Pullmantur and Crystal Cruises, have closed their activities or dissolved part of their fleets after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Docile bodies and power relations on board

The crew members of cruise ships form a veritable army to meet the desires and needs of guests who embark in search of leisure, rest and escape from reality. It is an army of bodies, both female and male, that are productive, disciplined and dedicated to maximizing the experience and leisure of the other, submitted to a multicultural environment, with its own semiosphere (Brito & Baptista, 2021), surrounded by almost military rules, divided into hierarchical and functional categories (crew, staff and officer) that determine and delimit spaces and actions on board:

Passengers pay to travel and enjoy, crew members are paid to meet all of the needs of these passengers. On my ship, there were a total of a thousand employees, and the impression I had was that there were two ships inside one. The first one was just like the ones you see on TV: luxurious, organized and full of unforgettable experiences waiting for you. The second was what existed from deck 1 down, where passengers could not enter, where the unforgettable experiences were ours alone. (T7).

The division of categories allows disciplining the confined space, or the “useful disciplinary space” (Foucault, 2014) on board. These bodies are constantly watched: *“I had the feeling that I was on Big Brother, because there were cameras everywhere, so don’t even think about doing anything wrong!”* (T13). They are often punished or subjected to veiled forms of domination and repression. Discrimination against nationality was mentioned more than once: *“the supervisor and the HR professional had a reputation for not liking Brazilians”* (T11); *“Because I am Brazilian, I often felt that I was underestimated”* (T10); *“some directors did not like to work with Brazilians!”* (T22).

Strict rules are a constant subject in the analyzed work:

The new life on board was full of strict military rules, safety drills and monthly toxicological tests... On the ship, everything is separated by hierarchies: crew, staff, officer and passengers. When we board, these instructions and the infinite rules and duties of the crew member are very clear (T1).

The hierarchical look, the normalizing sanction and the examination are instruments that, according to Foucault (2014, p.167), generate the success of disciplinary power. In another passage, it is also possible to check the hierarchy and power on board:

The crew is divided into a pyramid, where the officers are at the top and the crews at the bottom. I, as a staff member, was between these categories and could see the abuse of power and inequalities introjected in this hierarchical and sexist system. (T8).

The bodies of crew members act in the “real world”, as a useful and generally submissive force, especially those in lower positions, usually coming from developing countries, cited as “*the poor enslaved crew, Indian, Filipino, Indonesian and Brazilian*” (T1).

Those are “docile” bodies (Foucault, 2014), which can be subjected, manipulated, used, refined, transformed so that they exert movements, gestures and attitudes with swiftness, elegance and a smile on their faces. Those are bodies whose strength is used economically, obediently, but they can oppose the rules, breaking the frontiers of power. For each breach of rules, especially absences from work, the crew member receives a warning, “*the most feared word on the ship*” (T4). In the third warning, the crew member is terminated for just cause (T2, T4, T22). The warning is a “small penal mechanism”, present in the essence of all disciplinary systems (Foucault, 2014, p.175).

In addition to the rigidity of the onboard environment, the manipulation and repression of bodies by the authority that holds power is mentioned in another report:

There are many crew members on the ship and the regime is very strict. On my second day at work, as soon as I arrived at the buffet, my beard had grown a little, but I decided not to shave. The first manager who crossed my path said good morning to me and said “Please return to your cabin and shave”... Sometimes cotton was even rubbed on the crew member’s face to make sure the shave was clean. (T2)

In the same line of inspection and tests carried out on board, another crew member mentions a “tremendous misunderstanding” when she was drawn for the alcohol test:

They called my cabin around 7am, and I simply brushed my teeth, used mouthwash, and headed to the medical department. I took the test and it came back positive. My manager was notified and she promptly informed everyone and the captain of the ship that I didn’t drink and that I didn’t even frequent the crew bar, so it must have been a mistake. The Staff Captain then went to do a cabin inspection to verify that I really had mouth-

wash and toothpaste, they checked the amount of alcohol in each product and, finally, my innocence was proven. (T14).

Although the consumption of alcohol by crew members is not prohibited, since there is an exclusive bar for them, excessive consumption is not tolerated. For this reason, cruise ship companies conduct alcohol tests, with frequencies varying from weekly to monthly. Reflecting on this disciplinary power, we again approach Foucault (2014, p.134) to speak of the “docile body”, which can be supervised, submitted, manipulated, transformed and perfected. Body inspection is common on board, as companies value impeccable appearance, at work stations and in front of guests. As the author also states, “in any society, the body is trapped within very tight powers, which impose limitations, prohibitions or obligations upon it”.

The use of bodies on board, as a useful force, can be exhausting. Bodies are controlled so that they are not idle, as it is necessary to have a positive economy, a positive financial result (op.cit, p. 151). This is observed in this report: “*When I thought I would rest, as work would start the next day, my boss called me in the cabin asking me to put on my uniform, get something to eat and go up to work.*” (T4).

The manipulation and exhaustive use of the bodies begins on arrival at the ship:

My Romanian boss picked me up, gave me the general directions, took me to the cabin and said: “Have dinner, put on your uniform and go up to the store to start work”. How? If I couldn’t find my suitcase? I got lost in the basement looking for my uniform, I was tired and also seasick. I didn’t get a reception from my colleagues, which is customary among the crew, but that wasn’t the worst thing... I stayed at the store selling watches, glasses, drinks and perfumes. Just me, and I’m allergic to smells... I passed out and went back to the cabin. (T13).

Disciplinary power has the function of “conditioning” to appropriate even more intensely and effectively (Foucault, 2014, p.167). In the above experience, the crew member did not even have time to be “conditioned”.

Some crew members take risks and break the imposed rules:

It is not allowed to circulate outside the cabin after three in the morning... No, you cannot! This was the rule that the staff broke more frequently,

every night a crew member was caught. I've seen people walking in disguise, running from the security guards and even hugging a passenger so the security wouldn't see it was a staff member. (T22)

In addition to the alcohol test and prohibition of circulation outside the permitted hours, other rules were also mentioned (T22), such as inspection of crew cabins, carried out by officers without prior notice; the toxicological test, carried out at random moments and which can lead to expulsion if positive; prohibition to call officers by name (superiors must be referred to by their position); prohibition of carrying dangerous items in the cabin, such as weapons and irons or even hidden food; prohibition to use the guests elevators; obligation to greet everyone, always with a smile; and mandatory participation in the drills.

Discipline is the technique of a power that frames individuals as objects and instruments of its exercise; it “manufactures” individuals. (Foucault, 2014, p.167) In the case of ships, these individuals must rigidly follow a continuous routine as if they were machines (T5). Socializing with guests is to be avoided and personal relationships with guests are strictly prohibited. Some crew members, even in the position of staff, manage to break this rule, freeing themselves from the normative devices of power, so that they have some leisure time in addition to the exclusive spaces for the crew: *“I got a costume to participate in the passengers’ party... I did everything that was forbidden: I walked in passenger areas, elevators, ate, drank, danced and made people curious with that mask.”* (T1).

A crew member, who acted as a staff, posted a short video of his experiences on board on Instagram stories. He would leave the “crew only area” to enter the “guest area”, through an emergency door, where there was the following sign: *“You are entering into guests area. SMILE. YOU ARE ON STAGE.”* (Felipe, 2022). Such an indication is a reminder of the necessary discipline on board and requires an “automatic docility” of the bodies of the crew members who enter that area, reminding them, in capital letters, that it is necessary to be docile and always smile, even if there is no desire to smile, comparing professional performance on board to a stage.

Cruises are compared by Neves e Soares (2013) to assembly lines, with pieces that fit together all the time, or even to a circus, when the crew performs for guests on board. The authors add that the crew must be presentable, greet and always smile! Hospitality and cordiality are characteristics always found

on board cruise ships. Welcoming guests, being helpful and paying attention to the guests are attributions of everyone on board. However, many are forced or even coerced to behave in this manner while they are “on stage”, even if they are not physically and emotionally able to do so.

Relationships and sexuality on board

The intensity of relationships on board is compared, by a captain, to the rhythm of work on a ship:

Life on board is very hard... you live at a much more intense pace than on land, a lot of work (a minimum of 11 hours a day for most people), seven days a week (no days off), with many love affairs and quick heartbreaks, everything happens quickly (Santos et al., 2021, p. 6).

Gibson (2008) found that the level of interaction and communication are high and in this environment social isolates are noticeable. The analysis shows how intense the relationships on board are and that breaking rules regarding relationships is frequent, especially in the relationships between crew and guests, which are strictly prohibited. Crew members cannot go to guests' cabins, just as guests cannot go to crew members' cabins: “*The most common infringement I caught was passengers sleeping in crew cabins*” (T22), says a crew member who acted as an onboard manager. The breach of this rule by a crew member can elicit a warning or even expulsion. The passenger is almost never penalized for the act. In the analysis of the book, a breach of this rule was identified:

I didn't get involved with any crew members, but I fell in love with a beautiful Belgian passenger. This is totally forbidden. I told her: You are a passenger and nobody stops you from going anywhere, let's meet in the dressing room... It was a very special night... When I left, I was scared to see a Filipino cleaning man, and I remembered I always saw him at the crew bar and very quickly I said: “I'll pay for your beer until the end of the contract”... He accepted and became my friend (T20).

Relationships between crew members are common and not prohibited. Some professionals claim that dating has turned into marriages (T7) and that relationships are intense (T11, T15), as they often last for the duration of a

contract, between five and nine months. Disembarkation can occur at the end of the contract or by ship transfer.

Due to the multicultural environment on board, relationships between individuals of different cultures are very common:

I met my first love on board, a young Portuguese man. In my personal life, it turned out that my “Jack” sank into juvenile betrayals and I fell in love with a charming and intelligent Chilean, who brought me peace in moments of storm for a few years. (T15).

Parties are some of the few moments of leisure and relaxation available in an extensive work routine. These parties take place in the crew bar, an exclusive space for the crew, where a partial recovery of social life is possible (Ribeiro & Montanari, 2012, p. 51). At these parties, moderate consumption of alcohol is allowed and relationships between crew members from different cultures can occur, which, according to Tingle (2018), end in sex. The author answers his statement with a question: “What else would you do as a bunch of travelling adults living in a confined space seeing each other every day for months at a time?”. Without going into details, one of the reports shows this intensity of relationships:

On New Year’s Eve, two parties take place simultaneously on the ship; the first is the passengers’ party and the second, and without a doubt the best, is ours, called the crew party, which takes place at the crew bar. I got really drunk - my soul wanted the party, but my body wanted the bed. I went to the cabin and came across another party. (T7).

Many couples meet on board and try to follow a common life on land or even on board, as identified in the analysis (T2, T3, T6, T7, T13). Most do not continue the relationship, which can cause frustration, sadness, pain, emptiness, such as the report of a relationship that took place in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic:

They said we were the perfect couple and when he asked if he could consider me his girlfriend, I had no doubts. He as a nurse (Italian) and I as a dancer would travel the world. When we knew we had just one more week, the ground beneath our feet just disappeared... The decision was made - he would go to Italy and I would go there! But Italy remained closed, unbending to Brazilians. (T8)

Life on board for women is reported as much more difficult, as it is a male-dominated environment, and harassment and discrimination are common (Kitada *et al.*, 2017; Teberga De Paula *et al.*, 2017; Theotokas & Tsalichi, 2017; Theotokas & Tsalichi, 2017; 2021): “*I was frequently tested and discriminated against for being a woman, Brazilian and nice, and I never, ever needed to go out with someone to get something*” (T15). Racial prejudice, sexism, neglect, homophobia and bad temper were also reported (T17). In an interview on YouTube, a crew member says that there is a certain “curiosity” with the Brazilian women, because they are more “*calientes*” (Kyrillos, 2022), confirming the discrimination and sexism on board.

A crew member talks about the discrimination of being a woman and having her body evaluated as fragile in the interview to act as cabin steward: “*The interviewer and the psychologist looked at me and said: ‘You? You won’t be able to push the cart with the work materials, it’s heavier than you’*” (T14). Jobs in the field of hospitality and housekeeping are considered more feminine (Zhao & University of Wales, 2002). Misogyny is also noted (Manne *et al.*, 2019) during the hiring process. The social construction of the “body” on board cruise ships refers to the idea of male and female work. In addition, women can be considered a risk to the maritime environment (especially for different types of ships other than cruise ships), as they can bring sexual tensions and consequently social disorder to the ship’s environment (Kitada *et al.*, 2017; Theotokas & Tsalichi, 2021). As the authors point out, this may perhaps be one of the reasons why women are always in the minority in the maritime sector.

Concluding remarks

Cruise ships are globalized leisure equipments. However, they are very contradictory environments, where entertainment and hospitality services are produced by docile bodies, organized in order to maximize the guest experience. The two parallel worlds meet only when it is necessary to obtain a positive financial result from this relationship.

The book “*Todos a bordo: incríveis histórias vividas pelos tripulantes de cruzeiros*” presents real narratives of Brazilians who were (or still are) on board different cruise ships and companies, in different positions. Although the stories are from crew members of a single nationality and most were from companies that are no longer in operation, they can be understood as stories

that are part of a maritime semiosphere, typical of cruise ships and that are repeated with more or less intensity in the hundreds of cruise ships, as the crews are mostly multicultural.

The analysis of the crew's reports shows a parallel world, with insurmountable borders, full of rules that cannot be broken. But it also presents a world that is inhabited by bodies that feel, have emotions, pain, tiredness and desires far beyond the rules that must be obeyed to obtain economic results.

The immersion in the crew's own world, through the analysis of the reports on power relations, shows that the citizens of developing countries are exploited by the economic power of the global north, whose citizens are at the top of the pyramid of power also on the cruise ships.

Regarding relationships and sexuality, it is observed that bodies, both male and female, are in constant contact in a closed environment and need social (and sexual) interaction to remain in emotional balance. Women, as in many social institutions, are at a disadvantage, suffering discrimination and being seen as "bodies" that threaten the social structure they inhabit.

We understand that this exploratory study can generate new researches, as the topic of social and cultural relations in cruise ships is broad and still largely unexplored.

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“QUENTES DA CAPITAL”: PORTRAITS OF A CHANGING LISBON IN THE GAY AND LESBIAN PRESS OF THE 1980s AND 1990s¹

| Joana Matias²

Synopsis

The periodical publications that constitute the Portuguese gay and lesbian press are an important document of the political and cultural transformations that change the landscape of the nation's capital in the 1980s and 1990s. In response to a historiography of LGBTQIA+ communities that has focused on legal advances and politics of inclusion, this work aims to recover a physical archive that precedes and contextualizes them.

Keywords:

Queer history; LGBTQIA+; History; Homosexuality; Alternative Press, Cultural Studies.

The present work borrows the title of a recurring section in Lisbon-based zine *Orbita Gay Macho*, edited between 1982 and 1993.³ “Quentes da capital” (“The capital's hottest”) is typical of the publication's intimate voice, and in it, the anonymous narrator describes episodes of urban wandering:

Over on Príncipe Real, which if you didn't know we're here to tell you is the GAY neighbourhood in the Capital City, everything is as quiet as usual. There are some GAY and GAY-Straight bars (straight means straight-laced, traditional) and that gives the area a very special nightlife.

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² Doctoral candidate in History at NOVA University Lisbon and researcher at the Institute of Contemporary History /IN2PAST - Associate Laboratory for Research and Innovation in Heritage, Arts, Sustainability and Territory. Email: joanamatias@fcsh.unl.pt.

³ Though *Orbita* never refers to itself as a zine, it seems a fitting label. Zines or fanzines are small-circulation amateur publications, typically photocopied; they became a global phenomenon with the explosion of the punk movement in the 1970s (Guerra & Quintela, 2016).

(...) When we tell you Príncipe Real is the Capital's GAY neighbourhood, it's not just because there's a few GAY bars there. Local conditions have made it possible for many GAYs to settle and live in houses there, creating a more intimate ambiance in the city.⁴ (*Orbita* #2, 1982, p.9)

The neighborhood of Príncipe Real's reputation for nightlife, particularly as the site for several newspaper offices, is well-known, but here we have an early record of this history in a form of media by and for gay men. Fernando Curopos identified the area as an epicenter for cruising and sex work from the late nineteenth century onwards (2019, p.24). During the Estado Novo regime (1933-1974), sociality was confined to the private sphere, a few cafés in the city center that drew queer patrons and, in a more scattered and clandestine way, the city's public urinals and parks (Afonso, 2019, p. 161; Almeida, 2010, pp.170-175; Curopos, 2016 p.17). The first establishments dedicated to queer nightlife pop up in the 1960s - *Bar Z*, renamed *Harry's*, in front of Jardim de São Pedro de Alcântara; *Memorial*, also called *Gato Verde* and *Gato Preto*, on rua Gustavo Matos Sequeira; *Bric à Bar*, rua Cecílio de Sousa; and *Marygold*, rua do Sol ao Rato (Afonso, pp.176-177; Almeida, pp.182-183; Curopos, 2016, pp.17-18) - announcing an early concentration in Bairro Alto and Príncipe Real. And though this mapping exercise is an important element of this history, it is not the whole story. This is where the periodical publications that make up the Portuguese gay and lesbian press become an important document of the relations between LGBTQIA+ and queer communities and the capital. Between newsletters, newspapers, zines and magazines, the object of this presentation is a repository of information on the material and affective realities of these communities, an archive of debates and ideas about life at the margins of cisheteronormativity, as well as evidence of important interventions, on the part of the editors, at national and international level.⁵ I interpret these publications not as vectors of information, but rather as examples of a stage for the consolidation of a counter-public (Warner, 2005, p.117), a parallel discursive space constituted by the appeal to a shared identity category or phenomenology. In this sense, this work seeks to contribute to the project of queer history in Portugal, reflecting

⁴ All translations are my own.

⁵ All titles - *Orbita Gay Macho*, *Gaie France*, *Trivia*, *Korpus*, *Sem Medos!*, *Organa*, *Lilás*, and *Zona Livre* - are part of the collections of *Hemeroteca de Lisboa* (Lisbon Periodicals Municipal Library) and the National Library of Portugal.

on the process of how collective identity constructions are built on the basis of references and interpellation rather than shared stigma or physical spaces.

Every title under analysis addresses either a “homosexual”, “gay” or “lesbian” readership, or a combination of these. But the boundaries between each letter in the LGBT acronym are a relatively recent invention, and sexual orientation and gender identity, understood today as distinct realities, share an enmeshed history (Stryker, 2008). Questions of gender identity, presentation, and non-conformity abound in the titles studied, as well as bisexuality and other non-monosexual orientations, presented at different times as part of homosexuality or completely outside its scope.⁶ In other contexts, I use queer in the sense of the “open mesh of possibilities” given by Eve Sedgwick (1993, p.8), in reference to expressions and realities at the margins of heterosexuality or cisgender not reflected in excluding terms like “homosexual” or “transgender”.

Orbita is the only title identified that documents the afterlife of the decriminalization of homosexuality, as well as the beginnings of the HIV/AIDS epidemic.⁷ It was published by private members club GayClub, active in Lisbon between 1981 and the mid-1990s, producing seventeen issues between 1982 and 1993. These were sized A5 and photocopied with some colors until issue fourteen, in 1990, shifting to offset and increasing the print run from “dozens of copies” to “over three thousand” with the last issue (#17, 1993, p.2). It was distributed by mail to members and subscribers, and it is possible that, according to the editorial in issue fourteen (1990, p.2), a handful of Lisbon kiosks stocked it under the counter. Though *Orbita* had an impressive reach for its scale, as shown in the locations in personal ads and readers’ letters, it is essentially a Lisbon-based publication, and as such, much of its content is devoted to reporting on gay life in the big city. And though there are exciting new possibilities to be enjoyed - the bars, queer-themed film and theatre, parks in which to meet other men, a curious “Gay Gala” at Coliseu dos Recreios in 1988 (#11, pp.14-17) - there is an overwhelming sense of disappointment. The lack of participation is a constant motif, as well as reported difficulties in collaborating with media outlets and public institutions.

⁶ The first title exclusively dedicated to a trans* audience identified thus far is *Trans: Boletim para as comunidades LGB e transsexual*, edited by Zara Santos, with a first (and only?) issue published in 2002.

⁷ Two other publications had preceded it: *The Gay* (1975-1977) and *Nós* (1980-1981), both edited by Gay International Rights (GIR), an obscure early gay rights organisation based in Braga. They were not contemplated in this analysis due to their less relevant geographical and temporal reach.

The decriminalization of sexual activity between same-sex adults, which happened with the revision of the penal code in 1982, seems to have motivated the start of the publication. It, along with the 1976 constitution, are fully reproduced in issues three, four and five (1983) with the stated aim of educating its audience on their new rights. But the event didn't fundamentally change the relationship between people read as queer and authorities in public space. As with almost all other titles, *Orbita* includes a tour guide, a submission-based section that first appears in issue eight (1984), and expands to cover cities outside Lisbon in issue eleven (1987). Aside from an important document of the transformations in gay urban geography throughout the decade - from cafés, restaurants, cinemas, saunas, and cruising spots - the guide highlights the presence of police in certain locations and its risks. Notes on whether police are in uniform or plainclothes are replaced by the label "Risk (Thieves, Police)" in issue sixteen (1991). Reports of police violence in *Orbita* give more detail as to the need for this caution (#13, 1989, p.48 and #15, 1990, p.23). Depicting a hostility that never comes across as particularly novel, they suggest that the mere presence of a man deemed to appear homosexual by an officer of the law, regardless of being within the known network of cruising spots or otherwise, is subject to a "preventive" approach under the guise of indecent exposure. Because these aggressions don't result in arrests, these reports are an example of the importance of ephemera - those (counter)archives that hold "a kind of evidence of what has transpired but certainly not the thing itself" (Muñoz, 1996, p.10) - for the preservation of queer memory.

The first homosexual periodical to be commercially distributed nationwide hit the shelves in 1992⁸: *Gaie France Magazine*. The bimonthly produced four issues that same year, with a professional, glossy design, and color cover and photos. It mentions some cultural events of interest to the gay community in Lisbon, as well as contact details for GIR and lesbian magazine *Organa*. There is also some commentary on life in the capital: criticism of a meeting promoted by the Homosexual Working Group (*Grupo de Trabalho Homossexual*, GTH) of the Revolutionary Socialist Party (*Partido Socialista Revolucionário*, PSR); in the same issue (#2, 1992), a reference to *Memorial* as an obligatory stop in the "Lisbon night" (p.6); and in the following issue, an appreciation of *Bar 106* in Príncipe Real as "an important site to highlight in the capital's

⁸ Signposting the existence of *Cúmplice: revista gay de actualidade e comportamento*, which produced two issues in 1991 and to which I have not yet had access.

gay night" (1992, p.8). However, despite the magazine's geographic reach - that same number boasts of receiving mail from thirty nine towns throughout the country (p.8) - Portuguese references are limited to the two-page section "Entre Nós" ("Between Us"). The reason is the same that explains the feat of its commercial distribution. As the name suggests, *GFM* is the Portuguese version of a French monthly. It was translated and adapted in Portugal, printed in France, and sent back through foreign import channels. The connection isn't a happy coincidence. The original version was overtly fascist was pro-pedophilia, which determined the ban on its sale to minors in 1992 in France (Garnier, 2000). Editor Michel Caignet, a former member of neonazi group *Fédération d'Action Nationale et Européenne*, sought to expand their reach beyond the francophone market and made use of personal contacts in Portugal, leading him to a young journalist who would become responsible, under the pseudonym Pedro Botto, for translating and adapting the contents to a local audience. He would go on to resign upon becoming aware of the magazine's connotations.⁹

Two contenders to the place held by *GFM* appeared in 1996: *Korpus* and *Trivia*. Both are by-products of a particularly flourishing moment for the queer social movement and, by reflecting it back to their audiences, they participate in its consolidation. The second half of the 1990s saw the foundation of several new organizations, and their coordination (despite conflicts reported in the gay press) and larger visibility in the public sphere will lead to the creation of a series of important infrastructures. GTH had existed since 1991 and, amongst other accomplishments, was responsible for the first public Pride commemoration in the country in 1995, in Lisbon's *Climacsz* nightclub. ILGA Portugal was founded in 1995, Clube Safo in 1996 and Opus Gay in 1997, the same year that saw the first *Arraial Pride* celebration in Príncipe Real, the opening of ILGA's LGBT Centre in rua de São Lázaro and the first edition of Lisbon's Gay and Lesbian Film Festival, now Queer Lisboa. In 1999, trans* activist Jó Bernardo opened Lisbon's only queer bookstore, *Esquina Cor de Rosa*, since closed. In the publications' symbiotic relation with this moment, *Trivia* holds an admittedly smaller place. It published five issues between 1996 and 1997, printed in A4 newspaper format in black and white, with a first print run of five thousand, then one thousand from the second issue onwards. Though originally an independent project bringing together activists from different groups as well as collaborators in publications such as *Organa*, it officially became

⁹ Interview with Miguel Rodeia, March 23rd 2022.

property of ILGA in its third issue (though ILGA had its own, smaller and more strictly informative, newsletter from 1995 to 2005). It sought to “create a space for communication within the Portuguese gay and lesbian community”, as read in the first editorial, identifying a cohesion in its target audience that hadn’t existed in its predecessors. *Trivia* includes some entertainment content but is essentially a newspaper reporting on the incipient movement then centered in Lisbon. But in the vein of *Orbita*, it scarcely romanticizes life in the city; its first number speaks of homophobia in the management of the city’s gay establishments: “The gay and lesbian scene suffers from still being closeted. Save for a few honorable exceptions, the owners of places where gays and lesbians go to spend their money don’t want to be ‘associated’ with them. It’s up to the patrons to decide their standards!” (1996, p.10). Later, issue four reports a homophobic attack in nightclub *Kings and Queens* (1996, p.8).

Korpus, published between 1996 and 2008 by editor Isidro Sousa, will go on to become the longest-running print publication aimed at a gay audience; it will start out as bimonthly, then biannual, before settling on quarterly, with fifty two black and white pages, colored covers and photos in A4. The inaugural issue comes out in a year “marked by the appearance of some new organizations and new homosexual spaces (and the closing of some others!)” (#2, 1997, p.8), and *Korpus* will be first in line to document this geography in mutation. Though originally based in Porto, its headquarters moved to Lisbon in 1998, strengthening relations with organizations and businesses in the capital. Isidro, who had experience photographing gay events, gave *Korpus* a reflective capacity that *Orbita* had only rarely been capable of, and always with a sense of secrecy: the pages are filled with photos of parties and club nights, not just of the performers but also their audiences, giving shape to an eclectic community separate from the protagonism of the social movement - one that is diverse in terms of gender identity and conformity as well as race and ethnicity, something that, in all titles analysed, is only ever mentioned in a context of otherness.

More than in its print volume or over-the-counter sales, feats already achieved by prior publications, *Korpus*’s main accomplishment might be in its impact, seen in the feedback effect between magazine and readers, and the quality of dialogue sometimes taking up multiple issues over one topic. Here, Lisbon’s queer life and underlying tensions take center stage. There are many corrections, responses, counter-responses and open criticisms, whether in relation to the bad management of a party, the production of a theater play, or a political campaign. One of the most interesting of these moments of dia-

logue, tied in with the question of a more diverse community that was then represented both by the rights movement and its media, is on the matter of gender identity and sexual orientation. *Orbita* had been fairly militant in its rejection of all femininity, as part of a program of (cis)masculinity responding to popular caricatures of gay men as effeminate. There is a continuity in *Korpus*, in the form of a trope of both readers and interviewed personalities decrying the over-exposure of drag queens, female impersonators, and trans* people in media coverage of gay events as a “mockery” of the community. The magazine’s report on Lisbon’s first Pride march is “extremely criticized by transsexuals” (#13, 2000, p.1) and prompts the editor’s clarification that though it aims to speak to a larger audience, the magazine privileges (presumably cisgender) “homosexual issues”.

Two other interrelated aspects in *Korpus* are noteworthy: a gradual movement from Lisbon to other parts of the country, and the appearance of a pink market. Its birth in Porto and the practice of nightlife reporting gave life to places that, to a Lisbon readership, had been little more than items on a tour guide. The reader learns that Porto’s gay nightlife is more daring than its Lisbon counterpart, follows the development of the first Gay Pride in Porto in 1999, several same-sex weddings celebrated in gay tourist establishments in Algarve, among events in other regions. The profitability of these new circuits is clear. Though *Orbita* had already included a few discrete sponsorships from bars and restaurants in Bairro Alto, these expanded in *Korpus* to include LGBT letting and travel agencies, laser hair removal, and penis augmentation treatments. In reference to this moment of geographic and economic expansion, a reader writes in issue eleven (2000, p.39), “before, gays in the capital had bars and despite it being the ghetto, they were happy, and the ones in the country had nothing. Now with the movement there are more possibilities for all.”

The question of the “ghetto” is familiar to anyone studying queer history and politics and their relation to urban settings. It is, of course, an appropriation of the term used historically for Jewish segregated quarters in some European regions adapted to different political cultures. The discourses of gay liberation that coalesced after Stonewall¹⁰ proposed reimagining the geo-

¹⁰ The Stonewall riots of June 1969 are not the beginning of a movement for the rights of queer and trans* people in the US, which had already produced a series of collective actions (Streitmatter, 1995) as well as other spontaneous riots (Stryker, 2008). Rather, it may be more productively read as marking a new phase of the movement, more visible to the mainstream and consolidating discourses and practices inspired by the anti-war, anti-racist and feminist movements (D’Emilio (1998 [1983])).

graphical segregation that accompanied stigmatization of queer communities in large urban centers (Hobson, 2016). To leave the ghetto, in the assimilationist imaginary, is synonymous with the success of integration, for those for whom it is possible.¹¹ A contemporary that offers a contrast to *Korpus*' enthusiasm (and discomfort with trans* experiences) is GTH's newsletter, *Sem Medos!* ("no fear!"). Edited between 1998 and 2002, it produced ten issues, photocopied with one color in a variety of formats and typically made to be distributed at in-person events such as demonstrations.¹² It's the first in this list to use gender-neutral language, as well as explicitly using "LGBT" as an address in its tagline, "Lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transsexuals, unite" (replacing "transsexuals" with "*transgenders*" (in English) in the fourth issue). Steeped in a leftist and anti-capitalist tradition, *Sem Medos* offers an asymmetrical take on the same events as other titles in the same period: early criticisms of real estate speculation in the capital, and an appeal to caution against the city council's support of the LGBT center, *Arraial Pride* and Pride march. Commenting on news of a sensitivity-training programme for police in Rio de Janeiro, the editors write "if this were in Lisbon, we might avoid some very frequent slaps in Príncipe Real" (#4, 1999, p.11), suggesting that the violence documented in *Orbita* was still far from belonging to the past, despite political gains. Another highlight is the penultimate issue, an archival dossier celebrating GTH's tenth anniversary featuring photos, clippings, and statements from GTH, PSR and the wider social movement and LGBT-friendly left, rendering a portrait of activist life in Lisbon in the 1990s.

Finally, and countering what has thus far been a chronological presentation, I turn your attention to the lesbian press, which exhibits a different set of concerns in regards to urban space. *Organa*, a nine-issue zine produced between 1990 and 1992, is the first lesbian publication in Portugal, and in that sense one of the first explicitly lesbian articulations in the first person. Started by Filomena Loureiro and Ana Pinheiro, the team expanded after a first in-person meeting, with some of these new members later starting the magazine *Lilás*. Also photocopied in black and white, but with a cleaner graphic layout,

¹¹ "Homosexuals become indistinguishable, not because they hide their secret better, but because they are uniform in body and soul, rid of the saga of their ghetto, reintroduced fully and completely not into their difference but into their similarity." (Hocquenghem, 2001 [1975]). Challenging a simply binary of marginal/normality, António Fernando Cascais wondered, in 1983, "what post-revolutionary 'party', of proliferating gay bars with their forced normality (these runway sissies...) in the midst of transgression..." (1983, p.16).

¹² Interview with Sérgio Vitorino on April 20th 2022.

Lilás will put out thirty three issues between 1993 and 2002, and will also participate in movement politics under the name *Grupo Lilás*. Lastly, *Zona Livre* ("free zone") is Clube Safo's newsletter, counting a total of seventy one issues edited from 1997 to the present day in a variety of formats. In its ensemble, the three are a case study of how different textual and paratextual choices engender different publics despite seeming to address the same one: *Organa* uses a familiar language and intentionally DIY cut-and-paste design. The last issues mark a turn that will become characteristic of *Lilás*, which has a much more pronounced theory-based and ideological bent. *Zona Livre*, as is typical of newsletters, is less restricted to a fixed and coherent model; aside from reporting on Safo's and the larger movement's activities, it includes some members' submissions, literary and otherwise, and, like *Lilás*, will be interested in documenting lesbian history through interviews with older women.

None of the three are based in Lisbon: *Organa* has a postal box address in Amadora, as does *Lilás*, which changes to Rio de Mouro in issue thirty-one, and *Zona Livre* in Lagos. Though in-person activities, as well as references to life as a queer person, tend to center in Lisbon, globally, unlike their male counterparts, the proposed imaginary isn't dependent on life in the capital. There is a stronger emphasis on collaboration with international lesbian networks and, especially, women in rural Portugal:

I live in a city which happens to be the capital of Portugal. To me, someone who has the chance to do any mundane thing and even paying taxes as a single woman, I live quietly with my partner and her child, to me, as I said, it's easy to find other dykes, make friends, recognise them in a bar, in the bookstore and the club. I don't walk around with any badge, I don't follow any codes - aside from *Organa's* turtle - and I don't have any problems; I'm proud to be recognised by other lesbians. (...) Yes, for me, living in an already European cosmopolitan city, it's easier to deal with loneliness. But when I think about the lesbian living in the interior, without access to cosmopolitan freedom, no community support, sometimes running the various risks that come from the oppression she's subjected to, silenced by a system that doesn't recognise her, I'm shocked by fear. In the moments I think about that lesbian I recognise the urgency in being visible, speaking loudly, recognising and cultivating a lesbian culture past and present. *Organa* is just that, the need to move Portuguese lesbians, especially those most isolated. (*Organa* #6, 1992, pp.5-6)

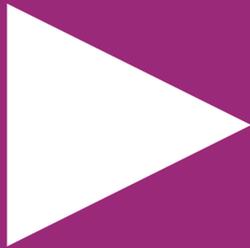
Though participating, by necessity, in Lisbon's ecosystem, the sense of space in *Organa* is more dispersed, turned either towards the rest of the country or abroad. This disassociation with the capital has an obvious reason. Aside from references, in radical feminist language, to male violence, there is a testimony of particular interest. In issue seven, the editors decide to visit a bar "we knew belonged to lesbians" (#7, 1992, p.9) in which they are reprimanded for upsetting the straight clientele. The same will be described later again in *Lilás*, issue eight (1994, p.50), in *Memorial* and *La Calle*, in Alcântara (p.51), also managed by lesbians. More disturbing are the mentions to exploitative, lesbophobic and misogynistic features on *Memorial* in newspapers *Diabo* (#2, 1993, p.57) and *Crime* (#9, 1995, p.58). The new millenium was still far from ushering in a safe space for women in Lisbon, even in its own "lesbian cathedral" (#7, p.49). Though *Organa* had already organized in-person meetings, it's in *Zona Livre* that we see a consolidation of a practice of collectively occupying space outside the urban centers. The newsletter's title is born in the first of many group camping retreats, in Tomar, in 1997, in homage to a participant's description of what the event meant to her (#48, 2005, p.5). These will become a tradition of Clube Safo, and so, while still promoting activities and events in cities (not just Lisbon, "capital of lesbians" (#1, 1997, p.5)), it will continue a legacy of a relation with public space that is broader and more decentralized, privileging the outdoors and the rural.

If, as Michael Warner and Lauren Berlant write, "queer culture [is] especially dependent on ephemeral elaborations in urban space and print culture..." (2005 [1998], p.203), I hope to have demonstrated the mutually constitutive relations between both through the medium of the Portuguese gay and lesbian press. The narrative that weaves through this history is a syn-copated one, contrary to the cumulative paradigm of liberalization (Herzog, 2009) that makes it difficult to read post-revolutionary conservatism, the disappointing horizon of decriminalization, the reorganization of public and private space during *Cavaquismo* (1985-1995), and the consolidation of a rights movement legible to institutions in the mid-1990s - a history that shapes and is shaped by the archive of the periodical press.

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SEX TOYS: A REFLECTION ON THE CULTURAL FACTORS SURROUNDING THE FEMALE ORGASM¹

| Lana de Araújo Gomides²

Abstract

Developed within the scope of Cultural Studies, this paper proposes to verify how sex toys help to unravel cultural factors that limit female orgasm, considering the concept of device from the perspective of Michel Foucault (2001) and Giorgio Agamben (2009), in addition to introducing the notion of contradispositive to approach the alternatives that women seek at the margins of the predominantly accepted discourses on female sexuality. To pursue the objectives, excerpts from two episodes of the television series *Crazy Ex-Girlfriend* (2015-2019) and *Sex and the City* (1998-2004), respectively, will be confronted.

Keywords:

Sex toys; Contradispositive; Device; Female Orgasm; Sexuality.

Introduction

Based on the theoretical paths developed within the scope of Cultural Studies, it is valid to take as a basis the conceptualizations of device proposed by Michel Foucault (2001) and Giorgio Agamben (2009) to reflect on the power relations directed to women's sexuality. While the first author uses the term when dealing with the issues of governability or government of subjects, the second extends such discussion to what concerns the concrete strategic function of devices in the inscriptions they exercise in a power relationship.

Therefore, devices can be understood as discourses, buildings, laws, schools, as well as simple objects that capture, guide, and shape gestures (Agamben, 2009, p. 40). In this sense, the fact that the notion of sexuality as leisure performed by cisgender, heterosexual men is better accepted when

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² PhD student in Cultural Studies, University of Aveiro. E-mail: lanagomides@ua.pt.

compared to the situation of women who resort to the practice for the same reason implies specific subjectivations about social roles and gender-aligned stereotypes. In other words, this type of discourse, as well as the consequent proliferation of taboos they trigger, collaborates to patterns of behavior that benefit the men described above. Just to illustrate, in addition to greater sexual freedom, they are predominantly exempt from responsibilities with contraception and parenting.

Heterosexuality can be recognized as one of the most successful technologies for maintaining patriarchal capitalist society, prioritizing sexual relations directed to reproduction. This need demarcates important factors responsible for gender inequality, since female submission is a socio-cultural characteristic that still enables male domination in different aspects (Depieri *et al.*, 2016, p. 58). Thus, the docility and passivity of women contrasted with the virility and sexual freedom of men, as well as the deprivation of information that most women have about their bodies, naturalized the absence of female orgasm during sexual intercourse. Consequently, they cultivated, for a long time, the perception that the pleasure of intimate contact with their partners was limited to the social roles destined to them: the idealization of a home through marriage and motherhood. Although several deconstructions have been made since the feminist mobilizations of the 1960s, the current system has rooted cultural factors that still reflect on issues of sexuality as leisure for women.

In fact,

The simulation of orgasm by women can have multiple causes, such as the simple lack of knowledge of their own body and the difficulty in saying what they feel and how they like sexual stimulation, but it can also be a sign of greater difficulties such as their insecurity about their sexuality, the fear of losing their partner, anxiety and guilt regarding their own sexual experience. (Araújo, 2005, p. 71).

In light of the above, this paper proposes to verify how sex toys help to unravel cultural factors that limit the female orgasm. In addition, it is worth questioning whether they would not position themselves as contradictory before the discourse that naturalizes the difficulty or absence of the female organism.

In order to pursue these inquiries, excerpts from two episodes of the television series *Crazy Ex-Girlfriend* (2015-2019) and *Sex and the City* (1998-2004), respectively, will be confronted. In the first one, it is possible to discuss the male discourse regarding women's use of sex toys. The second one, on the other hand, provides an opportunity to reflect on these devices from their point of view.

A theorization on selfishness

Undoubtedly, selfishness is a term often evoked when discussing sexual relations and their purposes. On the one hand, there is the carefree and individualistic behavior of men who, after achieving pleasure during sex, call it a day, regardless of whether it is focused on leisure or procreation. At the same time, since women's forms of sexuality were culturally built to achieve the purpose of motherhood, as already mentioned, there is the discourse that running away from these encounters with their partners, even if they do not generate pleasure, is a form of selfishness. After all, therein may lie the absence of compliance with their social duty.

However, there is less talk about men being selfish for neglecting the female orgasm, than about women being selfish for not wanting to be mothers or resorting to sexual practices as a leisure strategy. In this same sense, when heterosexual men postpone or refrain from fatherhood in order to devote themselves to their professional lives, there is no reading of selfish behavior. On the contrary, they are attributed

legitimate intellectual restlessness, hard work, success, and other such concepts. Why couldn't a woman feel the same way without being called an individualist? Isn't all desire and its absence individual? Supposedly in our societies doesn't desire have a better and better reputation, a better reputation, that anyone who doesn't fulfill their desires is a pusillanimous person? (Meruane, 2014, p. 83).

Probably, because it is easier to solve these issues individually than to clash with stratified hegemonic thoughts among subjects, sex toys are positioned as liberation devices, ways of getting to know one's own body, as well as ways of filling in the culturally normalized absences shrouded by taboo regarding sexual relations.

Female sexuality is determined not only by personal experiences, but also by a woman's contact with society. Women's magazines before the 1960s had a romanticized view of sex in which everything would end in marriage, husband, children, and the happiness that these goods alone would provide. Similarly, the movies showed an ideal and romanticized reality. The various religions also reproduced this ideal of marriage and children as a woman's personal fulfillment. The different distressing situations that she went through to control her pregnancy and to deal with the eventual infidelity of her hus-

band were omitted and were part of what was not talked about. The pedagogy of silence was in force, which was the way to deal with sexuality through omission and non-clarification, especially for the female sex (Araújo, 2005, p. 68).

In other words, people who had the opportunity to deconstruct themselves and experience orgasm as leisure, without the social burden of reproduction or the feeling of guilt pedagogized by religion, could find in toys alternative sexual behaviors. However, this does not mean that these devices are at the margin of the patriarchal capitalist system, as will be further discussed below.

Contextualizing sex toys

Before positioning sex toys as devices in favor of sexual liberation of cis-gender women or other people not privileged by hegemonic male, white and heterosexual power, it is pertinent to understand that the manufacture of the first vibrators began in the twentieth century, just before the development of male prostheses as a result of World War I (Beccari, 2021, p. 75). It is not a coincidence that, with women assuming space in industries and providing for the family's subsistence at that time, "the capitalist machine had to adjust to put the plasticity of the bodies at the service of a new form of consumption - which coincides, for example, with the foundation of Playboy magazine in 1953" (Beccari, 2021, p. 76).

In this way, initially, not only were sex toys produced from a reconstruction of the male body³, in the face of the notion of phallus, but they also served, if they still don't serve, as devices to control sexuality. After all, already in the 19th century,

with the help of mechanical instruments, interventions were made in the domain of female pleasure; while masturbation was forbidden and controlled, on the one hand, female orgasm was medicalized and understood as a crisis of hysteria. The male orgasm was mechanized and domesticated through an incipient pornographic codification... The machinery was ready. (Preciado, 2018, p. 77).

³ Our culture has a strongly phallogocentric tradition in which men assert their power through potency and domination in all fields in which they act, sex is included as one of the areas where men show themselves most vulnerable. (Araújo, 2005, p. 70).

It is worth mentioning that such pornographic codification inserts female bodies in a logic of submission, perpetuating the control of hegemonic capitalist organizations. And in any case, regardless of gender, the orgasm gains senses of oppression. According to Maria Luiza de Macedo Araújo (2005), from the moment women understand that it marks the success of a sexual relationship, they internalize the need to feel it. Then, to the already known impositive speech of “being a woman” is added the excellent sexual performance. Hence comes the simulation of pleasure, when orgasm is not reached.

In the same way, many men seek this validation to reaffirm themselves in the category of “real man”, because “his sexuality is not measured only by the pleasure of the relationship but by the power he has to provide an orgasm to his partner (if possible multiple)” (Araújo, 2005, p. 70).

In summary, there is a scenario in which either women do not feel comfortable to talk about the practices that give them pleasure due to the taboos that permeate the theme, or, even after some advances provided by the deconstruction processes, they judge themselves inferior when expressing their dissatisfaction in front of their partners, preferring to fake the orgasm.

Through these notions, they resort to sex toys as counter-devices to claim sexual pleasure with independence, removing orgasm from the obscene condition and still maintaining their affectionate interactions with partners in a somewhat more peaceful manner.

The device that accomplishes and regulates the separation is sacrifice: through a series of minute rituals, diverse according to the variety of cultures, [...] sacrifice sanctions in each case the passage of something from the profane to the sacred, from the human sphere to the divine. But what has been ritually separated can be returned by the rite to the profane sphere. Profanation is the contradispositive that restores to common use that which the sacrifice had separated and divided (Agamben, 2009, p. 45).

Therefore, while the orgasm and sex toys are culturally introduced as devices⁴ to regulate relationships, which should preferably be heterosexual in

⁴ At this point, it is significant to introduce Foucault’s definition of devices as “a decidedly heterogeneous set that encompasses discourses, institutions, architectural organizations, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral, philanthropic propositions. In short, the said and the unsaid are the elements of the device. The device is the network that can be established among these elements” (Foucault, 2001, p. 244).

order to maintain the current system, they can also function as a countervailing device for women who find alternatives to explore their sexual experiences outside of social impositions or expectations. Consequently, sex toys, for example, are ways to circumvent the fear of losing sexual partners without them ceasing to experience sex as leisure. Although they do not solve the persistent problems of sex and gender, they provide an experience at the margins of the patriarchal heritage that often still denies the female orgasm.

However, even when the female orgasm and sex toys are treated as counter-devices, it is essential to realize that they do not cease to establish a relationship with the norm. In fact, as already mentioned at the beginning of this writing, the artifacts sold in sex shops obey a design corresponding to the “broad process of materialization of discourses and values” (Beccari, 2021, p. 67).

With the exposition of these thoughts, excerpts from two episodes of the television series *Crazy Ex-Girlfriend* (2015-2019) and *Sex and the City* (1998-2004) will be analyzed below.

A dialogue between references

Before discussing the media content proposed here, it is worth noting that while the episode “The Buzzing from the Bathroom”⁵, from the series *Crazy Ex-Girlfriend* (aired between 2015 and 2019) was selected to discuss a male point of view on the use of sex toys, the episode *The Turtle and the Hare*⁶, from *Sex and the City* (exhibited between 1998 and 2004), reveals a discussion of the devices by a group of women.

Figure 1. Prints of the melody sung by the character Tim, from *Crazy Ex-Girlfriend*



Note: Montage made during the research from frames taken from the YouTube platform⁷.

⁵ Translation by the author: The Toilet Buzz.

⁶ Author's translation: The Rabbit Vibrator.

⁷ Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZIHf1Fc0OSg>. Accessed on: October 10, 2022.

Figure 1 shows two moments from the same scene from the CW musical comedy series *Crazy Ex-Girlfriend*. Among the central themes of the audio-visual production are female sexuality and women's reproductive system.

The song sung by the white heterosexual character Tim expresses, in its entirety, the feeling of failure when he discovers that the buzzing coming from the bathroom is not an electric toothbrush or something similar, but the vibrator that his wife uses to feel pleasure. Faced with this, he utters sentences like "what a deep humiliation", "I thought I was doing it the right way" and "so much shame consuming me".

Figure 2. Print of another part of the melody sung by Tim



Note: Montage made during the research from frames taken from the YouTube platform⁸.

When he sings, revealing that he understood the meaning of the words "Tim, it was nice," it brings up something mentioned during the theorizing of this article: to avoid confrontation with their partners, women tend to simulate orgasm. Later on, he utters falling asleep, believing he had had a good sexual relationship. However, shortly afterwards he hears the noise of the sex toy, which was used by his partner in an attempt to complete by herself what she could not achieve with him.

The taboo that exists about the female orgasm, as well as about women's desires in a sexual relationship, in general, is a cultural factor that leads to a lack of dialogue. It is not by chance, therefore, that Tim naturalizes resorting

⁸ Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZIHf1Fc0OSg>. Accessed on: October 10, 2022.

to the same sexual positions and on a certain day of the week, as if the ritual were an obligation handed down by society that must be fulfilled automatically and with no room for change, when he sings “we use two different positions every other Sunday night”. This problem can also be felt in the passage “I can’t believe she didn’t come to tell me that she needed much more than I could give,” signaling the absence of confrontation between the two parties.

On the other hand, the male prepotency in believing that only men have the power to provide orgasm, minimizing that their pleasure can also come from another person during the act, is well synthesized in the line “I used to think I was a hero”.

All this panorama dialogues with the research *Female Orgasm: Prevalence of Erroneous Beliefs in Pernambuco, Brazil*, conducted by health professionals Rógerson Andrade, Ricardo Cavalcanti, and Vilma da Silva in 2015. The research points out that

Sex education can be the beginning of prevention of numerous sexual dysfunctions not only in the sense of prevention of sexually transmitted diseases or contraception, but also in a broader sense, leading the young person to body self-knowledge, demystification of erroneous beliefs, religious taboos and improved interpersonal communication. (Andrade *et al.*, 2015, p. 13).

After all,

In the aspect of sexuality the human being is surrounded by false information and superstitions, getting involved in a network of myths and beliefs, and this misinformation is spread among young people mainly by ignorance and omission of those responsible for their education. (Andrade *et al.*, 2015, p. 12).

As Foucault (2001) would say, a network of devices architects and maintains cultural factors that directly influence human sexuality, generating senses of superiority and inferiority not only when it comes to men in relation to women, but also of heterosexual interactions over homosexual ones.

Figure 3. Print of conversation between Carrie and Charlotte in *Sex and the City*



Note: Montage made during the research from frames taken from the YouTube platform.⁹

The episode under analysis from the American series *Sex and the City*, which depicts the cohabitation between friends Carrie, Samantha, Charlotte and Miranda, shows the use of sex toys from the point of view of white, middle-class women. In Figure 3, Charlotte says she is afraid that she will not be able to enjoy sex with a man again if she continues to use the vibrator she bought from the encouragement of the other women in her circle. After all, as she comments at another point in the same scene, with the toy she is not only sure that she will achieve pleasure, but also reach orgasm in less time.

The series starts in the 20th century, in a period when among the social transformations were “the feminine liberation, the conquest of the right to experience their own sexuality without being linked to motherhood, that is, pleasure in sex became a right without being conditioned to marriage and motherhood” (Araújo, 2005, p.70). Although this audiovisual content reinforces some sexist issues, it revisits the dissatisfaction of many women in relation to their peers. For example, in the same episode Miranda comments that in a short time men will be obsolete, since not only are they no longer needed to achieve female orgasm, but women do not need them for motherhood, which would lead to a discussion about artificial fertilization methods timely for another writing.

⁹ Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OkvEephr9dk>. Accessed on: October 11, 2022.

Conclusion

With the discussion on the use of sex toys, it is possible to synthesize that the main cultural factors limiting the female orgasm were constructed by the state, by the various religions, by the media and by the modes of formal education.

In this sense, a network of devices acted and still acts on human sexuality in order to promote the maintenance of the patriarchal capitalist system by prioritizing heterosexual relationships, naturalizing social roles, such as motherhood.

Just to illustrate, how sex toys were introduced into society, taking the phallus as a reference, points to a predominantly male tradition, pointing out that these objects have the potential to order relations and, therefore, can be considered devices of control.

In contrast, the feminist movement and its deconstructions have promoted new forms of sexuality not only for women, but also for other people not privileged in the prevailing system, with sex toys being contradispositive (despite caveats) useful for a resignification of women's sex lives.

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SOCIABILITY AND WAYS OF LIVING GENDER AND SEXUALITY IN SPORT: AN ETHNOGRAPHY WITH LGBT YOUTH¹

Emerson Araújo de Campos²

Ana Cláudia Porfírio Couto³

Abstract

Through an ethnographic study with young LGBT who practiced volleyball in a public square, we sought to reflect on strategies for occupation and permanence, mediated by gender and sexuality, in *locus* privileged to the practice of different sports, but that has been occupied, to a large extent, by normative bodies. To do so, observations and interviews were conducted with these social actors, and, despite the contradictions that revealed different violence, especially racial and homophobic, this context revealed, as results, potentialities, such as: collective organization, the construction of fight units to remain in the public space, the affirmation of their histories and identities and possibilities to other leisure.

Keywords:

Sport; Gender; Sexuality; Youth; LGBT.

Introduction

This paper seeks to reflect on resistance strategies of young LGBT to occupy and remain in a territory understood as “natural” to normative bodies. For that, we will describe the occupation of a public square, from the social actors who attend it, in a gender and sexuality perspective, then characterize

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² Graduate in the Interdisciplinary Graduate Leisure Studies Program, Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG), Brazil. E-mail: emerson.campos@ifpa.edu.br.

³ Professor of the Interdisciplinary Graduate Leisure Studies Program, Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG), Brazil. E-mail: acpcouto@gmail.com

a space of dissent within the said square, “the turf of the LGBT community”, and indicate examples and modes of resistance engendered by young LGBT.

We performed an ethnography in Rosa Blanco Square located in the city of Bragança, State of Pará, Brazil, in early 2020 (between January and March and then November and December) and 2021 (January to April), the interval was motivated by the restrictions imposed by the coronavirus pandemic. The social actors investigated met to play volleyball every day, between 8 p.m. and 11 a.m., in one of the sports courts of the said square. There were about 20 young people (this number varied according to day and weather conditions), between 18 and 23 years old, who declared themselves as men (18), cisgender (18), white (08) or black (12), heterosexuals (02), gays (14) or bisexuals (04). They studied in public schools, in high school (08) or higher education (02), had a family income of up to 3 minimum wages, and some worked (03) because they needed to contribute financially at home, others even said that they were unemployed (04). The numbers don't add up exactly to 20 because some didn't know or didn't want to answer.

Ethnography (Magnani, 2002, 2016) was considered as an approach and an apprehension of reality through fragments, diverse information and clues, re-signified in a new arrangement, not only of the natives (young LGBT), a term used by classical anthropology to refer to the subjects/informants/actors of the research, but that came of them, took them into account, was raised from them. In addition, this new arrangement was also articulated with our (the researchers') perspective and, thus, carried marks of both, native and researchers. In this way, we, based on what was lived concretely, sought to articulate possibilities broader than the perspective of the natives and denser than the theoretical framework that we had.

The perspective of the adopted ethnography is founded in a look “from within and closely” (Magnani, 2002, 2016), therefrom it was possible to identify, describe and reflect on aspects of young LGBT who played volleyball, such as collaborative networks, formats of the meetings, arrangements, interests, needs, and themes that emerged from their daily lives. This way of producing ethnography was “[...] able to grasp the patterns of behavior, not of atomized individuals, but of the multiple, varied and heterogeneous sets of social actors [...]” (Magnani, 2002, p. 17), based on the arrangements established by themselves in the uses of the leisure and sports square mediated by the volleyball practice.

For this, we considered the social actors involved (the sports practitioners in the square), the group (young LGBT who played volleyball) and the practice (sport) they performed, as well as the landscape (the leisure and sports square) in which this practice was experienced as significant and fundamental elements of the analysis. The social actors were recognized by the uses they made of the leisure and sports square through the practice of volleyball. *In loco*, we observed the multiple and different behavior arrangements to identify patterns, based on the assumption of totality – understood not as an organic, functional whole, without conflicts, but based on two dimensions.

The first dimension of totality was based on the classical view of a community, delimited here to what we named as “turf of the LGBT community”, the space where ethnographic observation took place. In this turf, we found that the young LGBT knew each other, maintained close relationships with patterns of interpersonal exchanges, with characters identified and known within them. In another way, the second dimension of totality, now broader and capable of situating, comparing and analyzing the details of ethnography, sought in intersectionality references to understand issues related to gender, sexuality, race and body image.

Intersectionality seeks to recognize the structural and dynamic consequences of two or more axes of subordination, that is, forms such as racism, patriarchy, class oppression and others created inequalities that support the relative positions of women, races, ethnicities, class, etc. (Crenshaw, 2002) Thus, through this perspective, it was possible to analyze how certain social markers, such as gender, sexuality, race and body image, as multiple experiences of the subjects, benefit from that in accordance with normative models, and expose the vulnerability of those who are on the margins of them.

Data collection was carried out through direct observation, semi-structured interviews and field notebooks. The field notebook, an indispensable instrument and aid for observation, made it possible to record events of the most varied, even when they were not considered significant, and allowed to capture information that documents, interviews and recordings did not transmit (Magnani, 1996).

The public of the leisure and sports square

The study took place in one of the sports equipment of Rosa Blanco Square, known as Aldeia’s Square, because it is in the neighborhood with this name. It

presents different leisure and sports activities, however, to describe the audience that frequented it, we focused only on users of the courts/arenas for collective sports. In total, there were three sports courts, one for futsal, a second for sand football and “foot-volleyball” and a third for basketball and volleyball.

The audience of these sports equipment, in general, was marked in the discourse of those who watched the games as cisgender men and women. The public that contemplated the games was characterized by us as an audience, and it was fundamental to listen to it to understand how they recognized the players of any sport. From the audience, some stereotypes of gender and sexuality were raised with expressions that named men or women.

In some way, men who practiced futsal, sand soccer, “foot-volleyball” or basketball were read as cisgender and heterosexual, sports “intended” for men who performed gender and sexuality aligned with the heterosexual matrix (Butler, 2020). However, those who practiced volleyball were marked as gays. On the other hand, women who practiced any sport other than volleyball were seen as lesbians.

In relation to men who played futsal, sand soccer, “foot-volleyball” or basketball, it was common to hear from the audience phrases such as: “*this is such a macho, a hardworking player*”. In contrast, about men who played volleyball, we heard phrases such as: “*there’s only fresh [fresco] here*”, fresh [fresco] is a native category that nominates effeminate men, possibly with sexual interest/desire for other men.

About women, phrases like: “*looks like a boy playing*”, boy as a native category that symbolizes young men, but also used to indicate lesbian women because is male. Or the phrase “*this one likes*” that indicated women with possible sexual interest/desire for other women. These expressions marked women as lesbians in the practice of any sport other than volleyball. Therefore, in the context investigated, and from what the audience narrated, the sexualities of the different social actors depended on the sport practiced and the expectations of normative gender and sexuality that fell on the practitioners. However, did these appointments relate to the reality lived by such bodies?

The “turf of the LGBT community”

The subjects who practiced volleyball were marked by an external narrative constructed by the audience that named them as “*gays*”, “*queer [bichas]*”, “*freshes [frescos]*” or “*faggots [viados]*”. In one of our first forays in the field,

one of the phrases that translated this perception of ours was “*there’s only queer here*”, queer [*bicha*] can be described as a term that refers to the effeminate men with sexual interest/desire for other men. This type of statement presented plenty of repercussions among those who played volleyball, especially two: a feeling of relegation, motivated by terms that could be translated as homophobic and that affected negatively the target, or even feelings of identification and self-affirmation, because some bodies recognized each other and assumed the category “queer [*bicha*]” as their identity.

Hence, those who played volleyball, regardless of being aligned or not with the categories imposed by the audience, were almost always read as dissonant of the heterosexual matrix, different from players from other sports – recognized as aligned with the norms of hegemonic gender and sexuality. To some extent, the court in which volleyball was practiced was recognized as an LGBT space of Bragança, abbreviation which means lesbians, bisexuals, transvestites, transsexuals and transgenders, constantly used by the social actors of this research, when they referred to the group as a whole, “*there, in volleyball, is the space of gays, of the LGBT community*” (Interlocutor 03, 2020), functioning as a turf, as a particular space of sociability of such public, the “turf of the LGBT community”.

The “turf of the LGBT community” was occupied by different subjects, largely designated men at birth, who identified themselves, or not, with this gender⁴, of dissonant sexualities, young, aged between 18 and 23 years old, middle-class D, brown, brunette or black⁵. These subjects sought to “*play volleyball*”, “*have fun*”, “*meet friends*”, “*date*”, “*pass the time*”, “*forget the problems*”, “*get out of their house a little*”, “*relax*”, “*learn volleyball*” (Interlocutors, 2020).

Limits and barriers on the turf

Despite seeming a safe space, some barriers to stay inside it crossed it, such as conflicts with other groups, as players from other sports arenas, people who circulate in the square for other purposes, the structural conditions of the court – because, among all, it had the lowest lighting and had no coverage

⁴ During the interviews, none of the interlocutors recognized themselves as of a gender other than the male, despite hearing, at different times during direct observations, a person affirmed himself as a woman.

⁵ Middle class D refers to families with incomes between 1 and 3 minimum wages. As for the classification of race, they identified themselves either as black, or as brown or as brunettes.

that protected from rain or sun – and issues of gender, sexuality, race and body image.

Conflicts with other groups in the square were based on homophobia. A case that revealed this finding was observed in an ordinary situation of sports arenas, the exit of the ball from the playing area. The shape of the square and the layout of the courts, one next to the other, made it easier for the ball to get out of the playing area and into another one. Once, after the ball left the volleyball game and fell on the futsal court, it was returned with a kick, attitude disapproved by those who play volleyball – one of the fundamental rules of the sport is not to kick the ball out of play. Added to this attitude, which could have been accomplished because this rule is not known, there was a lot of laughter from the authors of the kick, as if they knew that they should not have kicked the ball and did not care. In addition, there was also the imitation of female gestures, as a criticism of them. The disapproval of those who were in volleyball was general, some grumbled, others complained in a louder tone, and everything calmed down. In the entire period of going to the field, we did not identify the same attitude towards the other sports arenas, this only happened against those who played volleyball.

The structural conditions of the court were unequal to the others with regard to the quality of the floor, lighting and maintenance. During the research period, the other spaces of the square received maintenance and reform through the government, including the creation of another sports arena, however, the volleyball court was the only one that did not receive the same attention.

The prejudice of gender and sexuality was also verified among those who played volleyball, but with another format, authorized in the context of play, or without the same indignation when coming from characters outside the turf. In general, everyone who approached an ideal of normative masculinity or femininities was treated in a specific and unequal way. For example, after an *intense rally*, with longer length of ball time in play, the achievement of the point was very applauded and this was in relation to the opponent who lost the point, however, two forms of celebration could occur, one in relation to the subject read as an effeminate and the other in relation to the one understood as masculine. In relation to the first, feminine expressions in the diminutive were more common, celebrated to screams: “*weak little woman*”, “*egg sandwich* [pão com ovo] *little faggot* [viadinho]”, “*shaggy* [xexelento] *little gay*”. Regarding the second, there were no expressions that diminished him

in the vibration by the point conquered, but an appreciation of himself through positive statements “*see how powerful I am*,” “*I am a very good gay*”. Then, there was an unequal treatment to the opponent of the game, guided by the devaluation of the other when feminine, and to some extent homophobic, and in the exaltation of oneself when the other was masculine, without homophobic offenses.

In some situations, this could widen when other markers crossed the subjects, such as when black or fat. On many occasions, we have witnessed racist expressions, such as: “*burnt rubber*”, “*asphalt leftover*”; and fatphobic: “*whale*”, “*immense*”, “*round*”. Or even, in some game situations, when a technical fault was committed, sentences like: “*black just does something stupid*” or “*could only be black indeed*”, or “*fat will never catch a ball like that*”. In another way, black and fat bodies could be the target of homophobia, racism and fatphobia at the same time, because what was valued in the turf were white, thin and masculine bodies, marking blacks, fats and epheminates as ugly and/or unable to develop in the sport with skill.

Resist, occupy and stay in the square

Despite the limits and barriers present in the “turf of the LGBT community”, ways of resist, occupy and remain in it were engendered by the subjects, some of which we highlight here: the maintenance of the court with its own resources, the resignification of prejudiced and violent terms and expressions, collective care and the feeling of brotherhood and acceptance, new meanings to sport in the city and the expansion of possibilities for leisure.

As stated earlier, the court aimed at volleyball did not receive the same attention, compared to other sports equipment, by the municipal government regarding maintenance. During the period we spent in the field, one of the courts was reformed, and another created, what generated some discussions in the group, which compared the quality of the other equipment and the inequality of attention given to each of them. This situation motivated them to repair the court, to do so, they raised funds for painting the floor and buying new sports materials through a collective action motivated by the precariousness of municipal public policies to maintain the court.

This collective also acted as a unit of defense against external violence, which relied on the brotherhood, “*we [volleyball players] being here [in the square], we add strength, if one of us is attacked, we will fight together*” (Inter-

locutor 2, 2020). We were never reported, nor did we witness any situation of physical violence, but fear was a constant narrative, so, perhaps because of that, none of them stayed alone on the court, and they arrived in groups and left in the same way. There was no declared threat toward them, but the treatment received, to some extent in homophobic terms, by segments that occupied the square stimulated the need for the group to coalesce as brotherhood to protect themselves.

In this context, the identities of group members and of the group as a whole were strengthened and gave other meanings to terms previously taken as pejorative. Expressions such as “*queer [bicha]*”, “*faggot [viado]*”, “*little gay*”, “*black*”, “*fat*”, used as an offense, in certain situations were reversed into positive identities, assumed by social actors targeted by discrimination and prejudice as their own. Phrase such as: “*I’m faggot [viado] indeed*”, “*I’m proud to be black*”, “*I’m fat and hot*”, resignified concepts and made feasible the presence of other bodies, and not just the normative in the square. The group members took these terms with pride when asked who were the people who played volleyball in the square, “*the gays*” “*the queer [bichas]*”, “*the LGBT community*”.

In another way, *the “turf of the LGBT community”* also acted as a place of welcome and space for sport development, because many felt limited in other environments, and not just sports, because of latent homophobia, “[...] *in school I couldn’t give my best [he played volleyball in school and was ridiculed him for his effeminate performance], here in volleyball [in the square] I can be who I really am [...]*” (Interlocutor 08, 2020).

Faced with these issues, the “*turf of the LGBT community*” represents one of the only public spaces recognizably LGBT, occupied by young LGBT in Bragança-PA, even with all the barriers presented here, such as homophobia present in the regular attenders of the square, the fear of physical violence and the very little attention of the public power to maintain the court.

Moreover, this reality placed under discussion the need for change of thought about the different bodies, especially through prerogatives that normalize certain sports practices to certain subjects and not feasible to others, because the genre is not aligned with the cultural expectations related to it. On the other hand, such reality placed in perspective the need for environments and leisure experiences that are welcoming, especially to those who still suffer gender and sexuality discrimination and prejudice and need spaces that enable the expressiveness and knowledge of themselves with lower chances of sanctions. Obviously, there is a long time to go, because even when we con-

sider these potentialities, certain contradictions have not yet been overcome, homophobia, racism and fatphobia are still reproduced.

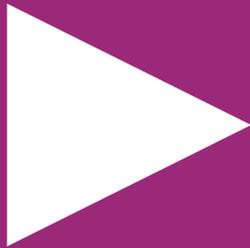
From the organization for the practice of volleyball in the square, other possibilities of leisure were thought and experienced. After the games, they thought together about what they were going to do over the weekend, which places they were going to visit, and which groups to interact with. In addition, the very turf of the LGBT community was a meeting point, of flirting, of “*at-raque*”, of “*rock*”, of the invention of possibilities to move around the city. The “*at-raque*”, besides being a moment that encouraged the game, an invitation to go to the square to play volleyball could be translated with the following calling: “*sis, let’s go the atraque in this game today*”, was also used with the sense of building affective-loving relationship with other bodies: “*I’ll atraque with a boy today after volleyball*”. “*Rock*” was the moment of chat, relaxed conversation, reflections on life, loves, work, family, school, almost always mediated by the consumption of cigarettes and alcoholic beverages, was one of the main reasons for meeting in other spaces of the city, such as rivers, places, squares, nightclubs, etc.

In any case, even when the context does not seem to be favorable to those who are not aligned with hegemonic gender and sexuality norms, some resistance strategies indicate that there is no innocence in leisure, from which different agencies can negotiate powers, change perspectives of domination and control and the *status quo* of those involved (Shaw, 2006)⁶.

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⁶ A translator João Victor Moreira.



WOMEN WITH DOWN SYNDROME: SEXUALITY, SILENCES, SILENCING AND VIOLENCE

Marina Dias de Faria

Bruna Zeni

Abstract:

The sexuality of women with disabilities has been regarded as taboo by society. It is an almost unanimous view that women with disabilities do not have the right to an active sex life and are not even owners of their own bodies (Wilkerson, 2011). The research that gave rise to this summary sought to take a small step in attempting to discuss such an issue - so deeply invisibilized. The objective of the research was to analyze the narratives about the sexuality of women with Down Syndrome (DS) from the reports of mothers of adult people with Down Syndrome and professionals who work directly with people with intellectual disabilities in Portuguese institutions. We emphasize that we align ourselves with the demand that gender and disability be articulated in studies committed to, obviously, the truth. Which is: that such people have sexual desires and should have the right to their own bodies (Siebers, 2008). To achieve this goal, we interviewed 16 mothers and 10 professionals. It is important to emphasize that this report is a part of a larger research, in which people with Down Syndrome were also interviewed, so that we could observe and respect their protagonism in their own life narratives. However, most of the mothers asked, at the time of the interviews, that we not ask anything about sex or sexuality to their sons and daughters. According to these mothers, it is a "delicate subject" or "something that she doesn't even know exists and it is better not to bring it up". Requests that provide us with important indications of how the sexuality of people with Down Syndrome has been treated within the family: as a taboo. We know that it would be very important to have the reports of people with DS, but in face of this indication and of others obtained with the professionals, we opted to make a smaller cut, even to be able to deal with the proposal in a satisfactory manner. But we emphasize, once more, that this is an analysis of the perspective of third parties about the sexuality of women with DS. The results showed us that silence is the norm. The research participants, especially the mothers, were visibly uncomfortable talking about the topic, and when they did, they said that women with Down Syndrome are not independent when it comes to their own bodies. On the organizations' part, one of the professionals reported that the institution offered sex education classes for people with DS, but the parents were against it and asked for the classes to be stopped. Situations like these reinforce that it is third parties who determine, without showing interest in listening to women with DS, that they do not have sexual desire. It is worth pointing out that in the research it also became

clear that, as much as men with DS also suffer from prejudiced views about their sexuality, it is the women who have their bodies completely kidnapped and their sexual desires silenced, ignored, and vehemently denied. One of the serious consequences of the denial of the basic right to their bodies is the high number of sexual violence suffered by women with Down Syndrome. Another consequence is the label socially assigned to these women as eternal children.

Keywords:

Sexuality; Down Syndrome; Body; Taboo; Woman.

Introduction

The sexuality of women with disabilities is an invisible and silenced subject in almost every environment (Wilkerson, 2011). The reference to the sexuality of these women is made rarely and in an instrumental way, with the objective of maintaining the social order, touching on points as ways of avoiding pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases (Shildrick, 2012). This research aims to be a small step to break with invisibility and silencing with regard specifically to the perspective of mothers and professionals who deal daily with women with disabilities. The question that is in the title of Hebe Régis (2013), by focusing on the involuntary sterilization of women with intellectual disabilities, permeates our entire investigation: “whose body is this?”.

Dan Goodley (2011), referring to people with disabilities (PwD) in general points out that the bodies of these people are seen as asexual, monstrous and not attractive. Thus, their sexuality is not even discussed. In the specific case of women with disabilities, they carry all these labels and, in addition, are labeled as infertile (Garland-Thomson, 2011).

Given this scenario, this article is aligned with the demand that gender and disability should be articulated in studies committed to the obvious truth that such people have sexual desires and should have the right to their bodies. It is urgent that the sexuality of these women is not seen by society as a taboo, so that the different facets of this issue are debated (Siebers, 2008). Thus, the objective of this essay is to analyze the narratives of mothers and professionals about the sexuality of women with Down Syndrome (DS). The narratives analyzed here were made by mothers and professionals linked to institutions focused on PwD care. It is important to highlight that this report is an excerpt from a larger research, in which, in addition to this audience, people with

Down Syndrome were mainly heard. That is, the research was concerned with the protagonism of such people in their own life narratives. However, most mothers asked, at the time of the interviews, that I didn't ask anything about sex or sexuality to their sons and their daughters. According to these mothers, it is a "delicate subject" or "something that she doesn't even know exists and is better off not waking up."

Logically, such a request is already an important indication of how the sexuality of people with Down Syndrome is a taboo. I know it would be very important to have the reports of people with DS, but given what was exposed and the richness of the material obtained from mothers and professionals, I chose to keep the article, but I emphasize, once again, that it is the analysis of the perspective of third parties on the sexuality of women with DS.

In the research, we align ourselves with Estudos Feministas da Deficiência (Feminist Disability Studies) as a field of knowledge, in which disability is inscribed as a result of a system of oppression and not as a medical issue. Here one resorts to the reflection that feminism – particularly when approaching liberal ideas – is extremely harmful to women with disabilities, by not leaving room for their bodies. An example of such an ideological mechanism of silencing can be observed in the discussions of feminist ethics of care, an area in which women with disabilities are usually placed as incapable of caring, and as bodies that need care from other women, namely those without disabilities (Garland-Thomson, 2019; Mintz, 2011).

Sexuality, taboos and the eternal child

When analyzing the scientific articles published in the journal *Sexuality and Disability*, Nádia Meinerz (2010) points out that sexuality is repeatedly pointed out as a frontier device with regard to access to the label of a normal individual. In this context of standardization of bodies, disabled individuals are pointed out as outside the norm, uncontained and disobedient bodies (Santos, 2019).

Learning about sexuality and specifically about sex necessarily involves knowing the body and having notions about individuality and consent. The importance of these issues leads to the understanding that denying PwD the knowledge and possession of their own bodies is a deliberately adopted path that deprives them of being full individuals from the point of view of their sexualities (Shildrick, 2012).

With regard specifically to women with disabilities, the theorists of Feminist Disability Studies denounce that feminist criticism of patriarchy and the myth of women as a sexual object and as a mother ignores women with disabilities, who are considered asexual and infertile (mintz, 2011). The requirement of procreation as the center of life (Roseneil *et al.*, 2020) directly impacts women with disabilities. This is mainly because such women are mistakenly seen as incapable of having children. On this issue, it is worth emphasizing the perspective of authors such as Garland-Thomson (2019) that, while for many women motherhood is an imposition, for women with disabilities it is a prohibition. This seems to me to be one of the many issues that ends up putting disabled women on the sidelines of feminist movements. Shildrick (2019) points out that, if feminism is indeed involved with the recognition and appreciation of intersectional difference, it is mandatory that feminist studies also engage with the issue of disability as one of the predominant forms of difference in contemporary society.

One of the issues that can and should be discussed when talking about sexuality and the right to one's own body by women with disabilities is the infantilization of PwD. In a cyclical process, which is not beneficial to PwD, there is a social prohibition that these people have romantic/sexual relationships with the excuse that they would be children, even when they are already adult. Additionally, being part of a couple is widely seen as an achievement, a stabilizing status characteristic of adulthood. Not being part of the couple form is, in many ways, being outside, or at least on the margins, of adult society (Roseneil, 2020). This cycle ends up being configured as a social excuse for the vision of PwD as eternal children.

The label of eternal children makes even adults with disabilities subject to adulthood. About this concept, Mafalda Esteves, Ana Cristina Santos and Alexandra Santos (2021) emphasize that the child sees his life determined by the social norms formulated by adults in an implicit and invisible way, therefore, naturalized. The same authors draw attention to the fact that an indisputable hierarchy is created between adults and children. Thus, within the capacitant logic, the PwD, because they are "stuck to childhood", but not only for this reason, are hierarchically inferior to the so-called normal people.

One last issue, which is usually made even more invisible and silenced, but which cannot be set aside in a debate that is truly committed to the struggle for the sexual rights of women with disabilities, is the heteronormative imposition. On the point, Shildrick (2012) states that the discourse

that PwD are beings devoid of sexuality is harmful to all individuals with disabilities and even more serious for those who are homosexual. Authors such as Siebers (2008) argue that understanding the sexuality of PwD can be important even to break with patterns of sexual normativity.

Sexual violence and intimate citizenship

The points raised above show that PwD and, in particular, women with disabilities are prevented from having the right to their own bodies. From the reflections made, the questioning about the right to intimate citizenship by such people arises. This is because intimate citizenship concerns the power of control and agency over the body, its feelings, its pleasure and its sexual life. Thus, in order to be able to think of intimate citizenship, it is supposed to be based on access to one's own body and sexuality (Plummer, 2003).

Discussing intimate citizenship for women with disabilities involves, unfortunately, necessarily discussing violence. For Regina Passos, Fernanda Telles and Maria Oliveira (2019), there are ethical gaps that prevent the full exercise of the citizenship of women with disabilities, especially when they are victims of sexual violence. Such reflections boosted the desire to carry out this research, by declaring that it is urgent to break the academic, legal, social and public policy silence on violence and women with disabilities.

Dan Goodley (2011) states that it is necessary to understand the context of exclusion experienced by women with disabilities, in order to understand the complexity of the sexual violence suffered by them. Even the denunciation by these women is a complicated process and sometimes even prevents the initiation of an investigation. Passos, Telles and Oliveira (2019) point out that there is a major problem of lack of attitudinal accessibility for the complaints made by such women to reach the State with due credibility.

The study by Kristin Bumiller (1990), although not specifically talking about violence against women with disabilities, can help to understand the scenario of sexual violence experienced by them. Firstly, with regard to the place of naivety that women are led to occupy in the trial of sexual crimes, causing them to take part of the blame for having been raped. Another important issue, raised in the aforementioned text, is that the search for objectivity often makes it more difficult to maintain the versions told by the victims when they do not correspond to the "expected" pattern of sexual crime, with the use of weapons and carried out by a stranger. In the case of women with

disabilities, especially those with intellectual disabilities, the issue of blaming naivety for crimes is intrinsic. That is, rape and sexual rape crimes committed against women with disabilities are commonly seen as a reflection of their naivety. On the issue of the crime matching the “expected pattern”, it is very common for women with disabilities to suffer violence from family members or those very close to them. This, again, is an element used to discredit the reports of sexual violence made by such women (Passos, Telles & Oliveira, 2019).

It is worth noting that I do not ignore that violence and the lack of the right to intimate citizenship are also present in the lives of men with disabilities. However, I followed the path recommended by authors such as Carol Thomas (2008) and Garland-Thomson (2019), who emphasize the need to shed light on specific issues related to women with disabilities.

Methodology

The research included the participation of: 1) professionals who work directly with people with intellectual disabilities in Portuguese institutions; and 2) mothers of adults with Down Syndrome.

About the first group, it is noteworthy that the professionals are linked to three institutions located in Coimbra: Portuguese Association of Parents and Friends of the Mentally Disabled Citizen of Coimbra (APPACDM Coimbra); Cavalo Azul – Association of Solidarity Families with Disability (A.F.S.D); Associação Olhar 21. In total, there were ten key informants, professionals who have worked for at least 5 years with people with Down Syndrome in the institutions. It is worth noting that, without any type of filter in this sense, all the professionals interviewed were women. This situation is quite interesting to be noticed because care, even if paid, is a predominantly female function. Table 1 presents a brief characterization of these interviewees without presenting their names and the names of the institutions to keep the identities of the participants preserved.

Table 1. Interviewees in the institutions

Interviewee	Institution	Role occupied
Informant 1	Institution A	Senior management
Informant 2	Institution A	Institutional Communication
Informant 3	Institution A	Theater Teacher
Informant 4	Institution A	Social Worker
Informant 5	Institution B	Occupational therapist
Informant 6	Institution B	Psychologist
Informant 7	Institution C	Senior management
Informant 8	Institution C	Senior management
Informant 9	Institution C	Teacher
Informant 10	Institution C	Sociocultural Animato

Source: Prepared by the authors.

(The table shows the interviewees showing which are part of each institution and its functions (without revealing their names or the names of the organizations).

With regard to the second group of interviewees, 16 mothers of adults with Down Syndrome were heard. It is important to note that the filter of only interviewing women mothers of women with DS was not made. However, for the analyses that will be presented, only the excerpts in which the interviewees talked about sexuality of women with DS were used. It is noteworthy that the mothers of men, even having closer contact with the reality of their children, recurrently reported their perspectives on the sexuality of women with DS.

Chart 2 shows the women who are mothers of people with DS. The names were removed to preserve the identity of the participants.

Table 2. Women mothers of people with DS participants

Participants	Gender of sons or daughters with DS	Age of sons or daughters	Age of mothers	Number of children
Mother 1	M	18	45	3
Mother 2	M	22	50	3
Mother 3	M	40	68	2
Mother 4	F	44	69	1
Mother 5	F	23	58	1
Mother 6	M	35	66	2
Mother 7	M	23	54	4
Mother 8	F	26	60	3
Mother 9	M	30	70	2
Mother 10	F	18	43	2
Mother 11	M	21	63	1
Mother 12	M	23	63	1
Mother 13	F	31	67	2
Mother 14	F	24	66	2
Mother 15	F	28	69	3
Mother 16	F	34	70	1

Source: Prepared by the authors.

(The table presents the characteristics of the 16 mothers with regard to the following variables: the gender of the children, the children, their own age, number of children.)

The present study included semi-structured interviews as the main way to listen to the perspectives of mothers and professionals. The interviews were conducted in 2018 and 2019. All empirical material obtained was treated using the content analysis technique (Bauer, 2002).

Presentation and analysis of the results

The first analysis that can be made, and that is in line with what theorists such as Wilkerson (2011) had already pointed out, is the identification of an almost absolute silence in institutions and families about the sexuality of

women with Down Syndrome. In addition to what has already been said about the mothers' prohibition that I touch on the topic in the interviews with people with DS, in the narratives of the interviewees it was possible to notice that they are not comfortable when it comes to sexuality.

On the part of the organizations, one of the informants said that the institution offered sex education classes for people with DS, but the parents were against it and asked that the classes be interrupted. Since, in the view of the professionals of this organization, it is very important to have this type of class, two classes were created: Female Psychology and Male Psychology. Such classes have sex education as their main content. It should be noted that classes are given separately for men and women and that the contents are very different. If in the case of men it can be said that there is a certain concern with the knowledge of their own body and issues related to pleasure, the class of women follows well what was pointed out by Shildrick (2012) in the sense of being instrumental to try to avoid pregnancy and sexual violence.

Gender and sexuality of people with DS

The intersectional view of gender and disability is fundamental since, if sexuality is taboo when talking about people with Down Syndrome, when focusing on women with DS the theme becomes even more unwanted and neglected. Rui Machado (2018), in a lecture given in Lisbon on the occasion of ^f IncomArte said that most women with disabilities do not claim their sexual rights because they do not even know that their bodies can be theirs.

In the mothers' statements, it is very clear that there is a denialist discourse regarding the possibility of women with Down Syndrome having sexual desire. Although men's sexuality is also impacted by a capacitant view, the taboo is much more rooted in the case of women with DS.

She doesn't even think about it [sex]. Also because she's a woman. (Mother 8)

There is really no need to take sex ed classes, for the kids, maybe. But for those who are women and disable, no. Mother 16

¹ Rui Machado, activist for the rights of people with disabilities, co-creator of the *Sim, nós fodemos*; member of the coordinating committee of the (d)Eficientes Indignados e da direção do Centro de Vida Independente em Portugal. Lecture entitled "Disability and Sexuality" at the Inconventional *Symposium.Art: Disability and society*. Lisbon, Portugal, 2018.

The greater naturalization of these men's sexual desire is not accompanied by a vision that they will be able to autonomously find a partner. Thus, in many narratives, it was possible to perceive that the family itself resorts to alternatives such as the payment of sex workers.

My [son] is a man so it's different. He does have his needs. In the case of girls with Down it's easier. They don't need this 'body and sex' stuff. It's a physiological issue. In my son's case, we hired a professional once. It was necessary. (Mother 7)

Another reflection of the difference in how families and institutions deal with the sexuality of women and men with DS concerns the possibility of loving involvement. Also based on capacitant prejudices, mothers and professionals participating in the research said that people with DS can only date/marry among them. In this logic, which is obviously completely wrong, the problem arises that men are allowed, or rather tolerated, to have an active sex life, but their "natural" partners, women with DS, are prohibited from knowing their bodies.

The denial of the importance of women with DS being owners and responsible for their own bodies was almost unanimous among the research participants. Such a stance even surpassed what the literature had pointed out (Shildrick, 2012). Mothers are not comfortable even with the presentation of topics such as pregnancy prevention and sexually transmitted diseases for women with DS. The testimonies show that many times the professionals of the institutions understand the need for women with DS to have knowledge about their bodies, but families are against it.

We tried sex ed, but it wasn't working. It's too much on their minds [women with DS]. It just got worse. Now we avoid the subject. (Informant 8)
I know that it can cause her to be raped and not even know what's going on, but honestly the girl doesn't have the... ability to understand. It's better not to talk, it may, perhaps, awaken what is not needed. (Mother 15)

The discussion on the sexuality of women with Down Syndrome is urgently and directly impacted by the way society, represented here by mothers and professionals, sees the right to the body by women and men with DS. Several previous studies have already shown the importance of intersectionality in the discussion regarding the inclusion of PwD (Erevelles, 2011), but

this issue does not seem to gain space exactly because of the determinism of social classification between normal and abnormal people.

Sexuality and the adult world

Sexuality had already been pointed out as a border device between the normal and the abnormal (Meinerz, 2010). In the research, this issue was confirmed and I can additionally affirm that sexuality also establishes boundaries between the child and adult world. Thus, by denying the sexuality of women with Down Syndrome, these women are deliberately imprisoned in childhood. It is a feedback process: women with DS cannot have sexual desires because they are children, even if they are not; and as they are prevented from having an active sex life, they are seen by their mothers, and by a large part of society as eternal children or, as many interviewees have said, as “girls who never grow up”.

She's not an adult. This [having an active sex life] is just one of the things she doesn't do and that is adult stuff. (Mother 5)

Sex is for adults. She's a kid. (Mother 4)

One of the rituals of adulthood that is denied to women with Down syndrome is motherhood. Being the requirement of procreation seen as the center of adult female life (Roseneil *et al.*, 2020), it is clear in the testimonies that this issue is a very important point in the lives of women with DS. Since women with DS are not considered owners of their bodies, it is immediate to realize that they are forbidden the possibility or even the expression of the desire to be a mother. Many interviewees said that their daughters verbalize that they want to be mothers, but for them this is an “impossible dream” or “a delusion of those who do not know what they are talking about”. In this issue it is important to bring the reflection made by Garland-Thomson (2019) that, while for many women motherhood is an imposition, for women with disabilities it is a prohibition. “*Mom? Of course not. She can't even take care of herself*” (Mother 8).

Mintz (2011) also made an important contribution to the analysis of this issue by stating that theorists of Feminist Disability Studies should denounce that feminist criticisms of the myth of women as a sexual object and as a mother ignore women with disabilities who are considered asexual and infer-

tile. We, therefore align ourselves with authors such as Shildrick (2019), who believe it is mandatory that feminism is involved with issues related to women with disabilities.

I want to make the observation here that the same mothers who naturalize the impediment of an active sex life for women with Down Syndrome have immensely regretted that their daughters could not have children. According to them, thus “one cannot be a complete woman” and cannot give them grandchildren, a fact that is very unfortunate in the view of the interviewees.

Finally, a point that deserves new research efforts with a more specific focus concerns the attempt of mothers to hide the existence of homosexual women with DS. The literature has already pointed out that heteronormativity is seen as the only possibility for PwD (Shildrick, 2012). Only one of the professionals interviewed was aware of the existence of homosexual women among the users of the institution. *“I know some of the girls like girls. I know, but I don’t talk about it because I know families won’t take it. So I try to help in any way I can”* (Informant 6). Another professional interviewed revealed that one of the users of the institution is homosexual and that the family denies it, says that she is not even able to know what this is. At other times, in different interviews, it was possible to notice that the sexual orientation of women with DS is a theme that is not even present in the imagination of families.

Experiences of violence by women with DS

Still with regard to the reflections of patriarchal society in the experience of disability by women who have the right to their bodies denied, one cannot fail to reflect on the issue of sexual violence. On this point, Goodley (2011) had already stated that women with disabilities occupy a specific place of exclusion that involves the fact that they suffer much more sexual abuse compared to men with disabilities. Although with some resistance for fear of being exposed too much, many mothers reported that their daughters had already suffered sexual violence at some point in their lives, commonly even in childhood.

Some mothers said they feel guilty for the sexual violence suffered by their daughters, which, once again, shows the role of patriarchal oppression. Commonly there is the blaming of women victims of sexual violence. In the case of women with Down Syndrome, the blame lies mainly on mothers. It is important to clarify that this view has three points with roots in the abyssal

line promoted by the patriarchy: 1) when blaming the mothers, it is reinforced that the woman with trisomy 21 does not own her own body and therefore needs another person to protect her; 2) it is only the mother's fault for not protecting her daughter, leaving the father exempt from social collection; 3) obviously, the last point directly concerns the absurd view that the victim is guilty and not the aggressor.

The invisibility of sexual violence suffered by women with disabilities (Passos *et al.*, 2019) was clear regarding women with Down Syndrome. Many mothers, including those who said they feel guilty about the violence suffered by their daughters, said they prefer not to bring it up. The professionals of the institutions stated that they had already heard of episodes in which families and institutions decided not to report cases of harassment or even rape in order not to raise such issues. In other words, they silence.

Two points presented in the study by Bumiller (1990) were central to the reports on sexual violence against women with Down Syndrome: the blaming of the victim and the discrediting of rape crimes that are committed by close people.

They [women with DS] often do not know how to behave [...] And then a lot happens. They're misinterpreted by some guys, and maybe that's where there can be sex crime. (Mother 7)

This scene [sex crime] happens like this with unknown people. I've seen girls with Down talk about how their father and brother did something like this. It's too much in their heads. (Mother 15)

Here we always have to find out when this type of complaint comes. For the families it's hard. They judge and blame the girls. Especially when the attacker is family. (Informant 4)

The last statement raises an important question concerning the crimes of sexual violence. There is so much disbelief and blaming of the victims that the denunciations are emptied, not being investigated to the satisfaction. Thus, there is impunity and new complaints are discouraged.

Another type of violence that was cited and often even naturalized by the research participants was the involuntary sterilization of women with Down Syndrome. It is important to note that, in the research, it was the mothers of men with DS who touched on this subject and defended sterilization, not of their children, but of women with DS. These testimonies make me urgently resume the questioning of Regis (2013): "whose body is this?".

It's certainly not the women's with DS themselves. It is a public body on which almost everyone can give an opinion and at the same time it is a body that must be hidden, infantilized and seen as asexual.

Maybe the best thing was to stop the girls [with SD] from generating. They don't know how to behave. (Mother 3)

They [women with DS] are always girls. It doesn't make sense to think they might have babies. This better be handled medically. (Mother 6)

Final Considerations

Given what has been presented, it is clear that there is a long way to go when it comes to the right of women with Down Syndrome to their bodies. The result of disregard for this issue are women banned from their sexualities. From the perspective of the research participants, the discussion about intimate citizenship does not even seem to take place when talking about women with DS.

Finally, I would like to emphasise that it is urgent for feminist movements to see women with disabilities. With regard to the right to one's own body, this group has differences and particularities that have been systematically left out of feminist agendas. The issue of impediment to motherhood, denial of access to information on sexuality and sexual violence are some of the points that have to be discussed with the presence of women with disabilities in feminist movements.

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SEXUALITY AND DOMINATION IN MODERNITY: THE SUBORDINATION OF WOMEN, BLACKS AND NATIVE PEOPLE ¹

| Luciana Dadico²

Abstract

In this work, I discuss how the exercise of sexuality participates in the configuration of a social structure of domination, which affects certain social groups. When analyzing the work of the Marquis de Sade, the philosophers Adorno and Horkheimer denounce the affinities between the sexual domination of libertine characters and the efficient mode of operation characteristic of instrumental rationality. Contemporary feminist authors, in turn, point to the fact that the other of domination is not a casual figure. While the subordination of women, instituted by modern capitalism, participates in a patriarchal order aimed at freeing workers to sell their labor power, the domination of foreign peoples who provided slave labor for the colonial enterprise gave rise to specific practices of sexual domination. In the colonies, these two forms of domination converge in the exploitation of the bodies of black and indigenous women. In this context, in which sexuality and the feeling of love are separated, we seek to reflect on the power of love and pleasure as a form of freedom, cohesion and social transformation.

Keywords:

Sexuality; Domination; Intersectionality; Women; Critical Theory of Society.

In Excursus II of the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Adorno and Horkheimer (1985) bring up Sade's work, represented by the character of Juliette – Justine's depraved sister. The orphan sisters, upon reaching adulthood, take opposite paths from the point of view of their moral choices: while the naive Justine decides to survive through work as a servant (and ends up, because of this choice, through all kinds of deprivation and violence), Juliette, abandoning

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² Adjunct Professor at the Federal University of Mato Grosso, Department of Psychology. Professor at the Graduation Program in Cultural Studies, University of São Paulo, and at the Contemporary Cultural Studies, Federal University of Mato Grosso. Email: ludadico@usp.br

Christian moral prerogatives, follows an opposite road, along which she does not hesitate to prostitute herself, steal and kill, thus becoming a successful lady of society. In this condition, Juliette gets involved with libertine nobles who, in search of satisfaction, kidnap people, especially women, to submit them to torture, sexual violence and death. While Justine becomes the good martyr of Christian morality, Juliette, in an enlightened fashion, systematically dedicates herself “to the work of sacrilege” (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1985, p. 92).

Contrary to the “fanaticism of Catholics in the face of the Incas” (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1985, p. 92), Juliette’s creed, the authors claim, is science. Sexual enjoyment, in this way, would not come from sensuality itself, but rather from the manipulation of the other that the sexual act consumes. The sexual satisfaction of the enlightened bourgeois would not emerge, therefore, as a result of a spontaneous feeling, but, in the opposite direction, and in close harmony with the scientific procedures and the administration of society, as organized entertainment. The libertine’s fun comes from the (ir)rational exercise of the power that authorizes this domination.

Beyond to the obvious affront to the sexual conventions established by Christian morality, the scenes described by Sade do not fail to shock due to their cruelty and unlimited disrespect for the pain inflicted on the other people. But Adorno’s and Horkheimer’s criticism does not aim, in this set of reflections, only at the content of Sade’s narratives, but at what Sade’s work expresses as social criticism. A shrewd criticism, which not by chance caused Sade to spend more than half of his life in prison. Sade denounces Catholic morality as false because of its contradiction with the interests of the individual and the very way in which bourgeois society works. In this condition, Catholic morality would have become a mere facade, not only incapable of stopping the violent oppression of the ruling classes, but putting itself at the service of this oppression.

Sade deals, in particular, with oppression based on sexual repression, which subjects women to additional oppressions: to social judgment, to guilt and to the suffering of the sexual act itself, converted into an instrument and expression of the domination of subjects of a certain class and gender on their bodies. Hence the reason why Juliette can only overcome her condition after abandoning the religious moral framework, submitting herself, however, to the logic of the prevailing domination. The core of Adorno’s and Horkheimer’s critique will concern, then, the affinities between the *modus operandi* of this sexual domina-

tion, which acts on the other's body while despising it, and "enlightened reason" (of which authors such as Kant, Nietzsche and Sade himself emerge as great representatives). Emphasizing that this modality of domination operates in the form of *rationalizations* (psychoanalytically understood), based on violence and contempt against the objects towards which they are directed in their exercise.

One of the problems with this arrangement lies in the fact that love, a feeling supposedly capable of interfering with violence, promoting social cohesion, respect and affection for the other, is hypostatized. In this condition, love aligns itself with the field of morality: both Christian morality and enlightened morality, built on the rubble of bourgeois interest converted into state policy. As if love and sex were, both in terms of form and content, on opposite sides. In other words: the dissociation between love (whether religious love or romantic love) and sexuality – a dissociation especially perceived by women – is reaffirmed by the sexual expression of domination, and the violence that operates on the bodies of the dominated people.

Ever since the Enlightenment thought turned sexuality into an instrument of control, in tune with an efficient mode of operation characteristic of instrumental rationality, Sade's work would constitute a model of technical coldness through which the subject manipulates the other converted into an object. A model that finds an immediate parallel in the "neutral" technological advances that make possible, at the same time, a greater exploitation of natural resources and the domination of the workforce, at the expense of our own repressed subjectivity and nature.

But who are the dominated people? Those considered "weak", Adorno and Horkheimer would say, due to the exercise of domination itself, and people somehow identified with the nature to be subjugated through administered reason.

As the Frankfortian authors recognize, this way of conceiving and exercising sexuality (and rationality itself) is not possible, in the first place, without a sexual division that excludes women from the position of subject of knowledge. Like the other of knowledge/power, the bourgeois woman, abashed under the stigma of weakness, is associated by Enlightenment thinking with emotionality and foolishness, in line with the naive and unsuccessful figure of Justine (remembering that her Sister Juliette is the one who represses and dominates even her own femininity). Rage against women, in this context, would not be an exceptional pathology, but the result of the rationality prevailing under the bourgeois order.

The violence of domination against women that is established in modernity would not be the result of a merely ideological operation. For Federici (2017), the consolidation of the capitalist economic model that becomes hegemonic in modernity became possible precisely due to the control of female reproductive work. Federici's thesis is that the privatization of arable areas and communal territories, resulting from the policy of "fences", would have constrained European workers to launch themselves into the labor market in the transition from feudalism to capitalism. Something that was only made possible thanks to the tacit agreement, as a kind of compensation to workers for lost communal lands, that women would remain confined to their homes, performing the domestic tasks necessary for the reproduction of the workforce, releasing men from these functions. In this way, the modern split between reproductive and productive work was established: a new division of labor, based on sexual difference. With the attribution of reproductive work to women, on an unpaid basis, women would have experienced a historic defeat:

With their expulsion from trades and the devaluation of reproductive work, poverty was feminized. In order to put into practice the "primitive appropriation" of men over women's work, a new patriarchal order was built, reducing women to a double dependence: on their employers and on men. (Federici, 2017, p.191)

Such transformations in social and economic relations would not have been possible without a powerful alliance between State and Church, which provided, through laws, confiscations and the establishment of courts (including the fires of the Inquisition), the control of the movement of women, the restriction of their economic freedom and the control of their bodies, put at the service of the reproduction of labor that was in short supply at the beginning of the 15th Century.

While in Europe the "invention of women" (Oyěwùmí, 2021) was offered as a solution to population crises and new economic arrangements – which included war and the spoliation of workers –, in the new colonies of America, Africa and Asia slavery was imposed as a way of providing abundant resources to the strengthening European ruling class. In 1600, Brazil alone was responsible for the production of sugar of twice the value of all the wool exported by England (Blaut, 1992), something possible only with the rapid subjection of thousands of African and native slaves. In the Americas, the

slaughter of native peoples at the time of the discovery would have been such (it is estimated that 95% of the native population was decimated by the colonial company) that the global temperature of the planet would have suffered a cooling, generating a “small Era of Ice” (Koch, Brierley, Maslin & Lewis, 2018).

In this context, the sexual domination of women would serve to different projects in Europe and in the colonies, being exercised in different ways as well. In a first moment of colonialism in Brazil, sexual relations – the result of a systematic culture of rape – with indigenous women allowed the Portuguese settlers to achieve a still small, but immediate increase in the number of workers available for work, while poor white Portuguese girls and/or orphans were forcibly shipped into legal marriage – capable of generating heirs – with the colonizers (Ramos, 2000).

When the overseas trade of black slaves, brought from Africa, began, slave women began to fulfill other functions than just reproductive ones, since slave owners had unlimited access to their bodies. The work of cooks and agricultural workers was added to the figure of wet nurses, who contributed to increasing the life expectancy of babies born white. In Brazil, in particular, for this and other reasons, life expectancy among slaves was low. Hence, the bodies of black women were less suited to the reproduction of slaves than to sexual exploitation. When the gold cycle began in the region of Minas Gerais, for example, the presence of prostitutes in the service of their masters was frequent. The sexual initiation of the children of the planters was carried out with the slave women, and the presence of bastard children on the large estates becomes a constant (Del Priore, 2016).

Interestingly, however, as Brazilian sociologist Lélia Gonzales (2019) protests, the word “rape” has not taken as adequate for intellectuals and historians (mostly men and whites) when describing interracial sexual relations in the colonial period, while the violence that characterizes these relationships since the arrival of the Portuguese settlers in Brazil points to the fact that rape was a structuring of Brazilian patriarchy. Since the Brazilian social structure preserved the asymmetries and social inequalities constituted at the time of slavery, even after the proclamation of the Republic and the liberation of the slaves, the figures of the “mulatto woman”, the “domestic maid”, and the *mother-black-woman* remained active in the imagination, inside and outside the country, as shown in an original and poignant analysis by the work of Gonzales. The sexualization of the bodies of black women, reinforced to this

day during Carnival – notably by the “butt” (which, according to Gonzales, would originally designate not a part of the body, but the Kimbundu and Ambundo linguistic trunk) – makes the “mulata” a kind of Cinderella forced to return to domestic reality as soon as the party is over. If she has not found the “prince” to put the shoe in her definitively, the black woman is returned to the invisibility of the maid. While the figure of the domestic maid remains naturalized, the “mulata” reconverted into a domestic worker is not, however, forgotten from a moral point of view: she keeps the marks of excessive sexualization, sin and prostitution associated with her. As if the violence that the black woman is daily victim of found, with the use of these images, justification and mitigating.

While I agree here with the idea that gender binarism is a social construction (Butler, 2013; Scott, 1995), as well as with the very idea of sexual division, the fact that women’s bodies have been the target of specific projects of domination in the history of the West makes it necessary to use the category “women” here, with a view to better understanding how sexual inequality was constituted and reproduced in our present social relations. The argument defended in this work is that sexuality historically participates in the configuration of an asymmetrical social structure, focused on the hierarchy and subordination of certain social groups. Thus, women become the target of prejudice/violence through sexual practices, and the intersectionalities of social relationships, in turn, contribute to the consequences of these oppressions being greater/lesser and qualitatively different. In this way, the intersectional conditions of gender will also influence the possibility of a more or less free and autonomous use of their own bodies and the exercise of sexuality and, eventually, the affective relationships implied therein.

Although she still did not use the term “intersectionality”, coined only years later by Crenshaw (1991), Angela Davis (2016) was already telling us about how the conditions of gender, race and social class combined, producing unimaginable modes of domination under other perspectives. Enslaved women in the United States suffered aggression and oppression like black men: they performed heavy work in the fields, were whipped and degraded. But not only. Her condition as a woman, ignored when it came to providing specific care for menstruation and motherhood, was, however, emphasized when it came to resorting to this condition to institute specific forms of oppression: sexual ones. Thus, it is possible to say that enslaved black women suffered more than men in the same conditions.

If at first glance the comparison about a *quantum* of suffering seems absurd, it is worth remembering, as Davis points out, that sexual division only makes sense in the context of domination. Otherwise, we would be emphasizing similarities between human beings, not sexual difference. Davis' work also helps to remind us that the different forms of oppression produce living conditions that give rise to different interests, reflected in the agendas and struggles of different social groups. Hence, white feminism has shown itself incapable of embracing the demands of black women, just as the black movement has been slow to pay attention to the specifics of women's struggles. As Hill-Collins (2019) points out, at the intersection between race and gender, both women among blacks and black women among women seem to disappear from these respective categories, so that black women end up corresponding to an empty set. Hence the importance of bringing feminist criticism – especially black and decolonial feminism – to the center of discussions on sexuality and domination.

Although, as Adorno and Horkheimer remind us, the violence of domination with the advance of capitalism does not spare those who delusionally thought they were safe from this violence, in the condition of operators of this violence. Science itself, founded on enlightened reason, when judged and considered valid in terms of its productive, instrumental efficiency, hides the bloodthirsty character of its procedures. The ready adherence to the established norm accompanies the illusory belief, erected in the process of state constitution, that the law that imputes punishment is not intended for subjects who operate domination, but only for individuals already subordinated by the state.

Such an illusion hides the fact that something in the subject himself needs to be mastered in his adherence to enlightenment and submission to injustice: the subjective nature, the particularity, the experience, the fragility of every individual. At the end of this process, the enlightened subject needs to repress his own love, since in loving, as Adorno and Freud (2010) remind us, we necessarily put ourselves in a situation of fragility: dependent on the retribution and affection of the other, exposed as well to its violence.

In this context, sexuality itself is transformed, as we see in Sade's narratives: sexual pleasure, placed in the background, gives way to the rigidity of the organization of sexual practice. Then, this changes the satisfaction of the individual, subject of the act, into a rule to be strictly obeyed. Finally, the sexual exercise ends up confused with the very act of dominating.

Highlighting that satisfaction and pleasure, for the Frankfurtian authors, are not confused. Pleasure, *jouissance* that originates from human experience, is not merely physical, but always social (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1985, p.100): it demands an abandonment of oneself in the other. On the other hand, satisfaction appears as a natural, physiological response of the body, restricted to the field of need. Satisfaction, similar to the logic of consumption, is ephemeral: it does not last over time. Hence the similarity pointed out by the authors between sex – or sexual activity with a view to immediate satisfaction, governed by administered rationality – and the sport of modern times:

As Modern sports teams, whose cooperation is regulated in such a way that no member has doubts about his role and for each one there is a substitute in place, find their exact model in Juliette's sexual teams, where no moment is idle, no opening of the body is disregarded, no function remains inactive. (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1985, p.87)

The sexual act, like sport, becomes both a model and a symbol of efficient practice. Fascist aesthetics, as we know, makes extensive use of images of the strong body, shaped by planned, disciplined exercise, capable of both displaying and justifying the physical superiority of the agent of domination. The body itself is submitted to the technique that allows it to achieve the result expressed in its well-defined beauty, confirming the athlete's adherence to the domination that now rewards him. The fascist aesthetic is also, as pointed out by Kracauer (2009), collectivist: it appears in the symmetry of the ranks and formations of grouped individuals, uniformly organized according to a pre-defined logic.

Subjectivity constrained is submitted to these laws, just as Sade's libertines were rigidly submitted to the regulations of their orgies. Therefore the reduction of enlightened morality to a minimum morality, since weakened Christian morality (reduced by the attack on metaphysics, by the denunciation of its contradictions as an agent of further repression and based on sexual taboos) is replaced only as a desperate attempt to help the interest as a factor of social cohesion (Adorno, 2008).

In this context, would love still be a powerful feeling to face the logic of domination that permeates the exercise of sexuality, from Sade to the present time?

Unlike a supposed scientific neutrality, the Freudian concept of love, which supports the analysis of the Frankfurtian authors, belongs to the sphere

of particularity. As private was also the friendship in Montaigne. Whoever loves everyone, says Freud, loves no one (Freud, 2010). This is why the Christian commandment to “love all as yourself” would be unenforceable: it is easier to taste an indistinct hatred than an indistinct love.

However, in the same way that Christianity is not successful in promoting social cohesion through love alone, reason based on the social interest of work would also be insufficient to keep society together, says Adorno. Thus, by identifying with the mass of individuals who are similar to them, the Christians of the past, like the fascists of today, only direct repressed aggressiveness to people outside the group, either as an original impulse – the death drive -, or as a reaction to the dissatisfaction generated by submission to the culture. Considering the Aryan race, for example, as an *ingroup*, the individual who identifies himself as Aryan feels legitimated to direct unlimited aggression to all those who are positioned outside the group: from Jews to the elderly, from communists to homosexuals.

In a contradictory way, it is in a context in which the difficulties posed for the realization of love are progressively greater, when the economic system imposes its irrationality on human relations, that the coldness of the bourgeois world starts to be hidden and compensated by the cult of feelings. Love acquires greater protagonism in the arts; sentimentality is integrated into the formula for facilitating consumption, as the content of the products of the cultural industry.

Conditioned on the sex from which it had separated, still separated from mythical jouissance and Nietzschean passion, bourgeois love thus repeats, as in Juliette’s sexual operation, the relations of servitude. The pleasure that is subordinated to such rules cannot express love, but the “deadly hatred of the sexes” (Adorno, 2008, p.107), forced to resort to tenderness due to cruelty, which sometimes acts not only as aggression spontaneous, but as protection of the individual against the violence of the other. Thus, Adorno states in his aphorism 110, from *Minima Moralia*:

If in society love must conceive a better society, then it will not succeed in doing so as a peaceful enclave, but as a conscious resistance. This, however, requires precisely that gesture of will that the bourgeois, for whom love is never natural enough, forbids. To love means to be able to prevent the immediate from withering away from the pressure on all sides of mediation, of the economy, and in this fidelity this immediate finds its mediation in itself, a tenacious counter-pressure. He only loves

that he has the strength to cling to love. When the sublimated social advantage preforms even the sexual impulse and spontaneously makes this one or that appear attractive in a thousand shades of what the order seals, then this is opposed by the inclination assumed when, in the face of the opposition of society, it persists against all intrigue, which the order usually uses. The feeling is proved when it overcomes itself by persistence, even if as an obsession. (Adorno, 2008, p.169)

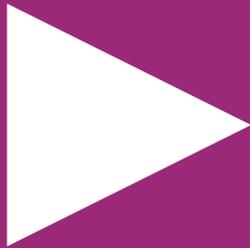
It is loved, says Adorno, who can love without suffering violence. The phrase sounds like a challenge to us today. Not only because reification intrudes at the heart of our social relations, but because the social inequalities created by the systematic production of asymmetries of gender, race-ethnicity, social class and sexuality (to list some of the most widely prevalent) bring violence to the forefront within romantic and sexual relationships. Authors such as bell hooks (2019), Grada Kilomba (2019) and Patricia Hill-Collins (2019) make a special claim for reflection, so that black women have the right to love.

How, then, can we love and freely exercise our sexuality in a society built on the violence of domination?

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BEING A WOMAN IS LIKE THAT: LEISURE ACTIVITIES IMPACTED BY VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN¹

Mauricio de Azevedo Couto²

Ana Cláudia Porfírio Couto³

Abstract

In Brazil, social inequality has been increasing and breaking records, increasing the number of people without guaranteed rights, causing an increase in urban violence and, especially, violence against women. Young women are the most vulnerable to the consequences of inequality and violence. We aimed to know to what extent the leisure activities of young women living in a Brazilian metropolis are impacted by urban violence. The study was carried out with 172 young women between 16 and 18 years old, students of the 2nd year of high school at CEFET (Centro Federal de Educação Tecnológica - MG - Brazil). We concluded that being a woman is already a factor that causes fear and insecurity, which directly impacts leisure practices, especially when young women seek the public space. In face of the reports, the young women live with fear and anguish, they are victims of the public system that, instead of guaranteeing rights, punishes them, imprisoning them without giving them the opportunity to move around and practice leisure activities, causing psychological disturbances and even suicide. Becoming youth victims of inefficient or nonexistent social policies.

Keywords:

Young Women; Violence; Leisure.

Introduction

Being a woman is like this... “According to data from the PNAD Contínua national research (Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra de Domicílios Contínua, 2019), women outnumber men in Brazil. The Brazilian population is

¹ Paper presented during the VIII Cultural Studies Internacional Congress: Sexualities and Leisure.

² Professor at the Physical Education and Sports department - CEFET – MG – Brasil, mucouto@yahoo.com.br.

³ Professor at the Interdisciplinary postgraduate program in leisure studies - UFMG, email: acpcouto@gmail.com.

composed of 48.2% men and 51.8% women”. However, the age pyramid “allows us to observe that the male population presented a younger pattern than the female population: in the age group up to 24 years old, men totaled, in 2019, 17.8%, while women, 17.2%. On the other hand, the proportion of women was higher than that of men in all age groups from 25 onwards: 34.6% and 30.4%, respectively.” The young population composed of women totaled 23% of Brazil’s population, and of this total, 3.87% comprised the 15-19 age group.

Brazil, currently, is a diverse country and still has a significant youth population, despite future projections of aging, according to data from the latest demographic census conducted by the Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística institute of Geography and Statistics - IBGE (2019) the youth age group is around 40% of the Brazilian population in a total of approximately 215 million people spread across 26 states and the Federal District. Youth are represented, in addition to age characteristics, by their specific cultures and practices, which characterize their peculiar youth condition during leisure time, and determined by intersectionalities.

Youth can be understood as a certain defined age range or as a transition phase from childhood to adulthood (Boghossian & Minayo, 2009), a period of human life characterized by physical, biological, and psychological changes (Almeida, 2017), a time of passage and preparation in which individuals are at imminent risk of losing themselves (Cassab, 2010). The World Health Organization and the United Nations characterize youth as people in the age group between 15 and 24 years (Nascimento *et al.*, 2011; Pinto *et al.*, 2016). In Brazil, this age range is extended until age 29, according to the Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada institute of applied economic (IPEA) of the Presidency of the Republic and by the National Youth Policy (Sebenello *et al.*, 2016; Sousa & Leão, 2016).

Youth are understood from various perspectives, not only by chronologies, but also by intersectionalities, by their constituted and constituent knowledge and their cultures. Furthermore, youth relations will, in this way, differentiate this population, especially during leisure practices by the cultural manifestations expressed and by the cultural capital developed and acquired that is influenced by social changes and their impacts on juvenile sociabilities (Pais, 1990). This thought leads us to reflect about these new generations and their behavior in modern societies, which stand out for being technological by nature besides being immediate and fluid (Bauman, 2001).

When we associate youth with their leisure practices, we base these activities on the behaviors and cultures determined by this group. Here we understand the leisure activities of youth as part of youth cultures (Pais, 1990), which are manifested according to their interests and relationships established with their groups and their social representations.

Based on this premise, this article aimed to find out to what extent the leisure activities of young women living in a large Brazilian city are impacted by urban violence. The starting point of this investigation was research with high school students. The target audience was composed of 172 young women students in their second year of high school at CEFET - MG - BRAZIL (Federal Center for Technological Education).

The analysis centered on the qualitative approach, starting from the natural environment as a direct source of data, with a reflective look at the bibliographical contribution, was the focus of experimentation in this study.

In fact, the actions are not mere events, but are part of the context of the people involved; therefore, they are fruits of the means in which they are generated and consequently developed. Our path was based on the content of the speeches, to seek answers to the objectives of this investigation. We tried to get to know and analyze more precisely through semi-structured interviews (Moreira, 1994) the students' speeches.

The interview guide was about leisure and violence, how young women understand leisure and if violence impacts or modifies their leisure practices.

According to Marconi and Lakatos (1996), the research process is presented by evaluation and critical analysis. We are not just seeking the truth, but rather, submitting ourselves to a reflexive and critical procedure. In the view of Quivy and Campenhoudt (1998, p. 211), "the objective of the investigation is to answer the starting question". The material collected from the interviews was analyzed using Nvivo and SPSS software.

This article has two main contributions, the first one deals directly with the perception of the young woman's place in society and the ways in which they mean their leisure time. The second deals with the possibility of returning to the school day-to-day life, the difficulties experienced by students and develop with them cultural content that enables a better social understanding.

Young women, their leisure and urban violence

“There are some places I can’t go because of the violence. We have to leave early too” (J,31)⁴. In Brazil, social inequality has been increasing and hitting records in the last 10 years, thus increasing the number of people without guaranteed rights, causing an increase in urban violence and, in particular, violence against women. Brazil currently ranks 5th in the world ranking of Femicide, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). In 2020, according to the Brazilian Yearbook of Public Security 2021, the country had 3,913 homicides against women, with 230,160 cases of intentional bodily harm due to domestic violence, registered with the civil police. There were 1350 femicides (Revista Afirmativa).

In this sense, based on Sacramento and Rezende (2006):

“Violence has been defined by the World Health Organization (WHO, 2002) as the ‘intentional use of force or power in a form of threat or effectively, against oneself, another person or group or community, which causes or is highly likely to cause injury, death, psychological damage, developmental changes or deprivation’”.

This concept, corroborated and illustrated by some of the speeches of the young women interviewed:

Not necessarily only physical violence, but verbal as well, making several problems. (J – 1)

Lack of security and confidence, because at any moment something can happen that will change the course of my life. (J – 17)

Violence gets in the way because of the fear it generates, and because it causes a lot of damage and injury. (J – 30).

Sometimes we want to do activities, but the fear of being hit by a stray bullet, or of being assaulted both physically and verbally causes us not to do our activities and to stay stuck in the sameness. (J – 51)

Violence is a social issue, mainly determined by social inequality, making young women the most vulnerable to the consequences of inequality and violence, in work relations, social interaction, education, health, and leisure. According to the atlas of violence, young women became victims of feminicide

⁴ Composition criteria: J – 31, where J – corresponds to Young Woman interviewed; 31 – corresponds to the interview number

and abuses for the simple condition of being women, hindering the appropriation and use of urban spaces, “it is dangerous to leave the house at night” (J - 27). Identifying the complexity of social relations that are imposed on young women, especially in their leisure time.

We often stop doing things we want to do out of fear (especially when it involves going out on the street at night). Violence also affects our mood and willingness to socialize or have fun”. (J - 52)

Getting in the way of me leaving the house to do some physical activity because of fear of being mugged, assaulted, or sexually assaulted”. (J - 58)

The conception of youth has gone through several labels referring to the behavior of the youth of each time. Stigmas related to a certain age group, and associated to social problems, such as youth delinquency. At times the youngster was labeled as alienated and passive, at other times as the protagonist of the political, social, and cultural transformations of a certain time, as the ones who would be responsible for transforming society. These models, over the years, built the idea that young people were responsible for the processes of violence they suffered, since the clothes they wore, the behavior they adopted, and the way they relate socially made them more vulnerable to violent harassment, especially against women. “Since I am a woman, the fear of going out on the street at night is constant, the fear of physical and verbal violence.” (J - 83)

This fact, totally questioned and rejected nowadays, can not be blamed on the victims. “I feel threatened when I am exposed to violence or in places where behavior that can harm me occurs. When I am threatened, I can’t have fun”. (J - 137)

In this line, it is our duty to realize, according to Dayrell (2003, 2007), Pais (1990) and Sposito (2005, 2006) that the use of the term youth in the singular is insufficient, because there is not a single definition that considers all the existing dimensions. We should use the word youth, in the plural, to talk about the diversity of ways of being young, “since factors such as gender, social, cultural, financial condition, among others, mark specific youths” (Romera, 2013) and that whatever the established age range, young people of equal ages live unequal youths, besides establishing particular youth cultures with leisure activities that are also distinct and determined by inequalities.

The various concepts converge to the conception of youth as a social category that represents the symbolic sociocultural relations of people, marked historically and by the groups that compose it. Thus, leisure are organized in

these representations. We start, in this study of the understanding of leisure with human dimension and cultural manifestation, we corroborate with Gomes (2014): “leisure is understood as a human need and cultural dimension that constitutes a field of social practices experienced ludically by subjects, being present in everyday life at all times, places and contexts”.

Understanding the human needs in relation to their leisure time leads us to understand the social representations that young women have of the social context and the various and ample possibilities of enjoying their leisure time, but which, as they themselves said, they are prevented or impacted by urban violence, which makes them rethink or change their actions.

During leisure in public environments violence generates fear and this prevents the moment of leisure, risk of abuse, rape, assault, robberies, machismo, aggression, sexually assaulted, kidnapping...” (J – 172)

To illustrate, when asked if violence hinders leisure, 95% of the young women answered yes, this data is very alarming, since urban violence prevents social relations from being established and people are prevented from coming and going and also from enjoying the Brazilian constitutional right, as some interviewees say:

Many of the leisure activities that I am interested in are in open places, without policing, making room for so much violence, so much robbery. (J – 65)

The relationship between leisure, violence and being a woman demarcates the influences that are determined by gender issues, and by the intersections imposed socially, especially when it comes to women, young, black, and who do not fit the normative social standards, since, paraphrasing Simone de Beauvoir, in her 1949 work entitled: *The Second Sex*, “one is not born a woman, but one builds being a woman”. In this context, the difficulties of being a woman in Brazilian society are marked by violence and have an impact on leisure practices.

We often stop doing things we want to do out of fear (especially when it involves going out on the street at night). Violence also affects our mood and willingness to socialize or have fun (J – 52).

tines are changed, actions are modified, or are not carried out, as they say, out of fear. The reports also show the focus on the regions where some of the interviewees live, that the fear of traveling through their own region already interferes in their daily lives.

It is worth pointing out that young women are punished for their history, their origin, their social class, and their gender, they are not guaranteed the constitutional right to practice leisure, for lack of government policies that guarantee mobility and democratization of leisure.

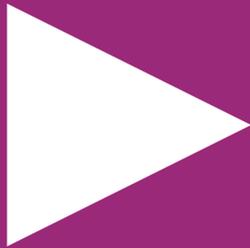
Leisure spaces are meant to improve the community and people's quality of life, violence has a hostile character, thus it is separatist and worsens the development of society. (J – 129).

Finally, this study has some limitations, such as having been developed only with young women in the 2nd year of high school, not having been developed with men in order to compare the impacts on leisure time, and finally not having a determined social and economic profile to know the impacts related to these factors.

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“THEM IN THE SINGULAR”: THE SUBVERSIONS AND POWERS OF WOMEN BETWEEN SCENES OF GENDER AND LEISURE¹

Lara C. P. Dourado Laux²

Cathia Alves³

Summary

“Elas no Singular,” released in March 2020, directed by Fabrizia Pinto available on the HBO Max channel, is a documentary series that narrates eight of the greatest Brazilian women writers, giving voice to their personal stories, their life journeys, with loving, poetic, creative and also painful overtones. In each episode, the trajectory of life and art of each one of them is presented, always told in the first person. Thus, based on Cultural Studies, through the technique of film analysis, we are interested in investigating the presence of the themes of leisure and gender issues in each episode. The documentary is formed by the self-narrative of eight women, namely Hilda Hilst, Conceição Evaristo, Rachel de Queiróz, Adélia Prado, Cora Coralina, Nélida Pinõn, Lygia Fagundes Telles and Clarice Lispector. So far it has been possible to notice that the authors start from their childhood and the affective relationships with their families to introduce their stories. We also noticed the presence of leisure through the playfulness expressed in parties, family meetings, childhood games, reading in the hammock, trips, among others. Around gender issues, it was possible to notice that in each singularity there was resistance, subversion, and confrontation for their works and their writings to be considered valid in certain spaces and for them, as writers, to be recognized in their autonomy. We indicate that “Elas no singular” is a cultural artifact that teaches and discusses the places given to and the places occupied by these women and problematizes power relations in different social contexts.

Keywords:

Women; Gender; Leisure.

¹ Paper presented during the VIII International Congress on Cultural Studies: Sexualities and Leisure.

² Post-graduate student in Transversal Issues at IFSP/Salto.

³ Post-Doctorate in Cultural Studies. Professor IFSP/Salto. Member of the research group Oricolé/UFMG; Limc/IFSP and collaborating researcher at the Center for Languages, Literature and Cultures (CLLC Aveiro/Portugal).

Introductory Scene

Starting from the understanding that a documentary is a cultural text, that is, an artifact, it has a curriculum that teaches something about something. This cultural text generates knowledge and processes of subjectivation, translates senses, meanings, and when elected becomes a device that operates pedagogically and politically in the social sphere. We have chosen for analysis the cultural artifact: “Elas no singular”, a Home Box Office (HBO) series that tells the story of eight Brazilian writers in short documentaries.

We take the device as something that disposes to a particular organization with a particular rationality. The devices permeate networks that are established in discourses, institutions, organizations, decisions, operate in laws and administrative measures, they can also be in scientific statements, philosophical and moral propositions (Foucault, 2005, 2015). It even features in movies, music, poems, programs, cartoons, soap operas, among other cultural texts.

Cultural texts are composed of information, learning, feelings, and thoughts that are articulated and manufacture a powerful work, a discursive activity (Paraíso, 2007; Silva, 2001). These texts prescribe knowledge, ways of being, thinking and acting, indicating thoughts, values, exercises and attitudes that must be practiced in order to constitute particular types of subjects.

In the area of leisure, we have named “cultural artifacts”, productions and fabrications elaborated by the subjects, products, pieces, objects, goods, which teach, which lead, which convey values, identities and issues related to subjectivity, intersectionality and human formations. The artifacts are represented by music, movies, soap operas, program and project contents, images, games, dynamics, activities that dispose something, that is, they are devices that have control technologies and teach, disseminate knowledge and ways of being (Alves, 2021).

“Elas no singular”, divulges the field of Brazilian literature around the lives of eight women that in their singularities disposes of writing through different paths and looks. Therefore, our goal is to analyze and identify through the scenes the presence around the spheres of gender and leisure. Are there lines, scenes, and representations about leisure as culture? That is, do the authors narrate about fun, rest, cultural experiences? If so, how does this occur and is it related to gender issues in its complexity and diversity?

We believe that reflecting on leisure is a challenge in the lives of women who have had this right denied and silenced throughout the history of their lives. Another provocation is to operate with the gender issues that permeate the lives of these eight women in their intersectional diversities that can fabricate marked differences in the way these categories of knowledge occur.

Methodological Scene

The encounter with Cultural Studies connected with cinema as systems of signification, as in addition to entertaining they also operate pedagogically and teach ways of being. In a post-structuralist perspective, the theory of Cultural Studies, opens the gaze to the artifacts of culture as means of production of particular senses that manufacture senses (Fabris, 2018).

Thus, we do here an investigation from the filmic analysis and literature review of the documentary series "Elas no singular".

The theoretical basis of this research makes us walk through Cultural Studies that point to methodologies that challenge the established matrices of power (Baptista, 2009).

Therefore, we understand that a series is represented as a cultural artifact, which can draw attention to social phenomena that contribute to fairer and more egalitarian educational processes, teaching about the inequalities around women's issues. Thus, we chose the method of filmic analysis and literature review.

The method takes place in breaking down the series in this first season, which consists of eight episodes with eight different women's narratives, they are: Hilda Hilst, Conceição Evaristo, Rachel de Queiróz, Adélia Prado, Cora Coralina, Nélida Pinõn, Lygia Fagundes Telles, and Clarice Lispector.

The method for filmic analysis consists of decomposition, that is, to perform a scrutiny, to interpret it based on the elements that compose it separately, such as sound, images, framing, among others; and only then to reconstruct it, elaborating meanings and senses from its parts (Penafria, 2009).

The step-by-step here then was to watch each episode, note the general theme, break down the parts and focus of each narrative, characterize each of the authors summarizing their bibliographies and connect their talks to issues that touch the field of gender and cultural studies. However, for this section we bring to light the themes of leisure and gender issues.

Main scenes between Leisure and Gender

“Elas no singular” is a Brazilian series released in March 2020, is available on the HBO Max channel, in a co-production of HBO Latim America, Coyote and Primo Filmes, with direction by Fabrizia Pinto and script by Fernanda Polacow. It is a documentary series consisting of eight episodes, each one lasting approximately thirty minutes. In each episode, the stories are expressed from the point of view of the authors, always narrating in the first person, where each author tells her own story. Among them are: Hilda Hist, Conceição Evaristo, Rachel de Queiróz, Adélia Prado, Cora Coralina, Nélida Pinõn, Lygia Fagundes Telles, and Clarice Lispector.

The narratives are told either by the writers themselves or by other actresses who, in a sensitive way, narrate the lives of these women. The writers lived in different times and places, and those who are still alive are: Conceição Evaristo, Adélia Prado and Nélida Pinõn.

We can indicate that the cultural text is composed of eight mini documentaries, the first one is about Hilda Hilst, with the theme “Obscene Lucidity”. Hilda was a transgressor woman, with the restlessness of who wanted to make the most of life and her youth, brings some leisure scenes from this period of her life, where she tells a little about her freedom to choose her boyfriends, the parties she attended in the presence of several friends, but also portrays the judgments of the girls of her age, for being different and not following the standards expected for a girl of that time.

The second mini doc is with the remarkable presence of Conceição Evaristo in “Insubmissa escrivência”, Conceição is the only black woman in this series, which presents us with an authorship originating from ancestry, represented in its great majority by black women, who for a long time have occupied almost exclusively the place of subalternity, and are being composed in the form of resistance. This resistance is observed even in their few moments of leisure, because when they get together as a family, they like to remember the past stories, even the painful situations, with the intention of celebrating what they managed to overcome.

In the third, Rachel de Queiroz, under the title “Under the Sign of Drought”, the author highlights the criticism she received for her first book, *O Quinze*, published in 1930, when she was 19. Probably because her text did not follow the imaginary around what would be a feminine writing, besides, the author had an intense bond with her land and territory in a period that Ceará faced immense droughts. As for leisure, she presents scenes from

her life that are also attributed to behaviors considered to be masculine, such as being interested in soccer, and for loving to play with her three brothers, who were her companions. When she played with dolls, she had company.

The fourth mini doc is by Adélia Prado, from Minas Gerais, with “*Todo dia o sol*” (Everyday the sun), the author shows us her unique way of looking at the female experience, from the human perspective of being a woman, mother, and housewife, who marvels at what is routine, conceiving it as poetic, domestic, feminine, and divine. Thus, gender relations and leisure are involved in this triad, which can be observed in the scenes in which Adélia and her husband talk while cleaning a fish, when they watch their children playing together in the backyard.

In the fifth Cora Coralina video, “*Between stones and flowers*” demonstrates how the educational process among women was unequal, as well as all her life, the rigid family prejudices and abusive norms were limiting her wills and desires. As a little girl, she looked at the street and felt attracted by that playful feeling and by the possible discoveries, but the street was forbidden to the girls of her time. In adolescence, she wanted to learn more, but the little she had learned in elementary school was already considered enough, because it was not a virtue for a woman to know how to read and write, that a girl who read novels would not be a good housewife. After she married, her children came along, and she continued to write, but her husband would not let her publish her writings. So it was only with the death of her husband, after 45 years of marriage, that she was able to return to her hometown, where she started working as a confectioner to earn a living.

The sixth episode portrays the life of Nélida Piñon “*Fabuladora de memórias*” presents a woman who cherishes freedom, stimulated from an early age to do so. Since she was 8 years old, her parents gave her access to big bookstores, English classes, and matinee sessions at the Municipal Theater, thus having a very rich experience in leisure and culture. Perhaps for this reason her family criticized her parents for the education she received. There was an uncle who even told her mother that she should have been educated for marriage, and not to be a writer, an intellectual. And her mother replied that she was really getting a unique education, and was being raised to know how to solve everyday issues. Nélida emphasizes the trips and the possibility to have tea alone after her courses.

In the seventh video, with Lygia Fagundes Telles and the title “*Trying to tell*”, she recalls some of her childhood leisure moments, they used to get

together to hear and tell stories, and even before she learned to write she loved to tell horror stories, with ghosts, werewolves and vampires, all of those she was very afraid of, and she began to realize that this gave her an immense pleasure, when she saw that she could make people feel fear when they heard her stories, so she lost her fear and felt powerful. As time went by she realized that her vocation was to write, but she didn't want to write about flowers and butterflies, because the country was going through a very hard period, the dictatorship, and she remembers a character in her book *The Girls*, who says: before it was the men who defined us, who said what we were like, now we are the ones who explain it. And in her writing, she goes on giving preference to female characters, and so she goes on trying to unveil herself.

The eighth and last documentary of the first season is Clarice Lispector with “Vivo por um fio”. The documentary illustrates her introspection, bringing her memories, the search for understanding herself, the fear of facing one's own stifled instincts, and the difficulty of giving oneself up completely as one of the human pains. Clarice also says she is imprisoned, feeling deprived of freedom, and portrays an anguish at being Ukrainian and Brazilian. Leisure scenes are present in travel and memories of going to the sea with her father and sisters.

It was interesting to note that Hilda Hilst and Nélide Piñon had a great interest for the theater and a differentiated education because of their access to the culture of the stages and shows.

In general, the leisure element is silenced in the episodes, that is, women from different periods and territories suffer the absence of this right. We noticed that family gatherings, parties, games, reading in the hammock, storytelling, walks on the beach and trips, show subtle scenes of leisure during their lives.

From Cora Coralina, born in 1889, to Conceição Evaristo, born in 1946, the non-presence of leisure, the lack of leisure time, of rest, and the little access to cultural practices cross generations. Women's lives are marked by silencing and the absence of leisure. We note that childhood portrays playful moments, but a woman's adult life is full of deprivations.

In addition, the prejudice surrounding the fact that women wrote, produced, and worked was notorious. Several confrontations had to be made so that these women could occupy a space and be recognized in their art and profession.

The struggle around freedom is something that is remarkable in the documentaries. Each one of the women in their singularities and experiences

sought different formats to live, to have sovereignty and autonomy in their decisions and experiences.

The crossing between gender and leisure issues of these women complement other studies that have also pointed out this lack and fragility (Bonalume, 2020; Bonalume e Isayama, 2018; Goellner, *et al.*, 2010).

The trajectories of these women seem to show all the time the clashes of subversions and occupations of micro powers in search of destabilizing normatizations and breaking with disciplinations.

Just as Butler (2017) points out when talking about the disarticulation between gender and sex in order not to fix identities, these women writers in their paths also tear gender relations beyond normative power.

Gender is understood, then, as something complex that must be contested, without submitting to norms and regulations, but remaining open to convergences and divergences (Butler, 2017).

Hilda Hist, Conceição Evaristo, Rachel de Queiróz, Adélia Prado, Cora Coralina, Nélide Pinõn, Lygia Fagundes Telles, and Clarice Lispector, all these women are intersected by various elements of gender, race, class, territory, among others. Women who divulge through videos their trajectories, stories of resistance, and ways of being. They represent women's ways of being that diverge and converge in human relations for the occupation of new places. They are women who have moved in the social sphere through micro-powers and the production of knowledge.

Final Scenes

The union of cinema and literature provokes us, in this documentary, to reflect on the condition that the women writers went through to become powers and references. We notice that their stories and experiences were extremely relevant for the inspiration of their writings.

All the women were transgressors, engaged, and in some way were crossed by systems of unequal oppression. Their intersectionalities intersect with cultural practices and reflect their lives and experiences of leisure and their gendered conditions.

To investigate the theme of women, leisure, and gender is also to resist and to reach fissures in a historically patriarchal, racist, and violent system. To watch "Elas no singular" is to walk down other paths and possibilities that art allows us.

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SEXUALITY IN THE FACE OF AFFECTIVE-LOVE RELATIONSHIPS: SUBJECTIVATION FROM THE BODIES ENTANGLED BY BONDS OF CONJUGALITY. THERE EXISTS THE “ESSENTIALLY FEMININE, IN OPPOSITION TO THE MASCULINIST WORLD” INTERNALIZED IN MOTHERS IN THE NEONATOLOGY UNIT¹

Gisele Justiniano de Faria Martins²

Luzinete Rezende da Incarnação³

Rosely Cubo Pinto de Almeida⁴

Abstract

Human behaviour related to desire has signifiers colonized by sensations that arise in a game of discursive order. The adult who cares for and exercises the maternal function speaks; the body stands out for being the transmitter of this great symbolic mediator that is language, in which the mother both interprets the expressions and attributes meaning to the manifestations of (in)satisfaction, which prolongs the corporality with the newborn. The paternal function is the normalized condition that operates a distancing or even an interdiction, and in this sense, the decline of the patriarchal society with its patterns of libidinal investments is precisely considered. In view of this complex scenario, our ongoing research, of a socio-historical nature with support from the Theory of Social Representations, discusses the nature of gender constructs, related to (dis)functional (dis)ties that reverberate in the system of conjugal coexistence because of extemporaneous and prolonged hospitalization manifested by gestational prematurity and resulting high severity hospitalization of the mother-neonate. We created a list of indicators of qualitative analysis, from the identification of mechanisms of conflicts that govern the subjectivation of the feminine in the instituted exercises of conjugality bonds, such as the

¹ Paper presented at the VIII International Congress on Cultural Studies: Sexualities and Leisure.

² PhD in Social Service, Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo. E-mail: giselejustiniano@hotmail.com

³ Master in Social Service, Pontifícia Universidade Católica de Goiás. Social Worker at Hospital e Maternidade Dona Iris E-mail: rezendeluzinete6@gmail.com

⁴ Researcher at the Centre of Languages, Literatures and Cultures (CLLC), University of Aveiro/Portugal. Researcher in the Ibero-American Network OTIUM. PhD in Leisure and Human Development from the University of Deusto - Bilbao/Spain and master's in psychology from the University of Fortaleza/Brazil. E-mail: roselycubo@gmail.com

assumption of the roles of caretaker of the home and children, maintenance of sexual intimacy and others; With regard to the demands of the masculinist world, we examined the defence strategies and positions in face of the restrictions and/or deprivations of moments of sexual intimacy that involve from the withdrawal and disinterest for the maintenance and cohesion of conjugality, decrease of the levels of responsiveness and adaptability, emergence of allegations and doubts about paternity and others. Our general objective is to deepen the study of the relations between the quality of the conjugality bond and the way the mother admitted to a neonatal unit describes the coexistence with the father of the premature baby; specifically, we aim to delineate the motives, intensities, and resolutions related to the conjugality-parenting subsystems. To this end, we used one of the explanatory hypotheses to understand the dynamics of this process, that is, the spillover effect (Erel & Burman, 1995), in which there is a certain intrinsic negative-positive externality inherent to the NICU - Neonatal Intensive Care Unit - that singularizes the quality of the marital-parental relationship and a certain overflow of impact from its contextual-emotional climate. As methodology we opted for an ethnography applied to the area of health, with an immersion in the field - public neonatal unit Hospital Dona Iris in Goiânia/Brazil, using techniques of participant-observation, free-talk-of-opportunity and interview-in-depth to meet the meaning of sexuality in the current conjuncture and the diversities of body representations as a territory of expressive languages of desire, feelings and sensations, which in terms of emotional and contextual elements, are ways in which the bodies entangled by conjugal bonds seek to manage feminine-masculine communication skills and/or use strategies of confrontation to the use of hostilities, provocations, offenses and separations. In summary, the use of strategies that focus on the awareness of “conjunctural relational flow” and the “embodied experience of feelings mixed with thoughts” will depend on one’s critical notion of sexuality as to the performative perspective of gender.

Keywords:

Sexuality; gender; marital and parental relationships; female-masculine context; emotions of feelings-thoughts.

Introduction

The nature of gender constructs, according to Foucault (2011), has been constituted since the eighteenth century as a crucial point of the great discursive network that acts on the through bodies; performing a series of analyses, shows which power relations and political strategies are put into practice and influence the production of this sexuality. Seeking to unveil some problems of gender and based on the view of sexuality as a discursively constituted and politically conditioned device through power relations, Butler (2012), makes

use of the critique of binarism and resorts to the notion of gender as performatively constituted in the sense that they only exist from the moment of their expression.

Given these scenarios, analysing sexuality becomes a privileged territory for articulating elements of the network of discourses and practices that cross the daily life of relationships and a valuable strategic device for understanding how (dis)functional (dis)ties reverberate in the system of conjugal coexistence because of extemporaneous and prolonged hospitalization manifested by gestational prematurity and resulting high severity hospitalization of the mother-neonate.

The way mothers internalize and represent their historical moment in view of the bonds of conjugality-parenthood determine the way they position themselves in Presence (identity) and create their strategies of Belonging (co-existence); both aspects define not only the subjective perception that they construct of sexuality in the face of affective-love relationships, as well as demarcate their bodies as “informational fields” in prevalence of values that ground the resistances and resilience’s during the prolonged stay and extemporaneous hospitalization in advanced neonatology unit.

According to Tajfel (1982, p. 24), the social identity of an individual is linked to the recognition of his/her coexistence in certain groups and to the meaning of emotional and evaluative presence that results from this belonging. Within the scope of the theory of social representations (Moscovici, 1998), we have the recognition of the importance of the interrelation processes to which mothers of premature babies construct their realities while they are hospitalized in a neonatal unit.

Social representations are conceptualized as a mode of socially elaborated and shared knowledge, contributing to the perception of a common reality for a given group; that is, they indicate how mothers appropriate the worldview that surrounds them, helping them to understand and act in affective-love relationship and the bonds of conjugality-parenthood with the father of the premature baby. This context, according to Zaffari (2020), portrays the asymmetric masculine/paternal-feminine/maternal roles in the neonatal unit of a public institution, where the mother has to assume the interruption of her ways of being and staying, while the father will be liberated to go on with his life; such cleavage reflects in the construction of different performances, negotiations and interpretations of the feminine, in opposition to the masculinist world internalized in the mothers of premature babies.

The perspective of social representations emphasizes the active role of mothers in the perception of sexuality in face of their affective-love relationships from their bodies entangled by the bonds of conjugality-parenthood. It is essential to reflect on the importance of the social representation experienced by mothers who are hospitalized together with their children, who before giving birth, lived the expectation of a calm and healthy birth; however, they are faced with prematurity, either due to a congenital malformation or a serious illness, needing to stay for long periods in search of care at the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU). Although social representations are in a permanent process of mutation, the appropriation of the “new” follows a deeply “sociocentric” logic of “conservatism” (Moscovici, 1998, p. 242); this context of uncertainties impacts the marital-parenting relationship, since the birth of a premature child, according to Borges *et al.* (2022) generates feelings such as fear, despair, anxiety, anguish, sadness, and guilt.

In the specific case researched, the unusual routine after the arrival of the premature or preterm child, being permanently hospitalized for an average of 6 to 12 weeks, affects sexuality, the affective-love bonds due to the distance between the mother staying in the hospital unit in Goiânia and the father being at home in the interior of Goiás. When the women are transferred to the state capital, they find themselves deprived of their original ways of life; we emphasize that this difficulty is closely related to the access to health services in large cities and the invisibility of the power of creation of sensibilities, knowledge, experiences, and languages in the Brazilian political-economic-social-cultural-institutional territory.

We maintain in this study that, despite the stressful character of extemporaneous coexistence, prolonged in a neonatal unit and depending on the “contextual” relationship internalized by the mother, there are experiences that suggest slight impacts on conjugality-parenting, even though the traumatic events with the birth of a premature and/or high risk child bring out inherent conflicts to the “emotional” fragility that point to insurmountable repercussions in the affective-love relationships manifested by the woman.

This ongoing research, which took place between July and September 2022 in the neonatal unit affiliated to the SUS - Sistema Único de Saúde (Brazilian Unified Health System) of the Hospital Dona Iris⁵ in Goiânia/Brazil, is part of the Project “Hospitalization of Patients from Other Municipa-

⁵ Tertiary service of high complexity for helping women, high-risk pregnant women, low- and high-risk deliveries, puerperal women, and new-borns.

lities in an Advanced Care Unit in a Maternity Hospital in the City of Goiânia: Reception and Humanization”. Delineated by means of participant-observation, free-talk-of-opportunity, and in-depth interviews, we analysed the contents collected from the narratives of twenty mothers of premature new-borns.

The use of narratives as a listening method (Azevedo, 2013), is sensitive to their singularity and their political-economic-social-cultural-institutional immersion; methodologically, we performed some discursive contributions extracted from the interviews and free opportunity conversations that allow us to access the ways of resignification of these experiences to meet the meaning of sexuality in the current conjuncture. Referenced by Carreteiro e Mattar (2003), we highlight the conflicts before childbirth, the hospitalization away from the home of origin, the feelings in relation to the prolonged hospitalization and the points of articulation between various dimensions that cross the analyses and their existing interactions between sexuality in the face of affective-love relationships and the subjectivation of the bodies entangled by bonds of conjugality-parenthood. To this end, we used one of the explanatory hypotheses to understand the dynamics of this process, that is, the spillover effect (Erel & Burman, 1995), in which there is a certain intrinsic negative-positive externality inherent to the NICU that singularizes the quality of the conjugal-parental relationship and a certain overflowing impact of its contextual-emotional climate inherent to the mothers’ perceptions.

The Essentially Feminine: Premature Childbirth

In the contemporary conception of the family in the public space, care and the essentially feminine is represented by raising children. It is in this logic that the association between women, maternity, and domesticity is built and underlies the normative gender order that conceives women as “naturally” affective, while men are the figure of the financial provider; health services and professionals reinforce these norms and hold women mainly responsible for maternal and childcare.

Extemporaneous birth is the consequence of a pregnancy that did not end in a neuro-hormonal development process. According to Romero, Gay e Fernandez (2011: 25) preterm birth can alter the bond and attachment in the face of the new-borns’ pathology and these conditions generate a distancing between child-parents. According to the WHO - World Health Organization, the characteristics of preterm new-borns are the length of hospitalization

required for their recovery in the hospital space and their reality of low weight (between 448 and 1,169 grams; the average normal weight is 3,400 grams) and parturient women with gestational age between 23 and 37 weeks (normal would be 40 weeks).

In the case of the survey in question, we have: 45% babies born between 27-33 weeks; 35% in the 34-37 weeks range and 15% in the 23-26 weeks period. Prematurity is associated with insufficient prenatal care, poor nutrition, and overwork; these data also corroborate Moscon (2007) analyses that indicate previous, untreated diseases. Reports from the Ministry of Health (2021) reveal that in Brazil, 340 thousand babies are born prematurely every year, which is equivalent to 931 per day or 6 premature babies every 10 minutes; more than 12% of births in the country take place before 37 weeks of gestation, twice as many as in European countries.

In the context of new-born care or hospitalization in a neonatal care unit, mothers play the role of zealous caregivers, while fathers are secondary or even excluded. As for the couple's municipality of residence in relation to the distance to the NICU, 60% said that if the birth occurred in their municipality of origin, it would enable the father's proximity in caring for the hospitalized new-born and especially in maintaining the relationship with his partner; this issue of distance from their territory, the difficult and costly commute from the interior to the capital of Goiás, represents a factor that generates anguish and uncertainty about the future.

The most significant demographic data are represented by 45% of the mothers living in a stable union with their partners; in the age groups 21 to 30 and 31 to 40 years old; having 2 or 3 children; with the help of one minimum wage as family income; experiencing the average time of hospitalization between 9 and 11 weeks. 100% of the women surveyed do not receive support or division in the care of their children from their partners. We listed some narratives collected as representative of the feelings that mothers report about these moments in their lives:

I can no longer stay here, my partner has his eye on the neighbour (M.J); my marriage was already not doing well, now it is worse (G.C); I am very jealous and insecure, but until now, everything is fine (J.C); I separated, he didn't want me to stay here, he said that I was having an affair (L. P); my mother-in-law put it into my husband's head that I am having an affair here (C.B); the father of my daughter was fine with me, but now he is doubting his paternity, he didn't even want to get the birth certificate (A.P); it is good here, but we lack a double bed (L.L).

Analysed as a narrative set, the speeches of situational confrontations make use of hostilities, provocations, offenses, and separations that demonstrate the demands and requirements in view of updating the perceptions of conjugality-parenthood and the (un)rightness in the affective-love relationships; on the other hand, because of the times-spaces of deprivation of intimacy, the couples end up adopting verbal language and body expression indicative of desires, feelings, and sensations. We enumerate some reports compiled from the employees of the Health Unit, who accompany the mothers daily:

I caught those parents in the little reception room, with the light off...and in a strange way (F.1); she sits on his lap in the armchair next to the baby...and that can't happen (F.5); they keep touching each other, kneading each other in the hallways (F.6); I caught that father inappropriately touching his wife as they walked down the hallway on their way to the NICU (F.8).

In view of the lengthy hospital stay, on average 63 to 77 days, 50% of the mothers who accompany the new-borns cannot go home to be with their families and children, due to the distance and financial difficulties to travel to the interior of the state, we found 17 mentions of feelings of fear, despair, anguish, anxiety, insecurity, and guilt.

If the gestational age is the marker of possible alterations and complications that can cause death or affect the psychomotor, intellectual, or emotional development, triggering the baby's vulnerability and lack of vitality, for the mother, the feeling of guilt for her child's health condition and the distancing from her partner is the cord that breaks the bonds of conjugality-parenthood.

According to Baldissarella e Dell' Aaglio (2019), if the birth of a healthy baby with its full development is strengthened every day, we observe that the (dis)ties that reverberate in the living system of parents with premature children, contains mainly the fear of even nurturing this affective-love bond; thus, parents have as their first feeling the mourning for not having a "perfect" child, often followed by guilt (2019, p. 44). They often seek resources in faith and support in the health team of the neonatal unit to experience and overcome the event of the struggle of not having the expected child and "leaving the imaginary child for the real child" causing difficult moments of adaptability.

Conjugal Parenthood Bonds: Sexuality in Question

In the current conjuncture of social representations subjectivized from bodies entangled by bonds of conjugality-parenthood, the woman who gives birth is at the core that integrates the “issues” of human sexuality. For Bravo (2008, p. 257), motherhood is the period that constitutes part of the woman’s sexual life, due to the distinct phases inherent to the feminine, such as gestation, childbirth, and the lactation period; in later phases, for example in raising offspring, the person who protects and cares, is not consecrated, necessarily as a woman.

In the line that investigates gender relations, Nunes (2005) announces the difficulty in addressing the theme, because the grandiosity of the human dimension and all its historical sedimentation of meanings and especially about the care and protection of children, natural/biological or not, engender distinct estrangements of the subjects in front of sexuality. Figueiró (2009), follows this same path towards the understanding of the elements inherent to sexuality as factors that enhance the care and education of children, since they involve love, pleasure, touch, affection, affection, gestures, respect etc.:

[...] sexuality cannot be restricted to its biological dimension, nor to the notion of genitality, or instinct, or even libido. Nor can it be perceived as a ‘part’ of the body. [...] It is an “essentially human” dimension, whose meanings and experiences are determined by nature, by the subjectivity of each human being and, above all, by culture, which should be understood, in its totality and globality, as a social construction that is conditioned by different historical, economic, political, and social moments (2009, p. 39).

In short, sexuality is manifested in the form of experiences and sex as a way of encounters that make people more intimate and connected to each other. In the study in question, we observed that the mothers’ bonds when they accompany their hospitalized child full time and for long periods, are permeated by jealousy, mistrust regarding the partner’s fidelity, discussions, demands, and impositions that affect the conjugality-parenting system.

These changes, according to Hameister, Barbosa e Wagner (2015: 142), are reflected in the cognitive formation of children since they interpret conflicts as a factor of emotional insecurity. This our explanatory hypothesis to understand the dynamics of this process, as spillover effect (Erel & Burman, 1995), in which there are negative externalities inherent to the NICU, singu-

larized by the overflow of impacts on socio-affective relationships; finally, we observed that mothers carry within themselves, an intense overload of experienced and contradictory feelings of presence (identity) and belonging (coexistence) in favours of fulfilling the roles related to conjugality-parenthood.

Conclusions

The birth of a child becomes a time-space of social representativeness that breaks into the maternal territory. In Brazil, according to the Ministry of Health (2021) there is recognition of the importance and participation of the father during labor and postpartum, providing support and maternal and neonatal safety. Under the SUS - Sistema Único de Saúde (Brazilian Unified Health System), expectant mothers are guaranteed the right to the presence of a companion, considering the woman's free choice, and respecting that the father is not a visitor and thus, ensuring him free access to health units where the child is hospitalized.

In the scope of this research, referenced by mothers at the NICU of Goiânia, there is the “essentially feminine in opposition to the masculine world” since the stigma about what are “man's things” added to the father's roles, as not suitable for the care of hospitalized new-borns.

In conclusion, we observe that the conjugality-parenting relationship is permeated with many challenges, even more so among the couple with a child in a Neonatal Intensive Care Unit; thus, understanding sexuality in this time-space of prolonged hospitalization requires the indication of public policies of care, to find strategies for overcoming the dilemmas of sexuality in their affective-love relationships.

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CISNORMATIVE CRYSTALIZATION IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETIES: RE-INVENTING TRANS PEOPLE'S SEXUALITY¹

Vânia Pires²

Hélia Bracons³

Abstract

This paper explores a reflexive analysis of the cisnormative social patterns that might determine the existence and lifestyle of many trans people, eternalizing a binary matrix in gender expression and thus perpetuating discriminatory behaviours. The resulting work of a master's thesis sought to determine family and social determinants which may contribute to the suicidal behaviour of trans people and, to gauge their perceptions in the inclusion of a social worker in a multidisciplinary health care unit, examining whether it would affect their gender transition/affirmation clinical process. Research was conducted by the last quarter of 2019 and used qualitative methodology through semi-structured interviewing, with ten trans individuals. Categorical and content analysis were used. About half of the respondents had attempted suicide, all had suicidal ideation, and most were engaged in self-harming behaviours. The main results observed within the family were rejection, aggression, and exclusion scenarios. Within the social domain, we observed a harmonious relationship with peers, although there was little social engagement and participation. Nonetheless, there has been evidence that cisgenderism's expressions, which establish normative standards regarding gender identity and expression within society, are endorsed, with participants assuring that they're excluded from the plurality of leisure activities.

Keywords

Trans People; Gender Identity; Cisnormativity.

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² Doctoral student in Social Work, ISCTE-IUL. Email: vaniacavacas42@gmail.com

³ Associate Professor, Director of the Social Work Graduate Degree. Universidade Lusófona. Email: helia.bracons@ulusofona.pt

Introduction

Prior research as shown empirical evidence outlining the vulnerabilities of trans people as a marginalized and incomprehensible group (Frazão, 2014; Gomes *et al.*, 2022; Toomey *et al.*, 2018). Both within the context of parents and family, social environment, or even from internal conflicts (Chang & Delaney, 2019; Frazao, 2014; Perez-Brumer *et al.*, 2017; Pires, 2020), the aggressions and acts of violence experienced by trans people may inhibit them to partake in social activities which involve engagement with the community, and might embody signs of minority stress, either through fear and expectancy of discrimination, or through constant monitoring their surroundings (Pires, 2020; Reis & Martins, 2020).

This article derives from the Master's thesis in Social Work: Risk and Violence in Current Societies - Social Analysis and Intervention: «Transitions: contextual resiliencies - a study on suicide and suicidal behaviours of young trans males» (Pires, 2020), which aimed to promote the understanding of the parallels between family and social factors that may lead to suicidal behaviour in trans people as well as to determine their own perceptions about the social worker's role in their gender transition/affirmation clinical process. Based on the results, we understood that crystallized cisgenderism generates and exacerbates depressive and stress-related states and can, thus, mitigate full social membership and increase insularity in leisure activities, as an inherent social right.

Initially, we present an exposure about leisure linked to the everyday life of transgender people. Subsequently, the results of the social categories of this research are presented, thus contributing to the understanding of the aim of this investigation and, in conclusion, the considerations which lead this production to its end.

1 - Theoretical Background

1.1- Trans people's leisure practices: cisgenderism as a factor of inhibition in social contexts.

Conceptualizing leisure, for its polysemic and subjective character, may represent a complex endeavour, bringing the possibility of not fully defining it.

Amidst synergies, Social Sciences have engaged in leisure studies, such as Psychology, Sociology, Social Service and Anthropology, characterizing it

in accordance with the principles, to its social reality and to each science's object of study, thus contributing to an amplified understanding and instrumentalization. However, we may briefly establish it through the freedom of choice in activities, relaxation, free time or, amongst others, the holiday season that summarises the achievement of personal pleasure (Gutierrez, 2001; Padilha, 2002; Kuykendall *et al.*, 2018).

When appropriately configured, leisure is a core force in enhancing human dignity, health, and well-being (World Leisure Organization, n/d). It ought to have universal status and to be a vital, rather than an aspirational component, in the experience of human existence in its fullness. It also performs an essential role, both in the individual and community development processes, contributing to a healthful quality of life and, the enhancement of social relations. Equally, retains a place of expression and engagement in democratic life, as citizenship in its fullness should. Similarly, it encourages social integration and belongingness which, as far as minority groups, can lead to a healthy social integration and absorption (World Leisure Organization, n/d); World Health Organization, 2004). Therefore, within the leisure conceptualization, some authors have categorized it according to its involvement and its satisfaction. Leisure involvement refers to the extent of people's participation in leisure and, may be measured based on the length of time devoted to leisure or its frequency of attendance. Moreover, leisure satisfaction refers to the extent by which people achieve pleasure or satisfaction in their leisure activities (Kuykendall *et al.*, 2018).

Whereas leisure time as an utmost aspect of people's lives, promoting their physical, social, and mental well-being, disappointingly little is known regarding the needs of trans people in leisure settings (Grossman *et al.*, 2005; Lewis & Johnson, 2011). Notwithstanding the limited research, we can only assume they face barriers to full participation in their preferred leisure activities (Elling-Machartzki, 2017; Lewis & Johnson, 2011).

Trans and gender diverse people have existed under social archetypes such as cisgenderism due to, and cogitating a deterministic approach, their gender does not correlate with their sex assigned at birth. The paradigm which conveys the premise that sex assigned at birth determines, automatically, a person's gender, may summon transphobia, sexual stigmatization, discrimination (Kallen, 2004), violence, suicide, and homicide against trans people (Irwin, 2016). Whether through intentional attitudes or involuntary actions,

prejudice, and discrimination against trans people remains an utmost reality in many of their lives.

Cisgenderism defines itself through the ideology which questions the categorical distinction among the persons as either transgender or cisgender. It also expresses a form of *othering*⁴ to trans people, by assuming as valid the correlation between sex assigned at birth and a person's gender, denying, and supporting the invisibility of trans people (Ansara & Hegarty, 2012; Oakleaf & Richmond, 2017). When the human existence is understood in a strictly cisgender way, it reduces people to gendered expressions and roles linked to hegemonic and normative binary structures of the two sexes (man or woman), of two genitals (penis or vagina) and of two genders (male or female) (Barreto, 2019).

Considering cisgenderism in a critically note, enables a more comprehensive approach on examining the mainstream discourses and, similarly, the systemic discrimination that repeatedly withhold trans people in agency and citizenship. Through this critical analysis, the normative discourses of gender have been identified under five key dimensions: on misgender (incorrect use of gender marker and/or pronouns), on binarizing (assuming the existence of only two genders, male and female, invalidating people who do not comply with the two-tone conception of gender), in erasing (denying the existence of trans people), on pathologizing and marginalizing (Bartholomaeus & Riggs, 2017; Dodd, 2021).

Gender expression is undeniably a matter of public criticism, and therefore trans people may be more vulnerable and underrepresented in leisure activities. Nevertheless, access to, involvement in, and enjoyment in leisure have a crucial link with people's well-being (Monterrubio *et al.*, 2021).

There have been countless and historical incidents of human rights violation of trans people, thus, being broadly exposed both to situations of social vulnerability and invisibility whereby, the scarce attending in leisure activities is a growing and widespread phenomenon (Canabarro, 2013, cited by Reis & Martins, 2020; Cardoso & Ferro, 2012).

2 - Method

The emphasis on understanding the participants' insights and achieving a deep involvement in their narratives and social realities, has contributed to

⁴ Phenomenon in which some individuals or groups are defined and labelled as not fitting within the norms of a social group.

the option of a qualitative paradigm in the form of a semi-structured interview. Through the analysis of their statements, we structured the narratives through a categorical system of analysis where, it was possible to categorize the discourses by topics and the categories represented below (Bardin, 2008; Bogdan & Biklen, 1994):

CATEGORY	Life Stage	Social Support	Discrimination	Suicidality	Social Work and other Social Sciences	Situational variables	Suggestions
UNDER CATEGORY	Self-perception of transgenereness	Family	Homophobia and transphobia	Suicide attempt		Fears and concerns unveiled	
		Peers		Suicide ideation			
		Community		Parasuicide			

Table 1 - Category vs under category

Source: Elaborated by the author

By operationalizing original and absolute variables into categories, sub-categories and constructs which could be scientifically assessed and contextualized (Coutinho, 2015), we proceeded to the thorough examination of their narratives.

2.1 –Participants

The participants of this study were determined through a non-probabilistic sampling procedure, the snowball technique. It is considered useful when encountering samples difficult to target and reach (Coutinho, 2015; Pires, 1997). Inclusion criteria, considering the aggregation of people who nurtured shared characteristics, participants identified themselves as trans people FtM⁵, were over 18 years old, in different periods of their gender transition/affirmation, and, geographically distributed. Hence, the study included ten young trans FtM, between the ages of 19 and 31. Nine were from the metropolitan area of Lisbon and one was from Viseu. Regarding the participants' description of suicidal behaviour, five had already attempted suicide, the totality accused suicidal ideation and eight participants had already engaged in parasuicidal practices.

⁵ The FtM (Female to Male) criteria came from the precursor (João) and from the necessity to harmonise the entire sample.

3 - Results

By characterizing the family factors that influenced suicidal behaviour, we highlighted a family atmosphere characterized by low parental both in involvement and support during their gender transition/affirmation process, along with the disrespect for the male name and pronouns. Equally, were described episodes of discrimination, transphobia, and home eviction. By many, family was seen as a hindrance to participants' well-being achievement and regarded, as a source of an overriding fear.

Regarding the community Social Support dimension, the substance of this article, we attempted to comprehend the participants' attitude, towards the various activities required in everyday life and leisure. There has been evidence of poor social integration, stemming from repeated ostracism linked with cisgenderism, in addition to minority stress symptomatology (Meyer, 2015). There was a striking distress associated with the beach activity, emphasizing the participants' fear and discomfort in favouring the haven from home over the beach, pool, or other leisure pursuits, only to avoid prejudice and, whenever they chose to do so, they were coerced into wearing apparel such as *binder*⁶, t-shirts or *packer*⁷:

I don't really like to expose myself (...) I just don't go to the beach because having to wear binder is too hot, but otherwise, that's it. (João); There were many places I stopped going, or never went, because I was already afraid. I didn't go to the beach, I stopped going almost everywhere (...), cinemas and things like that no..., I stopped going, I've only just started to recover or actually start having normal habits of a person again. (Duarte); (...) The only things I don't do are aquatic things, like going to the beach...in fact this year I'll thankfully know what it is to go to the beach or a swimming pool and take off my t-shirt. Until then, just the fact of thinking about going to the beach causes me extreme dysphoria and even if I went in a t-shirt, binder and packer, I felt completely dysphoric. It's a shame because I really like the sea (...). (Afonso); I never liked going to the beach because I didn't like myself, I didn't like my body and the beach was the worst place to expose myself. (...) even now if I go with friends I never undress because I have binder underneath and I don't even want to imagine... and in general I hate the beach because of this.... There are al-

⁶Thoracic corset which tightens the breast area (Pires, 2020).

⁷Prosthesis that allows the embodiment of the male sexual organ. It has the purpose to meet 4 needs: standing urination, bulking up the underwear, providing pleasure and use for penetrative sex (Pires, 2020).

ways people looking... (Nuno); Yeah, the beach issue is the most central one. I normally do it at night. I haven't been to the beach during the day for years and, when I go, I don't take off my t-shirt, I don't take anything off, I stay there... to have a social life, like going to the cinema or to a party, I go with a lot of reservations and only when I know who is going to be there, (...) otherwise I stay away. I don't like going through the novelty process and I don't even feel comfortable walking in the street. (Pedro).

It should be stressed that, although the most diverse social situations were discussed, the most part accused an enhanced fear in attending the beach, outings during leisure time and/or dining out. One should also note that body exposure, conveyed by the social convention for bathing activities, clearly highlights the generalised anxiety shared by the interviewed.

Concerning the second category, Discrimination and the subcategory homophobia or transphobia, which is the other focus of this paper, most speakers confirm having experienced discrimination. School, family, and community are the most common arenas where expressions of discrimination have occurred and, in which involving verbal aggression, slander, moral insults and, amongst others, denial of one's identity:

I felt discrimination when I lived as a lesbian. Usually they called me tom-boy, woman-man, they asked me if I was a man or if I was a woman, they questioned me if I was in the right bathroom, if I knew what it was (...). Once, in secondary school, I had 2 boys who came up to chase me and call me anything and everything, I couldn't be relaxed (...) (Duarte); A lot, when I was a lesbian girl, but the kind where they'd talk dirty. I heard a lot of, tom-boy and whatever...sometimes they would bump into me and such...they offended me a lot with swearing, but nothing too physical...like, getting my ass kicked, no, thankfully. (Diogo); All my teen years I suffered a certain amount of prejudice and discrimination. Nowadays there's still a lot of that too when I go, for example, to public toilets people still stare, there's still a lot of prejudice. (Pedro); More in Malls... I mean, if I went to the ladies' room, I would hear, 'Oh my God, there's a boy here...' and I would think, 'Yes, that's right! If I go to the boys', sometimes they call me a fag or a queer and stuff like that and I say I just want to pee... already defeated...' (Nuno); Huge, huge...I have never received so much discrimination as I have now, in this last year, from all the people on the street (Tiago).

The experiences described by the participants do not leave margin for scepticism regarding the cumulative instances of oppression, violence, abuse and, persecution which have guided the lives and paths of these young people. Due to their interim stages in their gender transition/affirmation, may trigger on others the oddity and «phobia» of their bodies and expressions not conforming to the gender perceived by others, being read as outsiders and provokers who must be sanctioned (Pires, 2020).

4 - Final comments

Transphobia and discrimination incidents have been, routinely, described in these young people's lives where, seven in ten chose to omit themselves from leisure activities such as movies, restaurants, beaches and, other entertainment venues requiring public exposure.

Many participants' justification is rooted both in fear and the emasculating social pressure, as it demands them holding a social expression that addresses the female or male dichotomy, thus "(...) experienced gender may include alternative gender identities in addition to binary stereotypes." (DSM-V, Apa, 2014, p.453). Therefore, when their gender expressions are perceived by others as undefined across the binary spectrum or yet allocated to the sex assigned at birth (female), society does not recognize them as male individuals, thus creating a sense of inappropriateness, distress, and discrimination (Pires, 2020).

Acknowledging trans people, as victims of societal ignorance, prejudice, and discrimination (Grossman *et al.*, 2005), as well as a marginalized group at significantly heightened risk of suicide (The Trevor Project, 2022), this research has expanded the understanding of the everyday stressors experienced by trans people, which may lead to depressive and suicidal behaviors.

Seemingly, trans youth report that most sports, school, social and recreational programs are not friendly, being compelled to challenge the mainstream gender stereotypes which are expected for attending and engaging in traditional and safely recreational, leisure and sports programs. (Grossman *et al.*, 2005).

Leisure settings can provide a platform to express oneself, to socialize and to exercise one's right to citizenship. Equality in attending and engaging leisure in public spaces, should not be limited to something trans people aim or defer. It should become a reality (Oakleaf & Richmond, 2017). The inherent

right that every human being has on attending a beach or any other activity that compels, and in this instance, trans men to expose their naked bodies to others, can be highly challenging and uncomfortable experience (Monterrubio *et al.*, 2021).

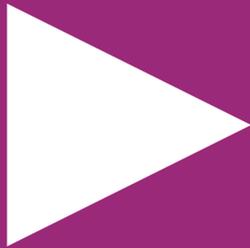
The obstacles perceived to their full society integration, extend far beyond legal and medical concerns. As discussed, family and social factors have a significant bearing on mental health, belongingness, identity, agency, and citizenship. Therefore, we might conclude that, even though family, society and the relationships established between these and the ego hold primary roles in both protective and risk factors in trans youth, we cannot disregard self-ostracization as a risk factor, all consequence of cisgenderism and the subsequent social intolerance and segregation that still portray and outline contemporary societies.

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WOMEN AND *eSPORTS*: A LOOK IN THE LIGHT OF DISCRIMINATIONS¹

João Victor Figueiredo Moreira²

Anna Luiza Souza Diniz³

Ana Cláudia Porfírio Couto⁴

Abstract

Electronic sports (eSports) are basically a competitive and organized way to play video games both professionally and casually. This work deals with the relations of young women with electronic sports in the current scenario of expansion of eSports and under-representation of women in (allegedly mixed) competitions. In this paper, our objective is to identify whether there are discriminations for such practices, which take place mainly in the context of leisure. Based on our data, we confirm that, in fact, there are discriminations, which are reflected in the perception propagated to players that such activities would be made for boys and the fact that the interviewees claim to hear more criticism and less praise from male players compared to women. Finally, we believe that our work is an initial step – modest, but necessary – to understand their experiences in this scenario that is possibly noxious to them and give tools to combat it.

Keywords:

eSports; electronic sports; young women; discriminations; gender.

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² Undergraduate in Social Sciences, Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG, Brazil). Member of the Study Group in Sociology and Pedagogy of Sport and Leisure (GESPEL/UFMG). E-mail: joaovictorfigueiredo01@outlook.com.

³ Undergraduate in Physical Education, Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG, Brazil). Member of the Study Group in Sociology and Pedagogy of Sport and Leisure (GESPEL/UFMG). E-mail: annasdinizz@gmail.com.

⁴ Professor at the Sports Department, Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG, Brazil). Member of the Study Group in Sociology and Pedagogy of Sport and Leisure (GESPEL/UFMG). E-mail: apcouto@gmail.com

Introduction

Electronic sports (eSports) are basically a competitive and organized way to play video games (Jenny *et al.*, 2017; Witkowski, 2012) both professionally and casually (Cranmer *et al.*, 2021). In addition, its popularity has increased greatly, especially with the pandemic of COVID-19 (Cranmer *et al.*, 2021), and its market is now worth billions of dollars (NewZoo, 2021). On the other hand, eSports are marked by male domination and strong gender inequality (e.g., Consalvo, 2012; Ruvalcaba *et al.*, 2018; Schelfhout *et al.*, 2019); accordingly, in Brazil, women – despite making up the majority of video game practitioners – are scarcely represented in official competitions (Muniz & Higídio, 2019).

In this scenario of expansion of eSports and under-representation of women in competitions (allegedly mixed), discussing women's relationships – especially young women – in the practice of eSports is relevant. We believe, moreover, that our research can contribute to an academic discussion about women's participation in eSports and that it contributes to gender studies and the inclusion of women in these practices.

Objectives and methodology

This work is part of a broader research that investigates women's professional and leisure relationships with eSports. In this paper, our specific objective is to identify whether there are discriminations for such practices.

The data were obtained from an electronic questionnaire that was divulged to individual players, groups and eSports associations through social networks (Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp), email and radio. Furthermore, to assist us in the divulgation, we asked the players to share the form also with their colleagues. So, from February to June 2022, we obtained 114 responses, of which we selected only those of participants aged 18 to 29 years who identify as women and who currently play ($n = 54$). The questionnaire answered by current players was divided into four sections.

Thus, the first part comprises questions about the description of eSports practices and their motivations; the second section is about emotions; the third section aimed to discover possible discriminations that practitioners suffer during or because of their eSports practices; the last section, finally, sought to trace a little of the players' social profile. However, we will not analyze all the questions of the questionnaire, but only those that relate to this

paper's objectives, which are the discriminations involved in the link between women and electronic sports.

To do so, we asked if they have heard that games (video games or computers games) are activities for boys and, if so, from whom they heard it. In addition, we adapted the methodological proposal of part of the study by Ruvalcaba *et al.* (2018) and provided questions where participants could choose whether they received more criticism or praise from male players or female players. Here, the intention was to verify whether, in the perception of the players, there would be significant gender differences in relation to the emission of criticism and praise. In this work, we analyze the data through the identification of the relative frequency of responses.

What are eSports?

With regard to the definition of eSports, there is no single understanding; the studies of this area have been done in several areas of knowledge (e.g., sociology, sports management, psychology and informatics), but without a common concept and with sometimes contradictory perspectives and approaches (Cranmer *et al.*, 2021; Reitman *et al.*, 2019). Therefore, as Reitman *et al.* (2019) and Freeman and Wohn (2017) point out, there are basically three definitions of electronic sports. The former conceives them as «interactive spectatorship». In this case, we try to understand eSports from the spectators electronic eSports mobilizes attractively and interactively (Freeman & Wohn, 2017). Due to its emphasis on spectators, this definition escapes our goals of understanding the relationships of young *players (gamers)* of electronic sports.

The second defines them as «computer-mediated sports». Here, electronic sports are seen as sports practiced through the use of electronic technologies (such as software and hardware of computers and consoles): «'eSports' is an area of sport activities in which people develop and train mental or physical abilities in the use of information and communication technologies» (Wagner, 2006, s/p). In other words, electronic sport

is a sport of wisdom between people with hi-tech software and hardware as sports equipment and can temper and improve participant's thinking ability, response ability, coordinated skill of heart, eyes, arms and legs and will, and cultivate team spirit (Zang *et al.*, 2008, p. 57)

Or, then,

a form of sports where the primary aspects of the sport are facilitated by electronic systems; the input of players and teams as well as the output of the eSports system are mediated by human-computer interfaces (Hamari & Sjöblom, 2017, p. 213).

Finally, there is the definition of eSports as «competitive gaming», which is the most accepted (Reitman *et al.*, 2019) and that we will use in this work. In this perspective, the authors – although they differ from different emphasis in a given aspect or another – affirm that electronic sports are simply “a competitive and organized way of playing video games” (Jenny *et al.*, 2017; Ruvalcaba *et al.*, 2018; Schelfhout *et al.*, 2019; Witkowski, 2012).

On the other hand, to this last definition, we find it necessary to add that eSports is not limited to its more competitive and professional dimension; on the contrary, the players who are casual and practicing for leisure are equally important for this field (Cranmer *et al.*, 2021), so that the degree of competitiveness varies according to the context and that electronic sports competitions can range from a dispute in the garage between friends to tournaments with high-level teams (Reitman *et al.*, 2019). Secondly, although its professional aspect is relevant, «the real fundamental issues can be found elsewhere, in particular in private homes on family computers» (Wagner, 2006, s/p). Moreover, as Martončík (2015) points out, computer games are a very popular form of leisure and, according to the Game Brasil Survey (Go Gamers *et al.*, 2021), most female players are casual. In this perspective, our work perceives these practices especially as leisure activities.

Regarding its historical development, according to Filchenko (apud Cranmer *et al.*, 2021), electronic sports began from the moment that, through technological development, video games were able to enable matches between different people, in person or not. After that, there have emerged games that allow the simultaneous participation of thousands of people around the world, and currently technologies are being developed – for example, virtual reality (VR), mixed reality (MR) and augmented reality (AR) – that change the experience for eSports (Cranmer *et al.*, 2021). In this perspective, eSports are developing and today make up four types – i) sports digitalization, ii) competitive multiplayer (computer) games, iii) digitally enhanced sports and iv) immersive reality sports – divided from their relationships with a) physical

activities, b) technologies and c) environment (virtual/real) (Cranmer *et al.*, 2021).

In addition, according to Cranmer *et al.* (2021), the popularity of eSports has increased greatly, especially with the COVID-19 pandemic, so that various sports organizations and clubs have come to work with eSports and that institutions have guaranteed them some stability. Also, according to them, comparing eSports with so-called «traditional» sports – that is, non-electronics – is limiting and hinders the recognition and progression of esports. In this regard, Hallmann and Giel (2018) add that the thriving acceptance and recognition of eSports has also been made from football teams, media, bureaucracy and political discussions and, furthermore, affirm that the discussion about the relationship between eSports and sports is important and that the official attribution of sports status to eSports is just a matter of time. In any case, there is no consensus on such institutional stability (see Jenny *et al.*, 2017), the eSports' industry is still incipient, and, its emergence, recent (Cranmer *et al.*, 2021).

Electronic sports and gender: the object of this research

On the link between gender – i.e., “social relations between the sexes’ based on perceived differences between men and women” (Joncheray *et al.*, 2016, p. 165) – and eSports, some studies indicate that the space of electronic sports, with an appreciation of masculinity, presents itself in a hostile and discriminatory way to women (e.g., Ruvalcaba *et al.*, 2018; Schelfhout *et al.*, 2019). In fact, there are several forms of embarrassment to women, which are related to a number of factors and which may be the reasons why women avoid eSports.

First, women are portrayed in a sexist and sexualized way in video games and, thus, players are objectified and attract unwanted attention from players (Consalvo, 2012; Ruvalcaba *et al.*, 2018). Even in relation to online streaming, there are a number of objections and sexual comments – and more linked to female bodies than to sports performance – in front of «narrators and commentators» (streamers) and gamers, as well as a lack of attention in traditional eSports channels (Ruvalcaba *et al.*, 2018).

Moreover, women a) are excluded and humiliated, b) commonly avoid the identity of «gamer woman» because they are prejudiced related to a worse performance in the game and c) find it impossible to perform their skills in view of this harmful expectation of gender that create stereotypes of women

as intrinsically incapable of being skilled in video games (Consalvo, 2012; Ruvalcaba *et al.*, 2018; Schelfhout *et al.*, 2019; Zolides, 2015).

In these aspects, we perceived a strong relationship with «traditional» sports, considering that studies have already found, among other things, in contexts of sports practice and transmission, a) objectification and exclusion of women, b) lack of incentive, support and investment to practices by female athletes, c) configuration of some sports spaces such as men and d) differential media coverage, that would tend to reproduce gender stereotypes that portray athletes in a sexualized and sexist way and place them as incapable and inadequate in the face of the male “standard” (Adams & Leavitt, 2021; Fink, 2015; Joncheray *et al.*, 2016; Nash, 2017). As an aggravating factor, there is, in the gamer context, the issue of anonymity in these virtual spaces, which, by hindering the identification of aggressors, facilitates discrimination and hostility towards minorities (Ruvalcaba *et al.*, 2018).

Finally, the space of electronic sports, which involves both the act of playing and communities of players and transmission of matches, is characterized by a male domination in which women are seen as strange and anomalous elements and treated in a hostile and «toxic» way and in which there is an appreciation of “masculinities”, which are “socially constructed component[s] of gender identity that [are] typically associated with men” (Nash, 2017, p. 735), especially “hegemonic masculinity” – i.e., «localized and disputed pattern[s] of practice[s] (...) that allowed men’s dominance over women to continue» (Connell & Messerschmith, 2005, p. 832) – (Consalvo, 2012; Schelfhout *et al.*, 2019; Yu *et al.*, 2022).

Indeed, such patterns of domination seem to be present in electronic sports. Based on our questionnaire, we found that approximately four out of five (precisely, 79.63%) players have heard that video games are activities for boys – among which, 79.07% say they have heard this from other players – and 96.30% say it is more likely to hear criticism from male players than from players.

Such data seem appropriate to the perception presented above that the space of electronic sports is characterized by a male domination in which, among other things, a) women are i) seen as strange and anomalous elements, ii) excluded, harassed and humiliated, iii) commonly avoid the identity of «gamer woman» because they are prejudiced by related to a worse performance in the game and iv) find it impossible to perform their skills in view of the gender expectations they create stereotypes of women as intrinsically incapable of being skilled in video games and in which b) there is an appreciation

of masculinities, especially hegemonic masculinity (Consalvo, 2012; Ruvalcaba *et al.*, 2018; Schelfhout *et al.*, 2019; Yu *et al.*, 2022; Zolides, 2015).

Final considerations

Finally, we can conclude that there are discriminations for eSports practices, which are reflected in the perception propagated to players that such activities would be made for boys and in the fact that the interviewees claim to hear more criticism and less praise from male players compared to women.

Nevertheless, gender relations are subject of political struggles, so that dominations are somehow negotiated and can be challenged (Connell & Messerschmith, 2005). Therefore, players can – although with great difficulty – question these harmful aspects of the gamer scenario (Consalvo, 2012; Schelfhout *et al.*, 2019). As an example, we could mention the creations of groups exclusively for women players to avoid embarrassment (Ruvalcaba *et al.*, 2018) – in Brazil, the Facebook group *Rexpeita Elas* – and teams of players who fight against such discrimination. That said, verifying whether there are discriminations for eSports practices by young women – as we did – is an initial step – modest, but necessary – to understand their experiences in this scenario that is possibly noxious to them and give tools to combat it.

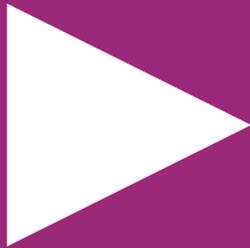
In our other study that sought to understand the motivations of eSports players for their practice through the analysis of the same electronic questionnaire, we realized that leisure is central in women's experiences with electronic sports, in such a way that our results a) agreed with the placements of Cranmer *et al.* (2021) on the importance of casual players, entertainment and collaboration for electronic sports, which go beyond competitiveness, and b) suggested that the main source of motivation is the category «Friendship and leisure» (Moreira *et al.*, 2022).

In this paper, we were able to verify the existence of discrimination for such practices, which take place mainly in the context of leisure. Therefore, we consider that leisure scholars should consider this emerging and popular activity (Cranmer *et al.*, 2021; Martončík, 2015) and we believe that those concerned about women's lives, with their discrimination, experiences and feelings, should also turn their attention to electronic sports, since these are a frequent practice in the daily lives of most Brazilian women (Go Gamers *et al.*, 2021). Thus, we hope that further research will be done to better elucidate the object of this inquiry.

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THE VENEZUELAN LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY IN ECUADOR: HOMOPHOBIA AND XENOPHOBIA?¹

Julio Merchán-Romero²

Angel Torres-Toukourmidis³

Jenny Pontón⁴

Abstract

According to data from the UN Refugee Agency-UNHCR- (2021), so far more than 4 million Venezuelans have been displaced abroad, representing 16% of forced migration worldwide. Even more worrying, by 2022-2023 these figures are projected to double. The factors that have brought about the Venezuelan exodus are the result of socio-economic and political conflicts that have been going on for years. As a result, Ecuador has been one of the countries with a large number of Venezuelan migrants, and cities such as Cuenca, Quito, and Guayaquil, as those with the highest economic growth, are important centers where these migrants settle or use them as transit cities to reach Peru (Condori, *et al.*, 2020), the second country with the second highest rate of registered migrants due to its economic and commercial dynamics. In this context, there is also an evident social problem with migration, and it is the increase of the LGBTQ+ community in the different countries that are destinations for Venezuelan citizens, which has caused the urgent need for public policies that can be used to control discrimination against this group within each country. This study presents the analysis of discrimination against a migratory group such as Venezuelans in Ecuador and the facets of discrimination also exercised against the LGBTQ+ community within these migratory waves in the country. In this initial perspective, we have the existence of the relationship of Venezuelan and Ecuadorian society with the LGBTQ+ community that historically has not been very good, specifically in Venezuela, where homophobia and machismo stand out as visible and commonly accepted forms of discrimination within concrete social environments in which the members of these communities lack the necessary resources at a formative level within their development. Taking into account that discrimination, is interpreted by attitudes that are socially linked to a concept of discrepancy with traditionally established standards in terms of gender identity and sexual orientation, on the other hand, machismo is understood as behaviors proper to the archetypal social construction of masculinity superior

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² Universidad Politécnica Salesiana, Ecuador. E-mail: jmerchanr1@est.ups.edu.ec

³ Gamelab-UPS Research Group Coordinator, Universidad Politécnica Salesiana, Ecuador. E-mail: atorrest@ups.edu.ec

⁴ Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales-FLACSO, Ecuador. Email: jponton@flacso.edu.ec

to that of women, subordinating them to a more utilitarian environment than as an equal (Alvarez & Lourenco, 2018). The following research poses as a general objective: to analyze the conjuncture of the Venezuelan LGBTQ+ community in Ecuador. It is also worth mentioning that beyond nationality, the Ecuadorian population tends to proceed with less familiarity with people belonging to the LGBTQ+ community, increasing their distancing towards Venezuelans when they belong to this group.

Keywords:

LGBTQ+ community; migration; Ecuador; social distancing

Introduction

According to data from the UN Refugee Agency-UNHCR- (2021), so far more than 4 million Venezuelans have been displaced abroad, representing 16% of forced migration worldwide. Even more worrying, by 2022-2023 these figures are projected to double.

With the massive arrival of Venezuelan migrants, Latin American countries have had to face an excessive increase in their population, particularly Colombia- 1.7 million-, Peru- 1.04 million-, Chile-457 thousand-, Ecuador-417 thousand- and Brazil 262 thousand- seeking to coordinate actions effectively to respond at national and regional level with public policies aimed at the integration, economy, protection, health, food security and education of Venezuelans.

The factors that have brought about the Venezuelan exodus are the result of socio-economic and political conflicts that have been going on for years. As a result, Ecuador has been one of the countries with a large number of Venezuelan migrants, and cities such as Cuenca, Quito and Guayaquil, as those with the highest economic growth, are important centers where they settle or use them as transit cities to reach Peru (Condori, *et al.*, 2020), the second country with the second highest rate of registered migrants due to its economic and commercial dynamics.

In this context, there is also an evident social problem with migration, and it is the increase of the LGBTIQ+ community in the different countries that are destinations for Venezuelan citizens, which has caused the urgent need for public policies that can be used to control discrimination against this group within each country.

In Ecuador, the «GLBT movement», or LGTBI, has been constituted with the purpose of guaranteeing, enforcing and enforcing the citizen rights stipulated in the constitution, in order to consolidate a strong identity in the face of a country that until the 1990s considered homosexuality as a crime (Valarezo, 2016).

With this precedent, an analysis of the reality that has occurred within the growth of this community in Ecuador as a result of the Venezuelan exodus is pertinent (Altamirano & Torres-Toukourmidis, 2021), without leaving aside the fact that, since the declaration of the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020, this humanitarian crisis has become more complex, Daniels (2020) mentions that, despite the closing of borders caused by the virus, the collapse of the Venezuelan health system added to hyperinflation and political polarization has produced the exodus has become an act of survival. The social co-responsibility of the receiving countries towards the issue of refugees during the pandemic implied the implementation of exclusive strategies imperatively requiring the redirection of public investment to mitigate the potential consequences of contagion among the migrant population (Brito, 2020).

To further aggravate this situation where mass migration and pandemic are combined, the framing of the media regarding the situation of Venezuelan migrants is added, influencing public opinion and the audience's perception of this crisis by nurturing the discourse of hate, criminalization and xenophobia (Altamirano and Torres-Toukourmidis, 2021). Therefore, this research is prescribed towards the deepening of an analysis of the typology of discrimination, developed to identify, categorize and develop a direct dialogue with the Venezuelan LGBTQ+ community found in Ecuador.

Theoretical Framework

This study presents the analysis of discrimination against a migratory group such as Venezuelans in Ecuador and the facets of discrimination also exercised against the LGBTQ+ community within these migratory waves in the country. In this initial perspective, we have the interpretation of migrants and their situation in the country of arrival, since according to Eguren (2021) where he places individuals located between 20 and 40 years old, who happen to be considered relatively young, as individuals in full capacity of adaptability to different jobs, added to this, the existence of gender equity between migrant men and women is understood.

However, the reality of the receiving country is altered by the difficulty precisely because of competition for entry into formal employment, which turns informal work into an escape hatch to which is added the need to reduce pay for labor in order to obtain employment (Regional Response Plan for Refugees and Migrants, 2019). Depending on the labor requirements of each country, this situation is affected and is constantly changing due to the migratory process, which means that a concrete study of the demographic profile is only possible when the flow of migrants stabilizes.

Once the context of Venezuelan mobility and the existing reality in relation to the difficulty of having an efficient demographic reading in countries such as Ecuador are situated, the existence of discriminatory behavior within the migratory context is observed (Moscoso, Candela, & Torres-Toukoumidis, 2022), since the labor market for migrants, as in the case of services such as education and health services, is complicated (Poza, 2021). This situation, which generates economic discomfort and increases the level of insecurity, is part of the main causes of a bilateral crisis; in the host country such as Ecuador and due to the economic instability of Venezuela which, as we have seen, during the month of February and March 2022 went from having a crisis due to the price of crude oil to having an increase in prices due to the war environment of the moment, these abrupt fluctuations, added to the still present pandemic of COVID-19, aggravate a tense financial and social environment.

The Venezuelan LGBTIQ+ Community and Migration

When taking into account the migratory history that has occurred in the last four years, in which, since 2018 according to UNHCR (2018), the number of migrants in Ecuadorian territory, of Venezuelan nationality, already exceeded half a million, with the entry through Rumichaca being the most sought after, with a figure greater than 4 000 people per day crossing the Colombian border, it can be understood that within this migratory movement members of the LGBTIQ+ community have also been forced to use Ecuador as a settlement or transit destination to reach countries of the southern cone. This is really useful to determine the experience of the migrant upon arrival in Ecuador and discrimination, an element that is born according to Millán (2015), by the friction of the two countries through the migratory waves that, in addition to being opportunities in which empathy with refugees

and migrants arises on the part of the receiving country, also become a breeding ground in which negative situations arise in which discriminatory acts stand out, because if we go back to historical facts, Venezuela in the years of prosperity went through this with Ecuadorians and now vice versa.

Added to this, we have the existence of the relationship of Venezuelan and Ecuadorian society with the LGBTIQ+ community that historically has not been very good, specifically in Venezuela, where homophobia and machismo stand out as visible and commonly accepted forms of discrimination within specific social environments in which the members of these communities lack the necessary resources at a formative level within their development. Taking into account that discrimination, is interpreted by attitudes that are socially linked to a concept of discrepancy with traditionally established standards in terms of gender identity and sexual orientation, on the other hand, machismo is understood as behaviors proper to the archetypal social construction of masculinity superior to that of women, subordinating them to a more utilitarian environment than as an equal (Alvarez & Lourenco, 2018).

Social perception of the LGBTIQ+ community

Stereotypes reinforce common conceptualizations that foster indiscriminate discrimination, which leads to these ways of thinking expanding in an alarming way at a generational level within sociability in environments where intolerance is seen as commonplace. Under this premise, expressions such as «closet faggot» become common and their use represents a derogatory social sentence that members of the LGBTIQ+ community feel directly in their context, in which the very terminology of «closet» is in itself an act of discrimination and flagellation, as the use of this term has come to cause such damage that it is no longer seen as a form of disintegration but as an identification, where opinions such as «I am gay/lesbian/closeted» become more and more common (Gumilla Center, 1993).

Nevertheless, the character itself of the forms, even linguistic, produced by the Venezuelan's own socially accepted behavior, it should be clear that different factors can alter the interpretation of this message, in which expressions such as «*mama huevo*», «*jala bolas*» or «*marico*», although at first glance they may have a certain linguistic meaning, can be seen as a form of identification, although at first sight they may have a discriminatory or offensive per-

ception, within the slang, these expressions are completely distant from their meaning as interpreted by a non-Venezuelan person (or even a Caribbean person, since there are expressions such as «marico» that are common in Caribbean countries such as Dominican Republic or Colombia). Dominicana or Colombia).

The concept of violence [...] that is exercised against people who are perceived as transgressors of traditional gender norms, of the male/female binomial, and whose bodies differ from the known standard bodies i.e. feminine and masculine (Gómez-Dueñas, 2012, p. 48).

From another perspective, an element that has been highlighted and has become a health issue, made invisible by the latest global crisis surrounding the HIV/AIDS pandemic, is the increase in the number of cases of patients testing positive for HIV, in which the LGBTIQ+ community has shown an exponential increase in recent years, and if we reduce the search spectrum to the Venezuelan LGBTIQ+ community found in Ecuador, we can observe, in the same way, a strong xenophobic charge coming from the still stigmatized fear and rejection of the convergence of factors between LGBTIQ+ members, foreigners, specifically Venezuelans and HIV.

Thus, according to Bolivar (2021a) people in this spectrum prefer not to attend health centers to start treatment, which has generated that the more than 1,062 Venezuelans with HIV in Ecuador are only a speculative figure because these have been the cases in which patients have opted to enter the health system, which casts doubt on the real number of people found with this disease. In addition to this situation, the pandemic has caused massive layoffs so that also after a certain time, access to health insurance is withdrawn, making the MSP (Ministry of Public Health) must attend to the uninsured population, this achieved by the pressure exerted by civil society organizations although it is still limited by the impact exerted by the pandemic, This includes multiple sectors of the population and the LGBTIQ+ community in which are found, for example, the case of sex workers, who due to their difficulties of stability in terms of residence, makes it difficult to follow up for effective treatment.

Although the Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador (2008) in Article 11, paragraph 2 declares: «All persons are equal and shall enjoy the same rights, duties and opportunities», which offers rights and protections for people of different sexual orientation and gender identity. However, as far as

the labor market is concerned, there is no code that deals more in depth with the issue of labor exclusion and discrimination (Araujo-Cuauro, 2018).

Discrimination against the migrant LGBTQ+ community

The case with the greatest difficulty is that of Venezuelan transgender persons found in Ecuador. The difficulty in accessing rights due to the absence of a public policy that helps in the sense of assistance in terms of information and guidance on available resources, added to their mobility, which prevents them from being monitored and accompanied in terms of their health and reproduction, the greatest risk for this group is informal and sexual work, which puts them at great risk of violence and aggression in the streets (Bolívar, 2021b).

The loss of economic and social well-being affects the quality of life of the LGBTI community, making them vulnerable subjects exposed to violence, exclusion and discrimination. Exclusion is reflected in various factors such as age, which like the heterosexual population suffers labor exclusion when they are older (49 years and older), as they are considered individuals with lower labor productivity (Cisneros-Freire, 2017, p. 48).

The discrimination involved in Venezuelan LBGBTIQ+ people, because of their sexual orientation and identity, in conjunction with the crisis in their country forces them to migrate causing even more problems of discrimination in their countries of transit and/or destination, the few people who seek refugee status on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity are analyzed under by «belonging to a certain social group». While aid agencies do not take into account the specific circumstances of LBGBTIQ+ persons as a refugee which makes them in certain cases, unreachable for members of this collective (Araujo-Cuauro, 2018). For Serrano and Cabezas (2020), the sex work that many transvestites and transgender people engage in is explained by a cultural aspect that, through mechanisms related to discrimination whose purpose is exclusionary, prevent non-normative identities, thus denying them job opportunities and the recognition of their identities.

Because of this, the choice of sexual or stereotypical work for non-normative identities is subject to social, economic, political and cultural pressures. While for the rest of the LBGBTIQ+ members, discrimination by employers

with discriminatory tendencies, what is sought by organizations that defend the rights of the community is the non-inclination of preferences and the equitable recognition of work effort, establishing a meritocratic criterion that does not suggest an equal salary for all employees regardless of hierarchy, but rather that gender identification or sexual determination is not part of the salary model, since the following analysis by surveys seeks to determine the effectiveness of the actions carried out for the welfare of this community. In which it focuses not only on the labor perception but also on the general perception of the population and thus make a reading on the situation of migration, identity and recognition of rights of the Venezuelan LGBTIQ+ community in Ecuador.

Recognizing this situation produced in Ecuador on both social groups, the following questions are presented: What type of closeness exists between the local population and the members of the LGBTIQ+ community, what type of closeness exists between the local population and the Venezuelan migration, what type of closeness exists between the local population and the Venezuelan migration belonging to the LGBTIQ+ community, and finally, how has the experience of the Venezuelan members of the LGBTIQ+ community been in Ecuador? For these questions a systematized process will be established that will allow understanding this situation that intertwines social groups -mass migration and people with gender identities and sexual orientation different from heterosexual-, which by antonomasia and as seen in the academic readings previously reviewed, both groups have suffered different degrees of discrimination, seeking to glimpse a detailed picture of their corresponding social situation in Ecuador.

Methodology

Taking into consideration this context, the following research proposes as general objective: to analyze the situation of the Venezuelan LGBTQ+ community in Ecuador. To this end, the following specific objectives were established: [SO1] To examine the perception of the Ecuadorian population regarding Venezuelan LGBTQ+ migration; [SO2] To explain the appreciation of Venezuelan migrants of the LGBTQ+ community in Ecuador; finally, [SO3] To contrast the current situation between Venezuelan migration of the LGBTQ+ community and the Ecuadorian population.

To meet these specific objectives, a quantitative-qualitative approach of descriptive scope was applied, showing the dimensions of a social phenomenon by establishing a series of properties and characteristics subjected to analysis (Hernández-Sampieri, Fernández-Collado and Baptista-Lucio, 2014). Under this tessitura, the methodological design selected has been mixed ethnography, defined by the perspective that those involved in the study may have and on what it may reflect in a spectrum of generalized opinion before the members of the collective involved who belong to the Venezuelan nationality.

To analyze the degree of social distancing of the Ecuadorian population with respect to the Venezuelan LGBTQ+ community. In this perspective, a Guttman scaling was applied, the scalogram was ordered hierarchically based on the distance and the degree of intimacy of the Ecuadorian population with the Venezuelan LGBTQ+ community, for this purpose 3 levels were established, the first exclusively to the Venezuelan population, the second on the LGBTQ+ community and the third with respect to the Venezuelan LGBTQ+ community. This questionnaire was answered by an exploratory probabilistic sample of 68 people of Ecuadorian origin, resulting in a gradual increase of exclusion in the three levels when they begin to have greater intimacy, that is, there is almost total acceptance when they are visitors, but when they become involved as residents, co-workers, neighbors, friends or relate to blood relatives, the degrees of repudiation begin. This survey was applied from March 15th, 2022 to May 15th, 2022, being extracted by means of an Excel where the information was systematized.

Results

With the results of the surveys applied to a representative sample of Ecuadorian society, we can infer that the level of closeness to members of the LGBTQ+ community and to the Venezuelan migrant sector of the population is mostly of acceptance, showing a behavior of rejection towards the indiscriminate exclusion of members of both groups.

However, it should be mentioned that the rejection of behaviors that reflect a dislike of migrant groups and people belonging to the LGBTQ+ community are proportionally linked to the level of closeness of Ecuadorian society to these groups, as shown in Figure 1 and 2.

1. Selecciona las opciones que mejor describa tus sentimientos hacia los VENEZOLANOS/AS en base a los siguientes enunciados:

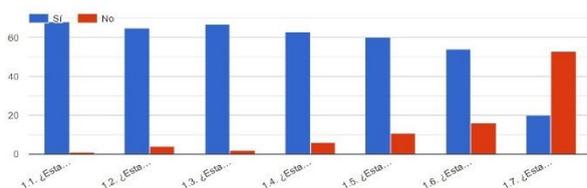


Figure 1: Results on the perception of the Venezuelan migrant community

2. Selecciona las opciones que mejor describa tus sentimientos hacia la COMUNIDAD LGBTIQ+ en base a los siguientes enunciados:

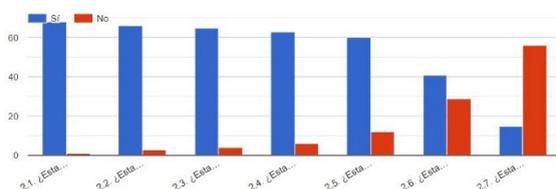


Figure 2: Results on the perception of the LGBTIQ+ community

It can be observed that as long as the contact of Ecuadorian society with members of the LGBTIQ+ collective or with the migrant community is alien to the close social environment of the individuals, they have no qualms in showing a clear empathetic inclination to the behavior of the groups about which they are asked questions.

However, it is important to take into account the number of people who, at the beginning, show a certain level of dislike or disagreement about this group and the communities, because as the circle of sociability with the subjects studied shortens, the perception changes, showing an exponential growth in the rejection of the interaction, this can be noticed to a greater extent with the question related to the feeling about the LGBTIQ+ community, in which a much more notable growth is shown, in which a greater number of people, in which up to 42.03% of those surveyed reject the fact of agreeing to the introduction of a member of this collective in their family circle.

In contrast, after reflecting a difference of 40.58% in the rate of negative responses between the first and the sixth question, a difference of 59.42% is shown in the questioning on whether the exclusion of the members of the collective from the country would be preferred, leaning towards a negative response, even so the margin of affirmative responses represents 21.74% of the total responses.

In the case of the perception of the Venezuelan migrant community, Figure 1 shows a gradually decreasing behavior in positive responses, similar to Figure 2, with the difference that the degree of rejection is lower. However, as in the case of Figure 2, when referring to whether respondents consider that Venezuelan migrants should be excluded, the difference between those who reject this position and those who accept it is less than in Figure 2, with a 56.52% difference.

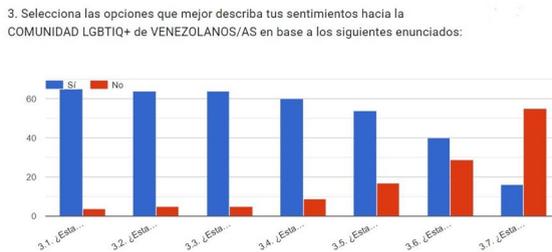


Figure 3: Results on the perception of the LGBTQI+ group of Venezuelans

For 81.15% of the sample rejects the exclusion of this group, while 18.84% of respondents are in favor of exclusion, 2.9% lower than with the LGBTQI+ group.

In conjunction with the previous questions, when questioning the sample subjects it is determined that, according to Figure 3, there is an increase in the tendency of acceptance compared to Figure 1 and 2, unlike question 6, which represents the same percentage as in Figure 2, question 7, however, shows a middle ground between acceptance and rejection with respect to questions 1 and 2, which consists of 79.71% of people against exclusion and 20.29% of the sample in favor of exclusion.

When we chose a mixed ethnography mode, we looked at our results in a quantitative-qualitative way, which gives us a much broader view of the per-

sonal panorama regarding LGBTIQ+ participation present in the Venezuelan migrant community and the perspective of a local sample in Ecuador.

The subjective and optional participation in the last question for the respondents shows the interpretation of the previous questions. They show a reaction of clear discontent to the vision of excluding a person, regardless of their condition, on the other hand, there is a vision related to the condition of «foreigner», which expresses the need to address in a deeper way the vision of the foreigner in Ecuadorian society.

Conclusions

The vision of the LGBTIQ+ collective is shown as accepted under certain parameters for the members of a society such as the Ecuadorian one. Although the interaction of the collective with society has gained strength over time, the range of acceptance of the members of a society is increasing.

With the passing of time, as reflected by Ortega *et al.* (2020), in which they show the participation of the LGBTIQ+ collective and the evolution of its public recognition. However, there is still a clear disagreement with the presence of members of the collective within the family circles of the respondents, being almost on a par with those with whom they do not show displeasure with it.

It is thus determined that the reflection of a society and its perspective towards the LGBTIQ+ collective is positive for the most part, with still latent traits of rejection and that leads us to the next statistical analysis, which is the migrant community, which has a moderate rejection by comparison, and that its standard of acceptance decreases when it comes to close relationships with the subjects in the sample, with its acceptance being even more marked than that of the LGBTIQ+ collective by a little.

As a conclusion, the environment of foreigners, migrants, identified as Venezuelans, who belong to the LGBTIQ+ collective is analyzed, which shows a level of acceptance relative to that of the groups separately, with which a similar result has been obtained, with the acceptance indexes decreasing as the closeness of the study subjects to Venezuelan migrants, members of the LGBTIQ+ collective grows.

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DIGITAL FEMINIST ACTIVISM IN MOZAMBIQUE: ACHIEVEMENTS, CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVES¹

Alberto João Nhamuche²

Maria Manuel Baptista³

Hélia Bracons Carneiro⁴

Abstract

The present work, framed within the Doctoral Program in Cultural Studies, results from ongoing research on digital feminist activism in Mozambique, addressing the main achievements, challenges, and perspectives. Its main purpose is to analyze the process of appropriation of digital platforms, by the feminist movement, in the context of promoting its activism. To reach the defined objective, in view of the nature of the research field, we opted for a qualitative methodology, carrying out virtual ethnographic research or, simply, netnography. We started with the search of critical literature that could support us in understanding the theme in study, that is, the feminist movement, its conception and migration to digital media, especially to the social network Facebook, assuming that this is the most used in Mozambique. Subsequently, we set out for empirical research, observing, on the social network Facebook, pages of two Mozambican feminist organizations, namely: the Rede Mulheres Jovens Líderes de Moçambique, an organization that advocates for the human rights of women, seeking equal social participation, and the Associação LAMBDA, an advocacy organization for sexual minorities (LGBT). We continued with in-depth interviews with the leaders of these organizations, including the perceptions of other users of this social network. The collected data allowed us to affirm that the literature on digital feminist activism has revealed that, through social networks, the feminist movement seeks to reach a greater number of its target audience, as well as to improve its relationship between and among, in a very important way, dynamic and fast. Furthermore, looking at the narratives of the leaders of the movements that constitute the object of this research, based on the interviews carried out, articulated with the perception of Facebook users, we understand the existence of paradoxical aspects: on the

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² Doctoral Student in Cultural Studies, University of Aveiro. Email: nhamuche@ua.pt

³ Full Professor of the Doctoral Program in Cultural Studies, University of Aveiro. Email: mbaptista@ua.pt

⁴ Associate Professor, ISS, University Lusófona. Email: helia.bracons@ulusofona.pt

hand, the feminist organizations in Mozambique appropriate digital platforms, in its activism, and Facebook is a social network with the power to not only make it possible to break down geographical barriers, but also and above all allow permanent feedback from members of activists and their articulation with society; on the other hand, the same social network is used for actions of censorship, condemnation or against feminists, considering activism as an instigator of behaviors and deviant, thus becoming a great challenge for digital feminist activism in Mozambique.

Keywords:

Cultural studies; Feminist movement; Digital activism; Nethnography; Facebook.

Introduction

With the development of technology, specifically with the advent of the internet, we believe that one of the opportunities for the expansion of the ideals of social movements, especially in feminist activism, is social networks. We based our position, articulating it with some research that points out that “one of the tools that allow the feminist movement to expand its actions around the world and add more followers is the advent of technologies and democratization of new information and communication, the internet” (Langner, Zuliani & Mendonça, 2015, p. 2).

As we can see, reflecting deeply on Langner’s approach; Langner *et al* (2015), we consider it prudent to defend the need for adaptation of feminist activism movements, not only as a survival strategy based on internal connection, despite, and above all for the achievement and consolidation of its purpose, looking at the expansion with a view to the viral effect of the their narratives and interconnection with other movements that have similar goals.

In fact, some studies seek to demonstrate that “the internet has fostered the dissemination of feminist concepts, especially because it allows feminists themselves to produce and disseminate content easily and widely on the network” (Langner et al., 2015, p. 5). From the study, the authors concluded that:

Feminist movements were able to appropriate new tools and digital platforms, to enable the expansion of feminist movements, with greater visibility, dissemination of ideas, adherence of new supporters, in addition to enabling a counter-response to placements considered sexist, causing, finally, in concrete conquests for the movements. They were

not at the mercy of technological innovations, they used them as a powerful tool for feminist struggles, using them not only as a form of dissemination (Langner et al., 2015, p. 13).

Therefore, it was in this context that with the present research, entitled “Digital feminist activism in Mozambique: achievements, challenges and perspectives”, we sought to understand the appropriation of digital platforms by the feminist movement in promoting its activism in Mozambique, considering that cyberspace, especially social networks, like Facebook, are relevant for the consolidation and expansion of identity content of the feminist movement, among other activisms.

Dynamics of feminist movements

When starting with the theoretical framework of this research, we believe that in (almost) all societies, there are norms or standards that shape the way of coexistence of the respective societies, which are not always softly received, and they have been counter-hegemonic behaviors, that are, of resistances.

Based on the above, we consider it necessary to understand that the feminist movement emerges as resistance against a behavior resulting from a sexist social construction institutionalized since classical. It is logical to believe that, throughout their history, women have been organizing themselves in various ways with a view of claiming their rights. “The history of feminism is very old. Feminist ideas have been present for centuries, and this period tends to expand, as even older records of this thought are discovered” (Langner *et al.*, 2015, p. 2).

In this way, it is worth mentioning that, reflecting on the literature on the history of women’s struggle for their rights, we note the reinvention of the identity contents of the feminist movement, in view of the social dynamics, caused mainly by development, a fact that is based on by (re)awareness about the object of the movement, in its main moments that for now adays we call it “waves”.

In other words, due to the social and intersex dynamics, we realized that each moment or wave had its main peculiarities as it was composed of activists with non-homogeneous characteristics. Otherwise, each human being has its particularities, and its ideas are flexible, therefore requiring personalized treatment.

Main waves of the feminist movement

Franchini's works (2017) consider the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century as the milestone of the first wave of the feminist movement, highlighting, from the objects of struggle, the equality of rights between men and women as essential, especially in contracts of work, conquest of property, marriage, and suffrage, that is, political participation in the sense of the need to elect and be elected. "It is believed that some of the main precursors of this wave were Clara Zetkin and Olimpe de Gouges" (Franchini, 2017, p.4).

A reflection based on the foregoing leads us to understand that, as we have stated, the history of women is not favorable to them, that is, since classical period, women were mistreated, with submissions that are not humanly accepted. A terribly unmistakable example is that they could not even participate in political life. There were limitations imposed by the standards that shaped social behavior and the society's way of life.

Based on this statement, it is noticeable that in the first wave of the feminist movement, the demand for women's rights was at stake, which had already been discussed in the period before the feminist movement, however conquered by men.

About the second wave of feminism, Franchini (2017) considers it as part of a continuation of the first, however, with some innovative aspects, such as the introduction of the term "gender".

It demanded an end to sexual discrimination and acceptance of equality between the sexes. It was a wave considered very radical because it went to the bottom of the ultimate causes of social phenomena related to the oppression of women. There were several percussionists, including Judith Butler, Ângela Davis (Franchini, 2017, p.5).

In this way, and according to Franchini's (2017) thinking, it must be understood that the movement considered all forms of inequality between men and women as a product of social construction, based on masculine standards. In other words, we can say that women felt discriminated against just for being women.

"Third-wave feminist thinking began after 1980 (...) and micropolitical and personalized approaches were developed, that is, an awareness of particular rights for each woman" (Franchini, 2017, p.7).

One of the feminists who left an indelible mark on the third wave of feminism was the Indian Gayatri Spivak (2010), when she questioned whether the subaltern could speak. In these aspects, it is important for us to awaken the need to analyze the meaning and scope of your question because, on the one hand, we can understand in the sense of the possibility of speaking, based on the capacity of the subaltern and, on the other hand, based on some authorization or permission.

Crossing the approaches presented, we understand that the second sex, by Beauvoir, corresponds to the subaltern, by Spivak, since there is no possibility of the existence of the second, without the first, that is, the main one, to which the second or subaltern is subordinated. However, from the analysis carried out, we also verified that the given correspondence is not linear, having and observing that, while Beauvoir discussed only aspects related to gender, Spivak went further, including issues related to race and class. Therefore, we concluded that it referred to the subaltern in all aspects.

It is an approach supported and grounded by the theorist Bell Hooks (2019) in “The Feminist Focus on Men: A Commentary”. The North American feminist researcher and activist considers it pertinent to articulate the feminist focus on men, with the process of building masculinity, believing in the possibility of social transformation.

The fourth wave of the feminist movement and digital activism

As we initially considered, this is the essence of the present research. We are portraying the process of using digital platforms for feminist activism in Mozambique, with greater emphasis on social networks whose virtual field is Facebook.

Lagner *et al.* (2015) presented a study on the feminist movement, articulating it with digital activism, with the aim of analyzing the appropriation of new information technologies, in the digital age, by the feminist movement, especially in the redefinition of the forms of action and the scope of its activities fought through these platforms. The result considers that, with the advent of the internet, and the consequent emergence of social networks, the feminist movement reinvented itself and adapted to new technological realities, starting to use them for its expansion and strengthening Lagner *et al.* (2015).

This result is based on Castells’ approach (2001, p. 15), when he states that “with technological development, the internet has played a decisive role

in the daily life of societies, starting to occupy a space of communication, interaction (...) become the fabric of our lives.”

It is important to highlight that, in Mozambique, the number of internet users is in a reduced percentage. This statement is based on data from the last general population census, available from the National Statistics Institute (INE, 2017), which indicate that only about 1,607,085 Mozambicans use the internet, as illustrated subsequently:

Table 1. Internet use by the Mozambican population

		%	Internet use	%
Total	24 269 150	100	1 607 085	7
Men	11 608 702	48	941 298	4
Women	12 660 448	52	665 787	3

Source: Adapted by the author, based on data from INE (2017)

Analyzing the data observed above, we can understand that, on the one hand, the Mozambican population is composed mainly of women, however, they are in a lower percentage in relation to the use of the internet (3%); on the other hand, the general percentage itself corresponds to only seven percent (7%), which means that it is a minority. Therefore, based on these data, we seek to understand how the feminist movement of this minority appropriates digital platforms in feminist activism.

Methodological procedure

Based on Cultural Studies, and through a qualitative approach (Baptista, 2009), in this research, we carried out an ethnography, analyzing digital feminist activism in Mozambique. The objective was to understand the process of appropriation of digital platforms by the feminist movement, in the promotion of its activism.

We decided on a qualitative approach, through participant observation and shaped interviews, as we understand the relevance of this type of research to the field of Cultural Studies, being a field of investigation that is more concerned with “the appreciation of life, everyday life, public, concrete and com-

mon sense” (Baptista, 2009, p.8). “Furthermore, the qualitative methodology is centered on carrying out intensive and in-depth interviews (...) aimed at collecting first-hand information” (Guerra, 2006, p. 12).

Therefore, we observed the pages of the feminist organizations Rede Mulheres Jovens Líderes de Moçambique, an organization that advocates for the rights of women, seeking equal social participation, and the LAMBDA Association, an organization for the defense of sexual minorities (LGBT). Subsequently, we conducted interviews with the leaders of these organizations.

We believe it is important to clarify that the research developed did not seek to confirm or deny hypotheses, so it was supported by research questions such as: How does the feminist movement appropriate digital platforms for its activism in Mozambique? What does it mean? And how does it behave? What is the intra and inter relationship of the feminist movement? How does it articulate intersectional issues? In other words, how are feminists from the peripheral areas involved? And how does the community appropriate feminist messages? How does the feminist movement feel about its achievements resulting from the use of digital platforms? What perspectives does it point to?

Therefore, we articulate the research questions with the objectives established according to the object of study, that is, the organizations that constitute digital feminist activism in Mozambique.

However, we consider it most important to point out that, due to the state of the pandemic (COVID -19), at the time of fieldwork, some actions were developed virtually, also considering that the dynamics of cyberspace have created bases that drive and sustain digital culture, both singularly and institutionally. In other words, articulating “social distancing” with the facilities created by the internet, especially the social network Facebook, which characterize today’s society, we assume to carry out a virtual ethnography, or, simply, nethnography (Kozinets, 2014).

For content analysis, “data are analyzed according to the object of study, according to whether it is about exploring or describing the phenomena or verifying the relationships between variables” (Fortin, 2006, p. 40) and “qualitative analysis brings together and summarizes, in the form of a narrative, the non-numerical data” (p. 41).

We need to clarify that we carried out the analysis in two phases: the first one we did it according to the observations about publications on Facebook pages, in which we built an observation grid, where the defined indicators

were the dates of publications, the likes, the comments and the shares. Despite including numerical data, our objective was not to quantify, however, to facilitate the interpretation and deeper understanding of the phenomenon under study (Baptista, 2009).

On the other hand, we made an articulation between feminist thought and systematized actions, including the understanding not only of the narratives of the activists themselves, but also their connection with others, that is, from the periphery, which eventually do not use the term “feminist”, meanwhile, to carry out similar actions.

In the second phase, we articulated the literature with the narratives in our interviewed subjects. To facilitate the analysis, we carried out, sequentially, the manual transcription, transforming the oral speech into written text, reading the interviews, building the synopses of the interviews, descriptive analysis, and interpretive analysis of the interviews (Guerra, 2006).

Final considerations

This work, being part of an ongoing thesis, that is, not being a finished work and with absolute truths, it is not easy for us to conclude; we only made some considerations, approaching its main conclusions and suggesting future studies, in greater depth.

As we explained, the course of this research sought to analyze the process of appropriation of digital platforms, by the feminist movement, in the context of promoting its activism in Mozambique. In this process, we discussed several aspects, starting with the contextualization of the dynamics of the feminist movement, having, the literature on digital feminist activism, leading us to consider that, since the process that preceded the formation of feminist movements, women fought together men in the sense that each one obtains freedom. This fact also occurred in Mozambique, with the insurgencies of women against colonial domination.

Furthermore, we understand that the feminist movement arised in protest of social inequalities and has assumed some dynamics both due to the heterogeneity of activists who are part of the respective movement, in relation to gender (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender...), race (white, black) and social class (poor, rich, illiterate, peripheral...) as well as the advent of social networks, based on the internet. This social and technological dynamic implied the need to reinvent feminist activism, in a process that forced the appropri-

ation of digital platforms, through social networks. It was also based on the literature that we understood that gender and race are products of a long process of social construction.

We also understand the way in which feminist organizations encode their messages in a digital environment, that is, the themes that are dealt with and how they are debated. This consideration was illustrated by the observations made on the pages of the Young Women Leaders of Mozambique Network and the LAMBDA Association, articulated with the narratives of the leaders of these organizations, based on the interviews carried out.

However, about intersectional issues, we understood that challenges persist, because in the subjects under study, we did not find a model that fits the particularities of each activist, since they are heterogeneous groups, especially about the social class. In other words, we noted the weak articulation of intersectionality issues because, as we said, we did not find any indicator that supports the involvement of feminists from the periphery, even though the subjects interviewed demonstrate awareness of the heterogeneity of activists who make up their organizations. It is necessary to understand that all struggles are intersected because we cannot talk about gender without articulating aspects related to social class.

Addressing the feelings, perceptions, and experiences of digital feminist activists, we understand that feminist organizations appropriate digital platforms in their activism and Facebook is a social network that makes it possible to break down geographical barriers and, above all, allow for constant feedback between members of the organizations and their articulation with society. Such appropriation is manifested through online meetings and information sharing, seeking to reach a greater number of its target audience, as well as improving its relationship between and inter, in a very dynamic and fast way.

Paradoxically, the same social network Facebook is used for actions of censorship, condemnation or against feminists, considering activism as an instigator of behaviors considered deviant, thus becoming a huge challenge for digital feminist activism in Mozambique.

And, still for the success of feminist activism in Mozambique, we recommend the establishment of formal links between organizations, including individual personalities, and make all citizens aware that feminism is a matter of human rights for whatever reason, as bell hooks (2019) says, the integration of men, so that there is an addition of forces.

In this way, it is our expectation that this research will contribute not only to the knowledge of the real situation of feminist activism in Mozam-

bique, but also and above all to encourage more research on the subject and the awareness of Mozambican society, and not only, in the sense of collaboration of all with a view to achieving an ideal society, with mutual respect among all human beings.

It should be noted that the difficulty in finding information from published studies on digital feminist activism in Mozambique led us to resort to foreign literature, so, once again, we highly suggest that more national research be carried out to go even further and produce knowledge in connection with greater depth on this very current and pertinent topic that deserves all our reflection and understanding.

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"REQUIEM FOR TINDERINE CYBER FIRST MATCH: #READING@CAPTURE\$CONTROL\O/DESIRE IN THE MEETING APPS¹

Andrezza Alves ²

Gabriela Nicolau dos Santos ³

Stella Zimmerman ⁴

Summary

What are the vectors that guide the construction of interpersonal relationships today? What is the interference that artistic enjoyment and the female body suffer, as by-products of culture, before this rearrangement of cards established by the power of desire and the power games? Can this body and this art reaffirm itself as a political act? Can art be a tool for non-colonial advances, even carrying the burden of being a colonizing instrument? Can the female body be the territory of current narratives of decolonization? Are we, as a social group, able to build, in our daily lives, anticolonial practices? How? "REQUIEM PARA TINDERINA CYBER" is the first elaboration made for "É Tudo Mentira!" project/action through which we intend to put into play the strength of the files that give materiality to the construction of aesthetic and behavioral standards having to support the relationship applications. With the realization of "It's All Lies!" we wish to investigate the interrelationships between artistic creation, female body and meeting sites to promote: 1 - The creation of a text repository; 2 - The realization of conversation tables and 3 - The creation of a lecture-performance, from which we present here a first draft to be read, devaneado and hopeful.

Keywords

Female body; Decolonization of thought; Meeting applications; Lecture performance; Power of desire.

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² DPhD student in Performing Arts and Moving Image, University of Lisbon. Email: andrezza.alves@edu.ulisboa.pt.

³ Postdoctoral fellow in Cultural Studies, University of Aveiro. E-mail: gabrielanicolau@ua.pt

⁴ Master's student in African Studies, University of Porto. Email: stellazim@gmail.com

ACT I: “Sit up straight!”

I begin this text on October 12, 2022, after having taken some glasses of wine from Casa Ferreirinha, asking for the illumination of Our Lady of Aparecida, the patroness of Brazil, on the day in which the country is celebrated the day of children, so that the words that will be spoken here honor every human being who will be quoted in this text. First, because I was educated to be and express my Roman Catholic apostolic faith. Second, drinking wine in Portugal is really a matter of survival. But if, on the one hand, it guarantees us survival, on the other, it does not exempt itself from being controversial, since (as papaya is for the intestines) wine is, for judgment, a strong weapon against ties and complexes that lead us, according to Freud⁵, to retain and accumulate when we should divide, give, give. Such liberation from moods and desires is not elegant or educated, nor is it Catholic, they say...

But what is interesting to talk about ethyl preferences, religious formations or the day of children in Brazil, in an essay on sexuality, body, identity in conviviality and virtual mediation?

NOTHING! (Or maybe everything).

Especially if the intention is to move content playfully, printing in the way we treat the matrices that defend them. And if the focus of the conversation is to identify - from the perspective of decolonial thinking - the relevance that can have, for Cultural Studies, to address through art issues related to

⁵ Em sua teoria do desenvolvimento psicossexual, Sigmund Freud defende que o desenvolvimento humano cumpre cinco fases ao longo da infância. A Fase Anal corresponderia à segunda etapa do desenvolvimento, indo, em média, de 1 a 3 anos de idade e estaria relacionada à tomada de consciência, por parte da criança, de que: 1º ela é um indivíduo uno, 2º o mundo não gira ao seu redor. Por conta dessas duas descobertas esta seria a fase na qual o indivíduo começa a reconhecer sua capacidade de produzir coisas e a ter orgulho das suas “criações”. Isso aconteceria, segundo Freud, porque esta é a idade na qual a criança começa a aprender a utilizar o banheiro e a consciência de que pode controlar os mecanismos do esfíncter e da bexiga fascinarão a criança. Tal descoberta, provocaria, assim, a eclosão de uma nova zona erógena na região do ânus (bexiga e esfíncter) e tal “novidade” reordenaria o foco da libido e das ações segundo o princípio de prazer na criança (transferido da boca para a região anal). A segunda fase do desenvolvimento psicossexual coincidiria, portanto, com a capacidade da criança de controlar o seu sistema excretor, ou seja, com a sua capacidade de deixar passar ou reter segundo à vontade. Como este seria um momento na qual a criança também começaria a lidar com regras (ir ao banheiro, não brincar com as fezes, não fazer xixi na cama) esta fase se configuraria ainda pela percepção das primeiras reações de posse, agressividade, egoísmo e dominação vindas da criança e pelos conflitos na sua relação com as figuras de autoridade de um modo geral, e com os pais em particular. Se as crianças durante este estágio conseguem superar os conflitos, o resultado seria um sentimento estruturador de realização e independência. Por outro lado, uma não resolução de tais embates poderia causar problemas ao longo da vida no que concerne às questões de controle, ordem, posse e entrega.

mediation games that unite a referent of reality, a document (whether an object, action or a testimony) to possible interlocutors of such a reality/document (and which print motion to such connections) this “drunken conversation” has, EVEN, to see.

Therefore, it is in this context that such a report of wines, experiences and dates can help us talk about game, memory, document/reality, real friction and body resignification as key elements for a study on freedom, identity, gender and affirmation in sexuality, leisure and the relationship with digital media.

ACT II: “Close your legs!”

Honestly, I know few people who like sex as much as I do. I had an excellent initiation, with the most beautiful and intelligent teenager of the small and quiet Iracema. A childhood friend, our mothers, attended lectures on Anthroposophy and I remember meeting in some of them. We’ve been classmates in different schools since fourth grade. When we were in the second scientific year, already lovers, we had sex for the first time. I met sex in the sweetest and most interesting way it can be. So I don’t blame myself or judge myself for loving him. In a way, I think I can say that the stories I carry with me are dreams, illusions or attempts to revive, to rediscover the perfection that memory and time have eternalized.

As a 42-year-old woman, I recognize that dating apps arrived in my life, effectively, quite late. I will not consider the time when I took my first steps in Iracema... Thus, I consider that my entry into this mundane and “unpromising” life of the applications coincides with my arrival in Lisbon. In my favor, I have the fact that the world was already pandemic and that I was alone in a country totally unknown.

Damn! At that time, entering Tinder was pure survival!!

Or was it not?

I was living, then, for the first time, the incredible experience (both in the sense of extraordinary, and in the sense of something that can not be believed) of not being able to leave home, of not having any possibility of contact with the world of encounters, if not the internet and the “blessed” applications created for this purpose. These, in turn, “pumped”... There were thousands of people de-ses-pe-ra-das who, like me, bet their chips on Tinder and the like to find someone to have fun with, who counted on that extension of the world

that projected into the houses and at the same time extended the house (and the bodies) to the world, subverting and contesting, by itself, the notion of space, contact and presence that we had until then.

Sweet collective illusion, this idea that apps can promote it... That this network of contacts can guarantee, to all users, the realization of this common dream that is co-knowing another person. Yes, because the desire to meet another person is a kind of dream that we pursue, the wishful illusion that moves our fingers, pushing people to the right and left of the screen, like gods defining the fate of mere mortals. Is there a power in that, in judging, in saying: “You don’t!” “You do!” “You, until you can be... I will think, and then I will decide...”?

I’ll start by counting the matches that are worth counting.... But first, I open a drawer (the first in a series that will continue to be opened throughout this essay), because it is important to say that the “I” who speaks here is a multicolor totem, a Hindu deity, a mythical Greek creature, a phalanx, an Orixá. It is an EU that has six hands and three heads, has also six legs, six feet, three mouths, three asses and most importantly, three bocetas. And I’m not talking about vulva, vagina, pepeca or pussy, I’m talking about boceta even, B - U - C - E - T - A (beautiful).

And when I refer to “the most important” I do not speak as an example of specialty or exoticism. I do not speak, also, as synonymous with eccentricity or what misogyny and xenophobia do not tire of “sealing” as “whoring, vulgar of Brazilian”. Yes, because the EU that writes here is a Brazilian, Northeastern and Universal EU.

The importance that prevails here is that there is today (Fortunately) an attitude that impels us to want more and more “edge” voices to be heard by their own mouths, with their own speeches and their own CORPAS, instead rely on some angel savior, champion of external justice, to speak for them.

The possibility of speaking “with”, of making oneself heard “by”, of publicly developing discourses that have been built over the years (discourses that, on the other hand, are repeatedly erased over these same years) is an achievement, hence the importance of this space. Because the voices of cunts are still silenced, even now, in 2022.

It’s the importance of having pussies talking to the world. It’s the importance of *The dinner party*⁶ An epic feminist, the first feminist epic inside a

⁶ *The dinner party está em exposição* permanentemente no Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art, no Brooklyn Museum, em Nova York.

museum, to be exact. In this work, Judy Chicago proposes an imaginary encounter between unavoidable women in history and mythology, a “fraternization” of Goddesses, painters, writers, scientists. The piece consists of a triangular table, one of the indicial shapes for the vulva. Each side of the table contained thirteen full dinner services (with towels, plates, glasses and cutlery). Designed, personalized and embroidered exclusively for each of them, these services presented mostly in the form of flowers that contained in themselves the various shapes and personalities of the female genitalia. The idea of the work is to suggest the meeting for a celebratory dinner among these guests: people like Eleanor of Aquitaine, Georgia O’Keefe, Sappho, Virginia Woolf, Emily Dickinson, Gaia, among others.

Judy still places under the table a white ceramic floor, also triangular, on which is engraved, in gold letters, the names of 999 women, as if in a suggestion that in addition to those who dine that night, many others, who also contributed positively to the history of humanity, have already passed through there, dined, celebrated together and therefore had their presence recorded. The action of the artist, to summon other names, expanding the work beyond the table, opens the precedent for the imagination and gives an idea of movement, passage of time and memory to the work. When engraved on the floor, in gold, other names, she insinuates other guests who gave way to the guests of the current table. These, in turn, at the end of the feast, like their predecessors, will offer the place for the successors and will also have their names engraved on the pottery. Thus, when printing movement, Judy presents us with a work “without end”, since, when saying: “we do not forget these”, we are reminded that there will always be new important women for history, engraving their names in gold on the ground, in an attitude of support and support to those who come to sit at our table.

It is the importance to which Donna J. Haraway refers in her *A Cyborg Manifesto* - science, technology and socialist feminism in the late twentieth century (1985) when she defends a “feminist critique of science” affirming the urgency and importance of not conceiving women as a category that is defined from the points that all women have “in common”. For Haraway, this kind of “identity policy” does not correspond to what is or can be the feminine and, consequently, to the woman (Look, for example, all the questions that come up socially when trans people come up. It’s female, it’s not female, it’s male, it’s not male? It can, can’t, will, won’t... Isn’t it?).

Donna Haraway argues that a break be established with the policy that unites by common characteristics and that, in its place, merges a coalition of “affinity politics” that can consider, at the same time, the differences and closeness between women. And presents as a synthesis of this policy the figure of the Cyborg, a creature formed by fusions between machine and biological organisms, a mixture between social reality and fiction, which does not constitute a solid body, with defined components. She presents the Cyborg as a metaphor for a policy capable of transiting in a world marked exponentially by the binomial of science and technology, where the boundaries between human and animal, organism and machine, physical and non-physical are fluid and increasingly blurred.

The preparation of *The Dinner party* begins in 1976, being a work that conceptually anticipates in 10 years the speech of Donna Haraway about the Cyborg as a fiction that maps the social and body reality being. Therefore, taken as reference for being the figure of an imaginative resource that always suggests very productive connections. The dinner party and *A cyborg Manifesto* open the way to the most diverse cartographic propositions (cartography of denunciation, affirmation, and at the same time playful) of our social figures, figures that transit the edges and that, for one reason or another, They're still being held hostage.

Following the path of the logic proposed by this “cyborg hybridism” that also operates the current relationship applications, we can, for example, replicate, auto-format, being able, from the screen of computers or mobile phones, To present ourselves and project ourselves in multiple directions, with the aim of relating at the same time virtually, imagetically, transcendently, with as many people as possible, without having to leave the place where we are.

To be, to desire, to find, to live, to dream, to deceive and to deceive oneself, to make oneself known and to know oneself...

However - I can say - it's not always worth it, sometimes it's too much work for little service.

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Act III: “Let him that hath his goats arrest, for my goat is loose!”

About the services (or matches) that are worth it, I don't know if I start with Frederico, the Italian, or João, the Portuguese.... In chronological order, I'll start with Frederick. As soon as I arrived in Lisbon I decided to download the app and Frederico was one of the first matches.... He was in the country at the service of an automotive factory, working. The day we met he invited me to the beach, which for a north easterner is, per se, an irrefutable invitation:

To see the sea,
Step on the sand,
Being on the opposite side of the Atlantic....

I remember until today the photo he sent from the sea by WhatsApp That day we walked, ate in one of the restaurants on the beach. At that time, I drank coffee and did not feel the taste, which in times of coronavirus suggested that I was infected.... But I did not want to believe... I had just arrived from a long trip and I preferred to think that I had a cold because of fatigue.... Anyway, we kept the recommended distance and told him everything that was going on with me.

It was a Saturday.

On Monday, he called, reporting that he was feeling all the symptoms of the coronavirus. He was afraid to go to the hospital and asked me to accompany him because he did not know how to speak Portuguese. I asked him to wait until the next day, when I found myself accompanying a “stranger” to the hospital of Luz while thinking: “What a beauty of Tinder!!!”

He tested positive, and the following days were followed by WhatsApp messages of an infected person in confinement. He had (ALL) the worst symptoms. I, equally desperate, concentrated on calming the creature as best I could. Two days later, I discovered that I was also infected.

Frederick survived, and after the regulatory days of confinement returned to Milan. I, confined, followed my path in the application until finding John, a being so crazy for sex that suggested we meet even though I was infected and confined. Already free, we set a date. He appeared. The first Portuguese of this story. My Pedro Álvares Cabral.

I had asked him to bring some wine, and so he did. I received him in the lobby of the building. Among conversations, wine glasses and cheeses, he indicated to me a few Portuguese musicians that he was adding to the Spotify playlist.

He suggested we go to my room.

I didn't want to.

He insisted on it.

I gave in.

When we got to the room he took off my clothes and in a few minutes we were having sex. We were surprised in many ways. Days later, he confessed to having enjoyed it very much. We had sex other times. I can say that with João I discovered the concept and the feeling of the unpaid bitch. To this day I wonder why I did not discover, along with him, the concept of free gigolo.

Well...

ACT IV: "Because the life of the believer... is not easy!"

João was the first man who made me realize, clearly, the "whore stamp" that the Brazilian women receive when entering Portugal. It doesn't even take long, it's right at the airport, right there at the SEF counter. And it's "funny" that, because I've never seen a Portuguese woman be considered a "whore", simply because she is Portuguese. We call the Portuguese colonizers, explorers. Yes, it's true. But, as I said, I have never seen people from Brazil call a Portuguese woman a whore simply for being Portuguese. But then, the contradictions, first because to me, honestly, bitch is not even cursing. Whores are very honest. 2nd because in 2021, on Labor Day, (the first of May, date celebrated by communists and socialists), a Portuguese newspaper published the following news: "Brazilian women are the group that most undertakes in Portugal".

You see: they are not the most entrepreneurial group among immigrants, but IN PORTUGAL, which includes Portuguese women and men, and men and women of all other nationalities. It is something very important: Brazilian women are the leaders in entrepreneurship in Portugal, surpassing all other groups, national and international.

Brazilian women who come to Portugal are survivors. They survived the structural machismo of Brazil. They survived the feminicide. Many have survived unemployment, hunger, inequality, and now survive xenophobia, misogyny and racism. I know being a woman is not easy, anywhere in the world, and I think this common difficulty should promote sorority, but Brazilian women in Portugal need to deal with all these problems and STILL be called whores, as an attempt to offend people who have already won a war, and who continue to win.

Legend has it that the fame attributed to Brazilians is due to the episode of the Mothers of Bragança. A story of more than a decade, when Brazilian (and Portuguese) went to work as sex workers in this city. The men, so to speak, became regular customers. The prostitutes of Bragança moved the local economy. supermarkets, clothing, aesthetic sector, cosmetics, health, gastronomy. Everything. New life and financial flow to the place. What did the Portuguese women do? An undersigned, calling for a ban on the entry of Brazilians into the city and the closing of the establishments. Yeah, love... Woman beating a woman. Meanwhile, all the men were spared, because, after all, poor things, they were bewitched by those devouring cunts. Threatened with a gun to the head of the stick. Right? Who doubts that they continue there, looking for call girls, cheating on their wives? Have they now joined the apps to find women? And in this case, like John, they no longer need to spend money.

ACT V: “But it is worth having stone in the way. Then, having stone in the? ‘RIM!’”

The match with Marcos (second Portuguese in this story), a being who, besides not paying, suggested that I pay... Oh my God! Marcos was from Bragança, ugly, pet (and now, thinking about my own narrative, I see myself reproducing stereotypes...), which I decided to give a chance because I was Taurino and had a photo with a cat on Tinder. Our first meeting, at his suggestion, was at the Crystal Palace in Porto. The deal was to go to the launch of a book by Valter Hugo Mãe and, in the evening, have dinner at a restaurant nearby. In the interval between the two schedules, in the palace hall, I suggested we have a beer. He replied that he had no money. To this day, I do not know what the strangest feeling is: if I feel the “unpaid whore” or mother of the boy, paying him beer on the first date.

I consider this to be a legitimate doubt because, let’s see, if we think of Manoel de Barros and his Portrait of the artist when something (1998) we can quietly say that “The greatest wealth of man is his incompleteness”. So, as they say here in Portugal, “quesáfôda” money from beer or fucking. However, Manoel himself follows the thought, saying: “At this point I am wealthy. Words that accept me as I am - I do not accept”. And that’s where the pig twists its tail, because at the moment of the action, the invitation to the beer, the meeting and the answer, what do we think? Do we think of being evolved,

emancipated and of, “in the good”, paying for beer, without judgments of value or about the role of man in relationships? We do not. What we think (or at least what I thought) is:

“Wait, the beer money the guy has to have!” Yes, but what about the fuck? Is it for the guy to leave on the nightstand before leaving too?

And only crickets answer “cri, cri, cri”... But as a message says that I received another day on a social network, one of those current types is credited to Unamuno: “I am me and my contradictions”.

And here, a drawer ... Yes, one more...

This has to do with this gap in thinking about the legitimacy of the beer bill and the fuck. It is like this: for the contemporary thinker Achille Mbembe, humanity has just entered its last era - demolishing and brutal, productivity and obscure - an era that gives it its name, an era in which any human order is governed by computation and algorithm. In his text, Mbembe reflects on neoliberalism as a colonialism on a global scale.

But what about love in times of algorithms? Algorithms recognize bodies? What bodies and faces are interesting? What thoughts, emotions, affectivity? Where is all this being directed?

Certain parts of the body participated in meetings and incantations: the eyes, the heart, the mind... The subject had a body and at the same time belonged to that body. Currently, in app times, some faces are avatars, others are manipulated by filters. We visualize synthetic bodies and an “eternal youth”. But, paradoxically, there are other ways to use the applications and, in these cases, we can talk about the eternal search for the “pair”, “soul mate” that renews itself in hope with each new “match”: who knows if I try, one hour I’m not lucky?

ACT VI: “It’s quiet, It’s favorable...”

Maria Manuel Baptista, at the closing conference of the 2nd Scientific Congress of the International Cultural Studies Network (RIEC), entitled “Leisure, desire and schizoanalysis: a reading from Cultural Studies”, held on July 9, 2022, She speaks of his political conception of leisure, or leisure as a possibility of resistance (Baptista, 2016).

According to the teacher: Desire flows between lives and every living thing summons something else that lives, producing agency. It is in the coupling of the desiring machines that desire is released and allows flows that can,

in certain circumstances, create delirious micro narratives (schizoids, looking for what there is not, but that there is possible) that stimulate the desire of what is not and that allow micro resistances through the escape lines.

And it is here that Deleuze finds the Tinder, because for the author the desire should not be understood as something that the individual lacks (as in Freud), but as something that the individual seeks to add to what already exists, the desire as a productive capacity of the new, as a will to will of power, will of life, need to create (like Spinoza). We are sick of capitalist culture, that's what the anti-oedipus: schizophrenia and capitalism tells us. And delirium is a symptom. (Deleuze, 1972).

Thus, Deleuze argues that the thesis that schizophrenia is the universe of the producing and reproducing desiring machines and thus, like a machine, we organize, articulate and function from desire. The social and cultural field knows the revolutionary power of desire and what it can bring about. So it presents discourses and practices that capture and condition our desires, so that it serves capitalism. After all, this is what capitalism feeds on: the capture and control of our desires.

It is capitalism that produces, reproduces, fosters and nourishes a world in which singles “do not fit”, are not well regarded or welcome in society. Quasi-pathological beings are seen as losers. And, of course, women and men are affected differently by this narrative. Therefore, it is evident that we all want to leave the world of “bachelorette”, using Tinder injections. Tinder is thus seen as the possibility, as a promise or delirium of belonging to the capitalist narrative, to the conquest of sis-hetero-patriarchal and normative happiness achieved through romantic love and the encounter of the “perfect pair”. What we have in the apps is a multitude of delusional, desiring machines.

It is possible that the people who make up this crowd, were it not for the capitalist narrative present/reinforced in the Hollywood and Disney cartoons and films of “and we're happy forever”, would discover that happiness itself can be understood as a narrative. And from there, they realize that they live well alone, that they know how to enjoy life without necessarily being in the theater of marriage (or at least are learning).

In this sense, I think there is an urgent need to replace Tinder with an application in which happy singles can say to each other: “Hello!! I am also a bachelor by choice, let's go ahead! You are on the right track!! Respect yourself!” and not act as it acts, in the sense of wanting to take the person from the “loosen” and, with it, take him from the place that is of his choice and

preference. Maybe that's why people have this relationship of love and hate with the relationship apps and who they meet there.

What would capitalism be without the capture of desire, after all?

Also, according to Deleuze cited by Baptista and Barbosa Jr (2022), "It is in the game between repetition and difference that the field of life is produced in its most diverse flows", and repetition in intensity holds the possibility of difference, a vanishing line that has the possibility of generating a micro-revolution.

For my part, I can say that when it comes to repetition in intensity, gave it to me, it's ok. Just now the micro-revolution happens!

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Broad and polyhedral, «Sexualities and Leisure» is a theme that proposes an articulation, not yet much explored in-depth, between the topic of sexualities and the topic of leisure within the scope of Cultural Studies. It is a topic that poses epistemological and methodological problems on which it is important to reflect and that calls for an effort to think about the dynamics of culture in contemporary society. The works gathered in this volume focus on the aforementioned articulation, from different perspectives and through different access routes. And they represent a contribution to the deepening of reflection and research on the proposed theme.

