

DISSONANT BODIES AND THE STRUGGLES OVER URBAN SPACE: NARRATIVES ABOUT RIO DE JANEIRO IN INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARIES

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ABSTRACT

Physical perfection is one of the most solid imaginary of Brazil and it is currently represented in the form of cisgender white, thin, female bodies that occupy the beaches of the south zone of Rio de Janeiro. It was also an attribute of the brand Rio during the construction of “Olympic city”. This article aims to understand, through a critical analysis of four international television documentaries produced and exhibited by foreign televisions during the so-called “Olympic period”, how the bodies that are dissonant in relation to these imaginaries struggle over urban spaces, the right to the city and to narrate themselves, breaking with the official brand. Despite the diversity of dissonant bodies, three of them gain space in the international media: trans and transvestite women, analyzed in *Gaycation: Brazil* by Page and Daniel (2016) and *Rio 50 Degrees — Carry on Carioca* by Temple (2014); black and poor bodies made invisible in urban daily life at *Copacabana Palace* by Waldron (2014) and people with disabilities who fight for the right to inclusion and mobility in *A Bumpy Road to Rio* by Fox (2015). Although the representations of these bodies are still small in relation to the solid imaginary of the perfect bodies, their approach contributes to give visibility to subjects made invisible by the city branding process. They also promote an important question in relation to the flattening of subjects and subjectivities that the megaevent strategy ends up imposing, in addition to showing other possibilities of existence, conflicts and disputes over urban space.

KEYWORDS

brand Rio, city, dissonant bodies, megaevents, television documentaries

CORPOS DISSONANTES E AS LUTAS PELO ESPAÇO URBANO: NARRATIVAS EM DOCUMENTÁRIOS INTERNACIONAIS SOBRE O RIO DE JANEIRO

RESUMO

Um dos imaginários mais sólidos do Brasil diz respeito à perfeição física, representada atualmente na forma dos corpos femininos cisgênero, brancos, magros, que ocupam as praias da zona sul do Rio de Janeiro e assumida como atributo da marca Rio na construção da “cidade olímpica”. Este artigo busca compreender, por meio de uma análise crítica de quatro documentários internacionais de televisão produzidos e exibidos por televisões estrangeiras durante o chamado “período Olímpico”, como os corpos dissonantes a esses imaginários disputam espaços,

o direito à cidade e a narrar-se por meio de rompimentos com a marca oficial. Apesar da diversidade cotidiana dos corpos dissonantes, três ganham espaço na mídia internacional: mulheres trans e travestis, analisadas em *Gaycation: Brazil* de Page e Daniel (2016) e *Rio 50 Degrees — Carry on Carioca* de Temple (2014); corpos negros e pobres invisibilizados no cotidiano urbano, em *Copacabana Palace* de Waldron (2014) e pessoas com deficiência que lutam pelo direito à inclusão e à mobilidade em *A Bumpy Road to Rio* de Fox (2015). Ainda que as representações desses corpos sejam pequenas em relação à ratificação dos imaginários já sólidos dos corpos perfeitos, sua abordagem contribui para dar visibilidade a sujeitos invisibilizados pelo processo de *city branding*, promovendo um importante questionamento em relação ao achatamento de sujeitos e subjetividades que a estratégia de construção da marca acaba por impor, além de mostrar outras possibilidades de existência, pontos de conflito diversos e de disputas pelo espaço urbano.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

cidade, corpos dissonantes, documentários de televisão, marca Rio, megaeventos

INTRODUCTION

Our bodies are the reference that ultimately anchors identity. Moreover, the body is unmistakable, self-evident; thus, we expect the body to dictate identity without ambiguity or inconstancy. A gender, sexual or ethnic identity is deduced from biological “marks”; the process is, however, much more complex, and this deduction can be (and often is) mistaken. Bodies are signified by culture and are continually altered by it. Perhaps we should first ask ourselves how a particular characteristic was recognized and signified as an identity-defining hallmark; also ask what meanings, at this moment and culture, are being attributed to a given label or such an appearance. (Louro, 2019, p. 16)

Physical perfection makes up the range of the most solid and ancient clichés in Brazil, which is recurrent in international television documentaries about Rio de Janeiro. The body that makes up the attribute of the city brand has established characteristics: thin, white, female, and cisgender. Black cisgender women are also often portrayed as having an available body that is an object of desire and sexualization. White cisgender men are also displayed on bodies with sculpted muscles but less frequently.

Thus, the question arises: where within urban branding is the place of bodies that do not fit the characteristics attributed to perfection or are dissonant in relation to these narratives? Although the list of bodies at odds with this official narrative is broad and unrestricted, the documentaries under analysis in this article highlight the struggle of trans women, black bodies from favelas, and people with disabilities for their right to the city.

We are interested in understanding how included and excluded bodies establish narratives within the Rio brand and how they are represented in the audio-visual productions: *Gaycation: Brazil* by Page and Daniel (2016), an American production broadcasted by the Vice channel; *Rio 50 Degrees — Carry on Carioca* by Temple (2014), *Copacabana*

Palace by Waldron (2014) and *e Bumpy Road to Rio* by Fox (2015), British productions broadcasted on BBC channels and for which the research for this article originates. These productions, with no connection to one another, produced and broadcasted by international networks at the time of the two mega sporting events based in Brazil (2014 world cup and the 2016 Olympics and Paralympics), make up the corpus of a broader study on the city-brand (Gotardo, 2020). When it concerns the public authorities and the city's marketing strategies, we observed that people who are not usually included in public policies appear in political advertisements or tourist promotions, portraying Brazil as a diverse and inclusive country. However, the daily lives shown in the selected documentaries present narratives that sometimes break from official speeches, and at other times reiterate them.

We sought a methodological construction through multipurpose readings of the programs' sounds, as well as its visual and narrative aspects to undertake these analyses. As it is necessary to safeguard differences in the means concerning the stages of production, circulation, distribution/consumption, reproduction the methodological proposal flows between the classic propositions of cinematographic analysis and the language proper to television. Although our focus is on the product, we considered the entire context in which it was produced and consumed, as well as the contexts that guide its reading. We also consider it necessary to articulate various strategies for constructing meaning, enunciation, and communicational circularity to precisely know the phenomenon.

Therefore, we sought to analyse elements from film, television, and narratives to build a methodology that allows a critical reading on the production of meanings and imagery in audio-visual products. Bearing these issues in mind, we endeavoured to reach a broad and critical understanding of the relationships between two of the leading agents involved in the reformulation of the city's image, the media and urban strategies, as well as the production of meanings conveyed from these relationships, in order to reflect the current situation of this brand-city, its impacts and results.

Cities are faced with negotiations between bodies and spaces, establishing disputes that permeate daily life and the media. Bodies make a mark on each city, constituting themselves as one of the main urban branding attributes. However, Brazilian cities' social inclusion strategies do not always consider everyday bodies, their life marks, and their tactics for disputing the right to the city.

TRANS WOMEN AND QUEER

Trans women find a voice in the documentaries *Gaycation: Brazil* and *Rio 50 Degrees — Carry on Carioca*, especially represented in the body of Luana Muniz, a symbol of the Lapa neighbourhood in Rio de Janeiro. Known as "A Rainha da Lapa" (The Queen of Lapa), Luana, a leader among trans prostitutes who work in the region and who died on May 6, 2017, used to perform and have relevant social work in the neighbourhood, welcoming and helping people in a situation of great vulnerability.

Understanding that a discursive dispute is also a power struggle, and self-representation is essential in this process, it is vital to highlight the reason for using the term “transvestite”. It is a word that carries a significant stigma because historically, it has been used pejoratively, “for referring mainly to people who have low financial conditions and are often associated with prostitutes and people who do not have cisgender passing privilege” (Coletivo Ametista UERJ LGBT +, 2019, pp. 12–13). Luana referred to herself using the term transvestite, as well as addressing other women in this way. In this case, the term is reframed for its political dimension, given Luana’s struggle to have trans prostitutes in Lapa recognized.

We highlight three striking characteristics: the first concerns Luana Muniz as a spokesperson for trans prostitutes — which can be understood as a recognition of the essential political and social work that she developed in the neighborhood; the second deals with the re-signification of the meanings of physical perfection from Luana’s body, which is projected in a multitude of ways as a body-resistance; and the third is the representation of Lapa and Carnival as spaces for trans people in Rio de Janeiro.

First of all, Luana is shown in two different moments and approaches but which are connected both by the presentation she makes of her social work and the criticisms made. In interview with actress Carol Marra, *Gaycation: Brazil* has a frame exclusively for trans women, which starts in Lapa, Rio de Janeiro, and then moves to São Paulo. It begins with Elliot Page’s² narration about the high rate of murders among trans people and their marginalization in Brazilian society. While walking to meet Luana, Ian Daniel points out that she protects the neighbourhood’s trans prostitutes.

The program seeks another perspective on transsexuality by interviewing Carol Marra, an actress and model of national projection who staged the first trans kiss on Brazilian television. The way Carol describes her experience and views of trans women is quite different from that of Luana Muniz. While Luana says she “likes to be a whore”, Carol aligns herself with the more traditional academic and activist discourse (for example, she says trans women are “cowardly pushed into prostitution”). The actress also ponders other issues such as the fact that gender is not linked to the genitalia, or transposing the concept of genitalia and the discrimination that they suffer from being women with penises.

Recognizing gender despite genitals is about breaking away from certain gender restrictions that insist on male/female, or “totally masculine” and “totally feminine” binarism:

¹ “Passing privilege” is an LGBT+ term which is used to refer to trans people who do not have visible or striking characteristics typically and commonly associated with the gender designated at birth, that is, people “closer to stereotypes and aspects of cisheteronormativity” (Coletivo Ametista UERJ LGBT+, 2019, p. 8).

² Elliot Page recently publicized his gender identity as a trans man. At the time of recording the episode, he was still identified by the gender designated at birth. Although in the episode he is identified by the birth registration name, we understand that it must be used from the moment there is a new gender identification.

gender is not precisely what someone “is” nor is it precisely what someone “has”. *Gender* is the apparatus by which male and female production and normalization are manifested together with the interstitial, hormonal, chromosomal, physical, and performative forms that gender takes on. To suppose that gender always and exclusively means the matrices “male” and “female” is to lose sight of the critical point that this coherent and binary production is contingent, that it had a cost, and that the gender permutations that do not fit this binarism are both part of the genre and its most normative example. (Butler, 2014, p. 253)

In this regard, Butler (2014) understands that gender can be used to deconstruct the conformed notions of male and female, moving it beyond binarism. Breaking away from binarism, also means a break from “a power-regulating operation that naturalizes the hegemonic instance and excludes the possibility of thinking about its disruption” (Butler, 2014, p. 254). Using accessible language, Carol proposes a break away from the idea of binarism which uses the support of physical/chromosomal concepts as regulation and normalization and suggests a transgression of the normative views on femininity and masculinity.

The break from gender normalization is much further explored in *Rio 50 Degrees — Carry on Carioca*. Luana is the only trans character in the film, endorsing the idea that she is a “spokesperson” for transvestites in Lapa (perhaps from Rio de Janeiro, considering that, in the films, transsexuality is territorialized). She is sometimes accompanied by Lorna Washington, one of the main transformists in the city. The programme does not air a specific block for transgender people, even though they are associated with carnival, Lapa, and questioning concerning violence against LGBTQi + people. Followed by an image of Christ the Redeemer who seems to cry, Lorna rebukes regarding violence: “is Rio gay-friendly? It is not. Who cares about transvestites? Nobody, in the same way nobody wants to know about the blacks or the poor ... several gays, transvestites, are killed ...” (00:44:44). Unlike the institutional productions of Rio’s city hall and the ministries of tourism to promote 2014 world cup’s host country and the host city of the Olympic games, which portrays Rio de Janeiro as gay friendly, Lorna and Luana clearly state that this image is not the reality. Brazil still has a high rate of homophobia and transphobia.

In Temple’s film, *Rio 50 Degrees — Carry on Carioca*, and the second striking feature evident in the film is Luana’s relationship with her body as a symbol of resistance. In *Gaycation: Brazil*, Luana is dressed in a long, less revealing dress and is apparently not comfortable with the TV crew’s presence in her home. In *Rio 50 Degrees — Carry on Carioca*, she opens up her house and her dressing room and is followed by the TV crew for longer. In an interview for the newspaper *O Globo*, Temple says he met Luana when he recorded the movie *Running out of Luck* (1987) in Rio (Fonseca, 2012). According to the director, from a recording that was supposed to have been done in secret, Luana

ended up creating space in the film to question certain naturalizations about the city's imaginaries.

Back at *Gaycation: Brazil*, Luana teases Ian when, while receiving instructions for the shooting, Luana, who is much taller, stands in front of him, and her posture makes her look from top to bottom, demarcating power. In *Rio 50 Degrees — Carry on Carioca*, on the other hand, she appears “parading” for the camera in a short, low-cut dress, glued to her body. In the next scene, she appears getting dressed in her dressing room, half-naked with her tattoos on display; she stands up in front of the camera, which frames her buttocks. Already in the first scenes, the images displace various normalizations through her body and sexuality. The imaginary of physical perfection attributed to the cisgender female body gains new meanings from Luana's body. Although she also has a thin white body, this body is fluid; it is tattooed and it is no longer considered a young body by aesthetic standards (she is about 51 at the time of recording).

Luana, with her fluid body, establishes not only an alterity in relation to the bodies attributed to the city-brand but also her biopower. According to Pelbart (2007), biopower and multitude biopotency or power over one's life and the powers of life, “are like the opposite of each other. (...) Both biopower and multitude biopotency necessarily pass through the body” (p. 58). The way Luana narrates her body is very different from Carol's. Luana feels good about having a penis; it makes her sexual fluidity possible, breaking both cis and heteronormativity. It can be understood that Carol is more subject to gender norms than Luana. According to Butler (2014), this standardization comes from a specific and gender-specific regulatory and disciplinary regime. Luana uses her desire as a power in expropriating it from submission and control of this modality of contemporary biopower that acts “at the heart of subjectivities and of life itself” (Pelbart, 2007, p. 58).

Oswin (2008) understands that it is the task of queer theorists “to embrace the critique of identity to its fullest extent by abandoning the search for an inherently radical queer subject and turning attention to the advancement of a critical approach to the workings of sexual normativities and non-normativities” (p. 96). Furthermore, it is interesting to observe how two trans women narrate their lives from very different perspectives. There is no invalidation of one or the other; instead, there is a need to understand them and how they operate within their specific contexts.

From Oswin's perspective (2008) on the need for criticism of binarism and norms, although Luana's discourse often comes into conflict with activist and academic discourses, it still offers a significant contribution. It is crucial to understand and recognize that Luana's life story, which is not known through documentaries, is permeated by daily struggles to survive. Luana appropriates and exposes her fluidity naturally and, although her speeches are often contextualized by binarism, she circulates in the “in-between”. She also treats sexuality and sexualization naturally as resistance to heteronormativity. Luana's body acts in the displacement of the imaginary and in the exert of or desire for power (or even in resistance to the violence imposed by cis-heteronormativity).

The Queen of Lapa is also recognized for how she conducts a transformation, which concerns the third highlight of the narratives. In *Gaycation: Brazil*, she points out that the queer world is seen as an “underworld” and thus very cliquey, but that in centre of Rio this is not due to her. However, contrary to the documentary portray of Lapa as a neighbourhood famous for prostitution, framing it as a place of transvestites, in *Rio 50 Degrees — Carry on Carioca*, Luana says that “Lapa has everything: it has whores, faggots, crazy people, beggars and rich and poor people” (00:43:16). Images confirm Luana’s statement. There is, at this point in the film, a break with the idea that Lapa is a queer space, that it is not homogeneous, and like Luana and her body, it is fluid — Lapa and Luana’s body blurring and merging as one.

In queer geography, there is the idea that the deterritorialization of the heterosexual space would enable “the visibility of sexual subcultures that resist and break the hegemonic heterosexuality that is the source of their marginality and exclusion” (Oswin, 2008, p. 90), deterritorialization as resistance and transgression to heteronormativity as an exercise of power. Oswin (2008) points out that this line of studies is based on the idea that spaces, as much as people, do not have a pre-existing sexual identity; thus, there is no “straight space”, but instead, a heterosexualized space, actively produced in this sense, in which the dissonant bodies produce a difference that further emphasizes their normalizing condition. Thus, the idea of their occupation denotes resistance through visibility.

However, this point of view is questioned by Oswin (2008) in the sense that classification even within sexual subcultures is also a standardization of spaces. According to the author, “recent work challenges conceptualizations of queer space as dissident space, resistant space, progressive space, colonized space or claimed space” (Oswin, 2008, p. 91). It is a challenge which acts in maintaining a heterosexual/homosexual binary on which these notions are based (queer space issues). In the author’s view, studies on the territorialization of queer space privilege sexuality to the detriment of other identity processes, and instead “considering queer subjects as simultaneously raced, classed and gendered bodies” (Oswin, 2008, p. 91).

Oswin’s (2008) criticism is in the sense that understanding spaces such as gay, lesbian and, trans also ends up being a normative and excluding practice. The author believes that spaces should be fluid and shared, regardless of sexual orientations or gender identities, even as a way of criticizing binarism and norms.

Although the authors contradict themselves in how the right to the city must be fought for, it is emphasized that the different points of view concern the right to an inclusive daily urban life, to celebrations such as Carnival, and of spaces, such as Lapa, in order to legitimize the bodies and break heterosexist norms. Expecting consensus in an area so permeated by several indentations is also standardizing a theory that proposes to break with norms.

In addition to territorializing Lapa as a trans space, these documentaries also associate Carnival as a trans party. In *Gaycation: Brazil*, for example, Page mentions the “safe atmosphere” of the party, which is primarily influenced by the LGBTQi + culture. Several images of trans women are displayed, and one is interviewed: “I come every year because it is a place like this that was made for us, you know, transsexuals, you know. We are welcomed here, understand?” (00:03:26). Page, however, reports the murder of the *passista*, a female carnival dancer, Piu da Silva to counter the idea of “acceptance”. They also cite the practice of crossdressing³, done especially among men, as a tradition that is a form of gender oppression.

The deconstruction of the idea of Carnival as a trans space is also seen in *Rio 50 Degrees — Carry on Carioca*. The Carnival shown expresses several points of view — the transformation into a consumer party, the sexualization of the female body, and the association with the idea of trans space. In images where she appears naked, her breasts on display, Luana says that this allure “is just folkloric, carnival was once a party that was synonymous with transvestites, but not anymore because nowadays Carnival has become for you, tourists” (00:42:13). Luana’s criticism also includes a deterritorialization (through cisnormalization) that generates even more exclusion for trans people. As Puar (2002, as cited in Oswin, 2008) points out, “the claiming of space — any space, even the claiming of queer space — [is] a process informed by histories of colonization, these histories operating in tandem with the disruptive and potentially transgressive specifics at hand” (p. 95).

At another point in the episode, images of Luana and Lorna Washington lip syncing the song *La Vie en Rose* are shown while new images of sexual content are displayed, all involving the sexualization and the consumption of the bodies of trans people at the Carnival by tourists, apparently foreigners — hypersexualization also cited by Page in *Gaycation: Brazil*. These images are alternated with Lorna’s speeches on violence against LGBTQi + people, with Dalida’s song as a musical background, in an ironic construction of the party.

In the documentaries analysed, it was interesting to observe some significant displacements concerning the official Rio de Janeiro city brand: first, highlighting the violence to which LGBTQi + people are subjected to, especially trans people. This narrative is a relevant change to the official narratives, which consider developing the “gay-friendly” attribute for the city brand as a tourist destination. Both in *Rio 50 Degrees — Carry on Carioca* and *Gaycation: Brazil*, this imaginary is quite demystified.

Taking into consideration the possible representation that an audio-visual product of this type allows, the fact that trans people gain space for self-representation is, in itself, a critical displacement as there was no silencing of the existence of these people, nor did they need to worry about reproducing the official narratives and the solid city imaginary.

³ Crossdressing is a term that refers to the practice of people who wear clothes and/or use objects commonly associated with the opposite gender, considering the understanding of a gender binarism corresponding to “male” and “female”.

In building perfect bodies for consumption, there is no room for these dissonant bodies; when breaking with official narratives, these bodies emerge and gain visibility, gain presence in the hegemonic media, marking their existence. Moreover, with their demands and struggles, they show that they constitute the city and have the right to it.

POOR BLACK BODIES

Being unprepared for an oppressive image of the media which can lead us not to paralysis, but to a situation of (a) commotion, in which we act because we are affected, and (b) of being at the same time there and here and, in different ways, accepting and negotiating the multi-locality and the cross-temporality of the ethical connections that we can correctly call global. (Butler, 2015/2019, p. 117)

Black bodies are often part of Brazilian tourism communication strategies. This representation was also recurrent in all advertising material aimed at the 2014 world cup and the 2016 Olympic games. In general, black people appear smiling with minimal true expression of their daily reality. In the British documentary *Copacabana Palace*, however, black bodies break the imaginary of the “mulatta”, its double oppression of gender and race, and the sexualisation in its dispute for urban space. Set at the Copacabana Palace Hotel, one of the icons for the brand Rio and of international allure, the documentary narrates the story of these bodies which are subjected to the capitalist logic of luxury consumption, with particular emphasis on people who work in the lowest hierarchical positions, such as chambermaids and janitors. It was produced in 2013, it is 59 minutes long, and the BBC broadcasted it for the first time on May 12, 2014, and for the last time on November 7, 2017. The synopsis highlights that

luxury doesn't come cheap; the starting price for a night at the Copacabana Palace is £400 and the price for their VIP suites isn't even made public. But in a country where one in five people still live below the poverty line, the reality for many of the hotel's staff is very different. This documentary for *This World* reveals how the hotel's story reflects the fortunes of the entire nation and how Brazil is increasingly a country of extraordinary extremes. (BBC, n.d.)

Neil Midgley, a columnist for *The Telegraph*, gave the documentary four stars in his assessment, saying it deserved to be done serially for the excellence of its characters (Midgley, 2014). In his analysis, he says that the Olympics should be organized by hotel managers, considering that

Rio de Janeiro's preparations for the 2016 Olympics are, according to the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the “worst” ever. (...) Inside the

beautiful Palace, it was easy to understand Rio's Olympic aspirations. But back in the favelas, it was even easier to understand the IOC's misgivings. (Midgley, 2014, para. 1–5)

After introducing some wealthy and eccentric guests, the documentary begins to interview hotel workers. Accompanied by a colleague, one of them says that he “can live a good life” (00:26:34), with salary he earns while. Both are crestfallen in front of the camera, as they cannot, in that context, criticize their employer. In another scene, a maid named Jéssica is accompanied by Anne Philips, an English hotel employee who is specialized in hospitality, and at this point in the documentary, teaches English to the maid. Anne says that employees would never be able to pay for English classes; given that they live far away, and during the shift she cannot accompany them for long hours, she records the classes allowing them to study on their commute, which can take up to three hours by bus. Although classes may benefit workers in other jobs, it is a way of extending the employee's subordinate relationship with the employer as well as being of immediate interest for their work at the Copacabana Palace. Anne also mentions that poor people cannot afford housing in prime areas close to work, noting that the people who live in the favelas are “fabulous”, and about “2% are drug dealers” (00:30:00). According to Anne, favelas are being revitalized, “they have television, electricity, water, sanitation” (00:30:30). Jessica, who does not speak English, cannot participate in the conversation but maintains an upright posture and a smile on her face as if she agrees with what is being said.

A normalization of the social chasm between guests and staff can be perceived when, for example, the chambermaid says it is difficult for workers, who are generally destitute, to deal with very wealthy people. She stresses that the issue is constantly reinforced so that the maids understand that this difference “is part of life”. Louro (2019) points out that every society establishes labels that intend to consolidate identities:

different and divergent representations can, therefore, circulate and produce social effects. However, some of them gain such visibility and strength that they are no longer perceived as representations and are taken as reality. The social groups that occupy the central, “normal” positions (...) have the possibility not only to represent themselves but also to represent others. They speak for themselves, for “others”, and about others; they present their own aesthetics, ethics, or science as a standard. They claim the right to represent, by denial or subordination, the manifestations of the other groups. (pp. 18–19)

In the documentary, the bodies of poor women, mostly black, are placed in this position of serving and subservience as part of life; they should also, within this logic, be thankful since they work in a hotel like the Copacabana Palace. Viviane says she likes

to be a maid, that many people want to work in a hotel known worldwide. She has three children and said that, at first, it was difficult to adjust caring for her three children with her hotel work, but that it worked out. A person asks if she lives close to work, she says yes, she lives in Rocinha (“I don’t know if you’ve heard about it on television” [00:39:17]). While she is being interviewed at work, she shows and narrates her activities to the camera — white sheets perfectly stretched over a large bed, products sprayed over the duvet so that it makes it even smoother as well as leaving a special fragrance. She points out that

even though we are busy, full of things to do, when we enter the guest’s apartment, we [should] focus on the guest, forget what is left behind. Because this is what is most important here, we work like this, always focusing on the guest, giving them the best so that they feel pleased to return. (00:39:39)

This body must give up its subjectivity to occupy this space in the city, even though urban logic submits it to unfavourable conditions. For example, the chambermaid reports that it is common for employees to call informing there are shootings where they live and that they will be late for work. She adds: “I understand I have guests to clean up after, but I will not be able to ‘sir, sorry, you won’t have housekeeping today because our maid cannot arrive’” (00:40:13).

The recording follows Viviane to her home in Rocinha, making evident the clash between the luxury of the hotel, its white sheets perfectly stretched, and the sewers and alleys of the favela. Viviane lives in a tiny simple house. She and her three children have only two single mattresses to sleep on. Viviane transforms when she is at home: from the hotel’s docile chambermaid, she becomes a critical woman, showing dissatisfaction for having to leave home to work during shootings and leaving her children in danger. She relates she will work 12 days in a row, with no time off, during Carnival. She also says that people think she makes a good living from working at the Copacabana Palace, but she tells to the recording crew: “you see that it is not like that in reality” (00:44:22). She also highlights that there are “two sides to Brazil”, one rich and one poor, with “workers being on the poverty side” (00:44:34), emphasizing that, while colleagues live in even worse communities, hotel guests live in luxury.

My life is practically lived inside the hotel. There, we are practically on a stage, in a theatre, because when we enter the scene, we have to forget all the problems, always smiling (...) no matter how tired you are from so much work ... it is to play a character there that in reality doesn’t exist. (00:44:48)

Viviane continues her criticism by saying that the government does not give the poor opportunities; she also says that she did not finish her studies and regrets it a lot but insists that her children attend school.

Back at the hotel, the narrative highlights Brazilian inequality as one of the largest in the world, while images of a luxury party are displayed. It also presents another face of the dissociation between the rich and Brazilian reality: Felipe, manager of the Asian restaurant being built at the hotel, also lives in the favela. For him, however, this is an option, a “lifestyle”. He says that he would not live there if he did not feel safe. People in favelas are no longer poor as they have good jobs, thus highlighting a gentrification aspect promoted by the pacification policy of the state government. The same idea of economic growth and the rise of consumption by poor people is ratified by the hotel manager, Andrea.

The documentary itself acts almost like an advertising piece for the hotel, showing its history and reinforcing solid imaginary of it as a luxury consumption space in the city, including through the use of archival images, such as the movie *Flying Down to Rio*, with Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers (a film that is also used in the editing of *Rio 50 Degrees — Carry on Carioca* in a totally different context, showing the power of archival images in the reconfiguration of the imaginary), among others, Rio’s landscapes, aerial views, constant use of the song *Mas que Nada*, by Sérgio Mendes (also used in another context by *Rio 50 Degrees — Carry on Carioca*, a documentary that also addresses the Copacabana Palace as a representative of the upper class in Rio), and historic artifacts that mark the hotel as one of the best known in Latin America.

In this context, it is interesting that through the voice of Viviane, the film opens space for people who are invisible and silenced in the process of consuming the city. Moreover, the discourse of privileged people concerning these bodies, which in their view must be kept docile and occupy an invisible space of subservience, is not problematized. The contrast of the images also produces meanings for potential criticism. Furthermore, above all, Viviane can, in her home, leave the character she builds for herself at work, denouncing the invisibility of her body and the subjection of her daily life by the logic of consumption. If the right to difference is, as Harvey (2013) points out, “one of the most precious rights of city dwellers” (p. 38), then the logic of luxury consumption is a way of removing the rights of those citizens who work there.

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Sometimes people, or some people, are confined or absent or out of reach of the street and the camera – they are unapproachable, although they may well be captured in another sense. It never really happens that all possible people represented by the notion of “people” appear in the same space and at the same time to assert themselves as a people! As if everyone were free to move, as if everyone, of their own free will, came together to a space and time that can be described or photographed in a way that includes everyone! (Butler, 2015/2019, p. 183)

As Butler (2015/2019) points out when addressing visual representations of people, not all bodies are available or have access to all spaces in cities. In the documentaries studied in this research another manifestation that presents itself as dissonant and in search for the right to the city concerns the bodies of people with disabilities, represented in *A Bumpy Road to Rio*. The 23-minute documentary was shown by the program *Our World*, on BBC World News and BBC World News North America, between 9 and 30 October 2015. The program stars Nikki Fox, a wheelchair user who seeks to understand what life in Rio is like for people with disabilities and shows the city's preparations for the Paralympics. A legacy, which was necessary to receive athletes from all over the world, was promised, especially concerning mobility and accessibility for people with disabilities. However, the Rio 2016 committee's financial crisis and the low interest of the population in purchasing tickets significantly impacted the games, compromising their performance. When guaranteeing the financial support for the event, the then-mayor Eduardo Paes declared that "the Paralympics is an incredible event, but, as a business, it is not exactly attractive to sponsors or for ticket sales. It is a business model that does not pay for itself" (Betim, 2016, para. 4). Although support from the media has helped to boost ticket sales, as well as the increase of television audience compared to the London games ("Com 4,1 bilhões de telespectadores, Paralimpíada do Rio bate recorde", 2017), the occupation of hotels, for example, has not been so promising (Martín, 2016).

Regarding the documentaries analysed for this article, there is practically no reference to the Paralympic games and their impact in terms of mobility, accessibility, public policies, and the inclusion of people with disabilities in urban life. *Bumpy Road to Rio* is, therefore, an important voice in this regard. For example, in the first scene of the film, it is interesting to observe how one of the most classic clichés in the city is displaced. It's a samba school where one of the *passistas* is a person with dwarfism, and both the other *passista* and the flag bearer are people with Down syndrome. Bodies that are not part of the Carnival allure are part of the program's opening, as well as its development. Paul Davies is an English national living in Brazil and the founder of the *Embaixadores da Alegria* (Ambassadors of Joy), a samba school for people with disabilities. Viviane, the *passista* with dwarfism, is called a "superstar" by Nikki. Viviane is vain, shows familiarity with the camera, and says she was born to dance. She says she always wanted to be the Carnival queen, but the minimum height of 1.60m prevented her.

Some people accompany Nikki during her stay in the city. The first, Elizabeth, also a wheelchair user, reports her difficulty walking on the streets, the fear of falling, of breaking her chair, in addition to the shame of not being recognized as a person by the government, highlighting the invisibility of people with disabilities in relation to public policies. The images show the holes in the sidewalks and the mobility difficulties they both face, but Nikki points out that "what is lacking in the city in terms of accessibility, people make up for it with their help" (00:07:00). Another companion is Carlos, a tour guide, wheelchair user and the taxi driver of a car adapted for transporting people with disabilities. He also highlights the difficulties of locomotion in the city, highlighting that, although they

seem terrible for foreigners, people in Brazil have already become accustomed to it. Nikki tries to get around the city and bumps into holes, steps, and traffic (drivers who do not stop at the traffic light or stop over the crosswalk or close intersections). Carlos invites her to take public transport. They stop at a bus stop on a street in the south zone (apparently Visconde de Pirajá street, in Ipanema): many buses that drive past do not have a motorized wheelchair lift or are full. They eventually manage to board an empty bus.

The presenter also visits the site at the Olympic Park. She highlights its cost, questioning whether this money will also be used to improve the city's accessibility for disabled people. Eduardo Paes welcomes her to the park, and although he recognizes that there is still a long way to go he emphasizes that Rio will be a much better city after the Olympics. Nikki also highlights the Paralympics as a way to initiate changes and push them forward (in a representation of the official discourse of mega-events as catalysts for the desired changes).

The difficulty of being a disabled person who lives in a slum is also addressed. Nikki accompanies Washington Assis do Nascimento Junior, a Paralympic athlete living in Cidade de Deus, and the challenges he faces in training, including the delays in financing. Andrew Parsons, president of the Brazilian Paralympic Committee, says that there is no efficient system for investing in training athletes and hopes that the Paralympics will contribute in changing it. The final part of the documentary shows athlete Wilians Araújo, who lived in Complexo do Alemão but managed to buy a house outside the favela. Permeated by positive messages of overcoming, despite the difficulties faced by the disabled living in the city, Araújo says that sport has changed his life and that of his family and that the Paralympics is a catalyst for the necessary changes in the city, reinforcing the official discourse.

Considering mobility as a fundamental right that guarantees access to other rights, such as education, health and leisure, the exclusion of people with disabilities from the urban space is a restriction of their right to the city. It is not just the prejudice of family members who "hide" people with disabilities, a thesis brought up by Paul Davies in a conversation with Nikki. Apart from the daily difficulties that these people suffer, not only concerning mobility but also in the absence of accessible spaces, study and work opportunities, difficulties in accessing culture (for example, theatre plays in sign-language or audio description, public libraries with Braille books, among countless other actions that could be taken in favour of people with disabilities), in addition to so many others. These dissonant bodies, very invisible and excluded from the urban space, saw in the Paralympics a potential to occupy the city and guarantee its visibility in the urban space because

if the body in the sphere of politics were active by definition – always self-constituting, never constituted – then we would not have to fight for the conditions that allow the body its free activity in the name of economic and social justice. This struggle assumes that the bodies are constrained and embarrassing. (Butler, 2015/2019, p. 201)

The Aliança Global (Global Alliance)'s press guide for inclusion of people with disabilities in the media and entertainment (Almeida, n.d.) highlights the vital role the media plays in including people with disabilities and their productions. According to the guide, the story focuses on questions about people's quality of life. However, certain speeches often flirt with meritocracy, such as when the narrator says that people do not complain about having to work much harder to improve their lives, or like when Carlos says that it is possible to do everything, it is necessary to try in order to win. The guide points out that "even though the public may find these portraits inspiring, these stereotypes raise false expectations for other people with disabilities" (Almeida, n.d., p. 6). Even so, *A Bumpy Road to Rio* is an important production in the inclusion of guidelines for people with disabilities in the hegemonic media and in the dispute for the meanings of the Rio brand, as it is a product produced by a person with disabilities that shows both the difficulties imposed by the social and urban fabric of cities as the need to create a city, through public policies, so that these bodies can be effectively part of the daily urban life. The audio-visual voices self-representation, criticizes ableism, and shows the plurality of bodies that make up the city and their claim for the right to live in it fully.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

We are, as bodies, vulnerable to others and to institutions, and this vulnerability is an aspect of the social modality through which bodies persist. The question of mine or its vulnerability implies a broader political question about equality and inequality, since vulnerability can be projected and denied (psychological categories) and exploited and manipulated (social and economic categories) in the course of production. and the naturalization of forms of social inequality. (Butler, 2015/2019, p. 231)

Although the plurality of dissonant bodies compared to the imaginary of the perfect body attributed to the brand Rio is still much more significant than that portrayed in the documentaries studied in this research, giving visibility to subjects that were previously invisible in the city branding process is a way of breaking away from the bias imposed by the brand-building strategy. This process implies the emergence of a whole range of possibilities for existence, conflicts, and disputes for urban space that are much more consistent with the daily life of the city than the consensus preached by urban strategic planning, in which megaevents are one of its most relevant points. In the latter, the focus of image reconstruction is central.

In the documentaries analysed, we note that bodies dissonant of the hegemonic aesthetics of consumption break with official discourses by including diversity in their narratives, always clarifying that this diversity is adjunct or alternative. Dissonant bodies are not protagonists within public policies, although there is a tendency to include

non-hegemonic bodies in periods of political elections or major events. In these situations, people excluded from a large part of the public education, health, transport, and housing processes are remembered because they represent votes or portray an image of an inclusive city to the world. This is the case of the categories of bodies approached in this article: trans and queer, black and poor people, and people with disabilities.

Dissonant bodies compared to the allure of physical perfection attributed to the Edenic Brazilian paradise since its founding narratives, reappropriated as an attribute of the city brand, also act as tension in the discursive dispute over the power to represent itself, of narrating and fighting for the right to exist, for the right to life and the city. If these bodies, understood as minorities, were previously silenced or kept docile, actions searching for representation contribute to the dispute for some space and some self-representation in the hegemonic media even though these are still under the scrutiny of a foreign eye.

Translation: Alessandra Gotardo

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Submitted: 30/01/2021 | Accepted: 01/04/2021

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