


**AFROFUTURISM AS AN ALTERNATIVE FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF
OTHER LEISURE CURRICULA**

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ABSTRACT: The present study represents the cross between Cultural Studies and Curricular and Leisure Studies. At this intersection, strategies for curriculum formation and subjectivity in the postcolonial world are discussed, based on the relationship between the concepts of dis-placement and inter-places of Stuart Hall and Homi Bhabha. The notion of curriculum, according to Marlucy Paraíso, articulated with the diaspora of African people, in the reading of Paul Gilroy, opens the path for the study that proposes an approximation between the personal experiences described by Hall, Ebony Thomas and the author of this article, to perceive Afrofuturism as an alternative for the construction of forms of curriculum for the leisure, which, instead of imprisoning, reactivate forces, committing themselves to ethnic-racial relationships.

KEYWORDS: Afrofuturism. Leisure. Subjectivation processes.

**AFROFUTURISMO COMO ALTERNATIVA PARA A CONSTRUÇÃO DE
OUTROS CURRÍCULOS DE LAZER**

RESUMO: O presente trabalho representa o cruzamento dos Estudos Culturais com os Estudos do Currículo e do Lazer. Nesse cruzo, discutem-se estratégias de formação curricular e subjetivação no mundo pós-colonial, a partir da relação entre os conceitos de des-locamento e entre-lugares de Stuart Hall e Homi Bhabha. A noção de currículo, segundo Marlucy Paraíso, articulada com a diáspora dos povos africanos, na leitura de Paul Gilroy, pavimentam o estudo que propõe uma aproximação entre experiências pessoais descritas por Hall, Ebony Thomas e o autor deste artigo, para perceber o Afrofuturismo como uma alternativa para a construção de formas de currículo para o Lazer, as quais, ao invés de aprisionar, reativem forças, comprometendo-se com as relações étnico-raciais.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Afrofuturismo. Lazer. Processos de subjetivação.

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The intention of this article is to perceive Afrofuturism and its products as cultural texts, from which it is possible to build new forms of curriculum, and of Leisure. Guided by the Afrofuturist perspective, we propose to think of curricular forms aimed at leisure and entertainment that, instead of imprisoning, reactivate forces, in the sense of a commitment to ethnic-racial relations and other identity issues that constitute “the problem of difference” (PARAÍSO, 2015, p. 50), in which we live today, deeply embedded. One more way is pointed out to “exempt a curriculum from subordination to forms” (PARAÍSO, 2015, p. 50). For such, I start from the understanding that the cultural text is a practice of productive meaning directly involved with power relations, which generates behaviors and guides subjectivation processes (PARAÍSO, 2010). Therefore, I propose to think about possibilities of “releasing the forces of a curriculum” from the investigation of the effects that cultural artifacts – guided by hegemonic discourses – had on my own processes of subjectivation and how, in the Afrofuturist perspective, these discourses take on another form, counter-hegemonic.

By Afrofuturism, I mean the transnational and transdisciplinary cultural movement, whose political agenda aims to rewrite the history of the past and imagine a positive future for people of African descent (ELIA, 2014, p. 84). The term is originated in the United States (DERY, 1994) and spreads as a culture of resistance, encompassing different genres and media, speculative fictions created by Afro-diasporic and African authors who, for almost two hundred years, dramatized the racial question, inventing a future bright for blacks in a world with significant scientific and social changes (YASZEK, 2013, p. 1). I analyze Afrofuturism as an expression of decolonial thinking discussed by Mignolo and Walsh (2018), which questions epistemologies that form the “The matrix (colonial) created by a minority of the human species ” and that “rules the

life of the majority of the human species”² (MIGNOLO; WALSH, 2018, p. 114)³. Established interpretations are deconstructed and new, counter-hegemonic ones are constructed.

With regard to the term “subjectivation processes”, I refer to one of the “main projects of structuralism” (HALL, 2003, p. 177), as explained by Stuart Hall when he develops on “the decentering of the subject” to discuss the “Ideological State Apparatuses” provided in the work of Althusser. According to Hall, “This ‘subject’ must not be confused with the historically lived individual. It is a category, the position in which the subject – the self of ideological statements – is constituted. The ideological discourses themselves constitute us as subjects for the discourse” (HALL, 2003, p. 177).

This text is, therefore, aligned with the perception of Marlucy Paraíso (2010) when he considers that: cultural artifacts – such as literature, cinema or comic books, etc. – are also teaching machines and that, for this reason, have and practice a curriculum that must be analyzed and problematized to contribute to the understanding of its effects on the formation of those who deal with these artifacts themselves, and the professionals who deal with the education and leisure.

Then, it can be seen that: both in the curriculum and in leisure, Culture is also a practice of meaning and, as such, guides, leads and transforms certain groups, producing different subjectivations, according to the practices and experiences that individuals in these groups experience. The experiences that I was able to taste in my identity formation will be compared with the statements of Stuart Hall (2003) and Ebony Thomas (2019) in the sense of articulating as cultural artifacts – literature, cinema, television, etc. – helped to compose our processes of subjectivation. Although distinct, the “double-consciousness” (DU BOIS, 2016) remains in our personal

² In the original: *The matrix (colonial) created by a minority of the human species rules the life of the majority of the human species* (MIGNOLO; WALSH, 2018, p. p. 114).

³ All English translations were made by me. And the original text will be indicated in footnotes.

histories, a feeling common to those who suffered the effects caused by the diaspora of racialized African peoples and its influence on the construction of colonial narratives updated in the contemporary post-colonial context.

In this regard, I am personally related to the purposes of this investigation, since my academic and professional path, as well as my processes of subjectivation, offer me an adequate context for the investigation of cultural artifacts loaded with criticism on the racial issue, with the specificities that Afrofuturism presents. The trajectory that I present below aims to explain this contextualization.

About the Feeling of Dis-placement

By contacting the authors and ideas of Cultural Studies, I came across the perspective of analysis that would come to support this paper: how cultural artifacts are crossed by power relations. This approach – especially the one described in the work of Stuart Hall (2003) – affected me and also caused a personal discomfort. When reading Hall (2003), I also felt read by the author, and by his ideas.

In *Cultural Identity and Diaspora* (2003), identifies colonial and postcolonial history recycling itself in contemporary public discourses. Eurocentrism, still alive, acting on the assumptions and discourses of the media and mass culture. Specifically, I am referring to how the author explains culture: a production, a process in constant mutation that, in order to be observed, requires a posture attentive to its fluidity (HALL, 2003). Hall explains the intrinsic relationship between culture and the processes of subjectivation when he states that, paradoxically, our identities are “always in the process of cultural formation”, thus, culture is not an ontological question, “of being, but to become” (HALL, 2003, p. 44).

This understanding of the fluidity of cultural processes and their connection with subjectivities made me realize and assume these same processes in my curricular trajectory. I understood that recognizing my blackness placed me in the field of Cultural Studies, a process that sparked my interest in Afrofuturism and cultures of resistance, themes linked to the formation of my identity, and which helped me to understand the feeling of “dis-placement” (HALL, 2003, p. 27), the concept transporting me from the place of observer to that of subject involved in the investigation process.

The feeling of dis-placement is the familiar feeling that Hall deals with when he brings the notion of “*unheimlichkeit*” – the feeling of discomfort and insecurity present when “we are not at home”, according to Hall’s reading of Heidegger (HALL, 2003, p. 27). We are all subject to being taken by this feeling. This dis-placement, intentionally put with the “hyphen”, talks about being put out of place, or feeling displaced in the face of a society that does not recognize and does not present spaces for those who do not meet the image previously conceived by the eurocentric speech.

Unheimlichkeit, was used by Heidegger in the work *Sein und Zeit* (1927) to work on the contrast between the familiar and the strange. The word is repeated in the study of the notion of strange, developed by Sigmund Freud in a homonymous text (1919), but it is used to “develop the meaning of the ambivalence between the familiar and the strange” (OSSWALD, 2018, p. 80). Heidegger uses *unheimlichkeit* (strangeness) to describe the experience of feeling *unheimlich* (strange), a harrowing experience of *nicht-zuhause-sein* (not-being-at-home). This is to say that “Heidegger (1927/1997) believes that, in order to appropriate oneself, it is necessary to renounce the familiar” (OSSWALD, 2018, p. 77). This feeling of experiencing the estrangement of *not-being-at-home* is typical of the experience of peoples in diaspora, and Hall uses it to demonstrate – with depth and clarity – a feeling with which I also identify and, by

extension, those who identify themselves. that recognize the sensation of feeling the other of oneself.

With the concept of double-consciousness, the sociologist, historian and activist W.E.B. Du Bois (2016) demonstrates his reading of the diasporic experience. Black people – and other subalternized non-white groups – represent the other on which the hegemonic idea of humanity builds its notion of self. In other words, the modern white man has as a reference for the formation of his subjectivity a series of references that establish as “the other” all those who are not white, and this was established from colonization as the foundation for the modern processes of subjectivation.

Thus, black people are faced with a basic reference that has themselves as what they should not be, which implies a violence to their subjectivity, against which a production of double-consciousness turns out to be the result. It is the experience of alienation and estrangement produced under the effects of a post-colonial world. As Du Bois explains when he describes “double consciousness” (2016, p. 8):

It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. Alguém já sentiu essa dualidade: – um americano, um negro; duas almas, dois pensamentos, duas tentativas não reconciliadas; dois ideais em guerra em um corpo sombrio, cuja força obstinada por si só evita que ela seja despedaçada⁴ (DU BOIS, 2016, p. 8).

When Hall tries to answer “what the diaspora experience does to our models of cultural identity” (HALL, 2003, p. 28), he discusses how in common sense cultural identity is assumed to be fixed at birth and genetically imprinted on individuals. Something that Hall questions and elaborates in the face of the consequences caused by diasporas. With this line, he shows how “each dissemination carries with it the promise

⁴ In the original: It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness, – an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder.

of redemptive return” (HALL, 2003, p. 28). The author refers to the fact that, with colonization, descendants of peoples kidnapped from their homeland built for themselves a shared narrative in which the return to their origins would be something capable of redeeming the suffering they experienced. This understanding, for Hall, became part of the “newly constructed collective sense of self” of these peoples (HALL, 2003, p. 28) and is the basis for a narrative deeply marked by the feeling of being out of place, out of place. In this regard, identities are crossed by power relations and constructed by difference and disjuncture in the process of diasporic dissemination of these peoples during colonization (HALL, 2003).

In the essay of philosopher Charles Taylor, *The Politics of Recognition* (1994), we see how identity is not a fixed position, but something that summons the gaze of others, requiring their recognition in order to be constructed. When dealing with the modes of expression by which we define ourselves, the author allows us to expand his reasoning in the perception that the sources for the formation of identity are outside of us, that is, we need significant contacts with other people to form our own meanings. “People do not acquire the languages needed for self-definition on their own. Rather, we are introduced to them through interaction with others who matter to us.”⁵ (TAYLOR, 1994, p. 32). Which, in turn, agrees with the position of Hall regarding the formation of cultural identities, as it indicates the contact with other peoples as something implying the formation of these identities.

Hall discusses specifically about the peoples of the Caribbean, but his words can be extended to other diasporas, especially those that involved African peoples and helped to form cultural identities in what Gilroy calls the “Black Atlantic” (GILROY, 2001). Because we are culturally identified according to our ancestry, being black –

⁵ In the original: People do not acquire the languages needed for self-definition on their own. Rather, we are introduced to them through interaction with others who matter to us.

whether born in Latin America or anywhere else in the world – is to be identified as belonging to an idea of Africa, an idea that does not always correspond to an empirical notion. Therefore, there is a preconceived notion about Africa there, even if it has different meanings for different groups.

In this regard, Culture can be understood as a production, “it depends on a knowledge of tradition (...) and on an effective set of genealogies” (HALL, 2003, p. 44). The way we deal with this production incurs in the political and social construction of what is understood as race (HALL, 2003, p. 69). This construction is supported by the media as reproducers of a hegemonic discourse.

By understanding media products as tools used in the practice of leisure, it is possible to highlight the place that culture occupies as a definer of what is or is not accepted as positive or adequate for the content and dissemination of these products. Thus, culture exerts an epistemological weight that guides the organization of leisure activities, including the languages and postures used by institutions, groups and individuals promoting leisure practices or practicing them (PARAÍSO, 2010). In this regard, a reading of the curriculum or leisure activity as a cultural text can help to understand the effects that certain curricular and leisure practices have on the bodies of individuals subjected to their actions. Based on this concept, I establish a direct relationship between the curricula and leisure practices with which I developed my processes of subjectivation and, from which I was able to experience the historical effects of colonial narratives that were updated and still are updated in post-colonial discourses. contemporaries. Speeches that had a significant effect on my experiences.

During my studies, I did not recognize myself in the media representations and sought to adapt to the current standard, seeking this recognition. But who is interested in an individual in doubt about how he recognizes himself? The question itself already

indicates violence against subjectivity. Does white wonder about being white? In this line, there is no confusion, doubt, disbelief or imbalance. It seems to me that the white individual, cisgender and in a privileged social class, does not question this specific aspect of his subjectivation process, this questioning belongs to the brown subject, the one who has historically been removed from the processes of racialization and only more recently is re-approached to his/her afrodescendant.

As Maria Aparecida Silva Bento states in *Branqueamento e branquitude no Brasil*: “The lack of reflection on the role of white people in racial inequalities is a way of persistently reiterating that racial inequalities in Brazil are a problem exclusively for blacks” (BENTO, 2002, P. 2002, p. As if it didn't make sense that the group of white people in this society were seen as a racialized portion of the population and it was only up to the black portion of this people to be studied, dissected and problematized – which also extends to other non-white groups. It is, to a certain extent, what, in 1938, Mario de Andrade described as a “color superstition”, the “primary and illiterate superstition that the white color symbolizes Good and race symbolizes Evil” (ANDRADE, 2021, p. 226). Bento goes further into the issue and realizes that, in the construction of this “black superstition”, there is the exercise of power by a privileged group over another subaltern group.

Considering (or perhaps inventing) their group as a reference standard of all kinds, the elite made a crucial symbolic appropriation that has been strengthening the self-esteem and self-concept of the white group to the detriment of the others, and this appropriation ends up legitimizing its economic and political supremacy. and social (BENTO, 2002, p. 25).

In this regard, Bento clarifies that, when discussing racial inequalities in Brazil, there is a focus on black people and a silence regarding white people, a situation that the author calls an agreement, “a tacit agreement between white people not to recognize themselves as an absolutely essential part of the permanence of racial inequalities in Brazil” (BENTO, 2002, p. 26). Bento interprets that it is also necessary to study, dissect

and problematize the white portion of the population in order to understand its contribution to the permanence of racial inequalities in the country. Also focusing on the group of white people is to discuss privilege, an inherent part of unequal power relations between white people, black people and other subordinated groups in Brazilian society (BENTO, 2002).

In addition, the “symbolic appropriation” mentioned by Bento can also function as part of a political management strategy, based on the construction of a certain narrative, such as the narrative created about the role of the brown subject in Brazilian society. This is explained in *A cor da mestiçagem: o pardo e a produção de subjetividades negras no Brasil contemporâneo* (2018), by researchers Weschenfelder and Linhares da Silva. The text problematizes the place that the brown color/race occupied in the historical processes of the Brazilian ethnic-racial dynamics and its effects on the processes of subjectivation of the black subject in the country. It is the production of an indefinite subjectivity, to which I referred above when I presented the question: who is interested in an individual in doubt about the way he/she recognizes himself/herself? According to the authors, this was used as a management policy and took place during the construction of the idea of the Brazilian nation. The brown subject served to “enhance miscegenation as a national identity, resulting in the belief in racial democracy”, on the other hand, since the rearticulation of black movements in the 1970s, this myth of racial democracy has been deconstructed, with “the displacement of the category brown color/race, which now, together with the self-declared black, is now called the black population” (WESCHENFELDER; LINHARES DA SILVA, 2018, p. 312).

Thus, the researchers point out a displacement in the uses of the term brown (*pardos*) during what they identify as a shift in emphasis from the miscegenation device

to the negritude device.⁶. Which coincides with my own experience, that of a black subject who has only recently been able to recognize himself/herself as such.

The text also discusses how the brown category in Brazil contributed “to the production of subjectivities in Afro-descendants” precisely because of its undefined, “changing and politically interesting for different purposes” (WESCHENFELDER; LINHARES DA SILVA, 2018, p. 311). In this regard, the idea of racial democracy, instituted by the Brazilian state as an official discourse from the 1930s onwards, functioned “as the effect of biopolitical governance strategies that effectively shaped the political-cultural narrative of the nation” (WESCHENFELDER; LINHARES DA SILVA, 2018, p. 318–319). From this “political-cultural narrative”, the set of thoughts with which I had contact during my training was built, which makes me realize today that, because I am brown, I am an example of what the authors understand as the result of the process of “desubjection of black subjects” (WESCHENFELDER; LINHARES DA SILVA, 2018, p. 320). The brown subject was put out of place, in the lack of definition that constituted the production of subjectivities of Afro-descendants, with whom I identify today.

In this regard, I was immersed in this imaginary constructed so that I would not be recognized as part of the stories I grew up with. That is, what somehow built for me the references that formed an important part of my subjectivity, at the same time, kept me apart – dis-placed – from what I considered my place in the world. I felt, therefore, the results of the diasporic experience: the anguish of *nicht-zuhause-sein* (not-being-at-home) (OSSWALD, 2018). Aware of these reflections, I found myself faced with ideas

⁶ The term device refers to the concept by Foucault: “A decidedly heterogeneous set encompassing discourses, institutions, architectural organizations, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral, philanthropic propositions.” (FOUCAULT, 1998, p. 244). But it is Agamben who helps to understand its effects when he explains that “The device is, therefore, above all, a machine that produces subjectivations, and that is why it is also a government machine” (AGAMBEN, 2009, p. 46). In this regard, cultural artifacts also function as machine tools and contribute to the formation of the discourses that crossed my subjectivation processes.

capable of responding to the discomfort of considering myself in doubt as to my place in society. If, at first, I did not perceive myself as black, today, I have decided that I am not white. According to Eurocentric culture, I am inserted within the “place of black” (HALL, 2003, p. 18-19). Questioning the role of cultural artifacts with which I was involved in the representation of this place was the manifest path in my research intentions when I came across these reflections. In this process of discovery, I produced an approach to Afrofuturism.

Afrofuturism and Dis-placement

The term Afrofuturism appears for the first time in the text by the American Mark Dery, *Black to the Future: Interviews with Samuel R. Delany, Greg Tate, and Tricia Rose* (1994). The work analyzes papers by black scholars and artists who are science fiction enthusiasts, who gave new life to discussions about art and social criticism with narratives based on scientific and technological concepts from the 80s and 90s (WOMACK, 2013). Dery interviewed acclaimed science fiction and semiotic writer Samuel R. Delany, cultural critic Greg Tate and African Studies and History professor Tricia Rose, seeking to address this movement that he initially identified in science fiction pulp literature. As explained by Ytasha Womack (2013) in the book *Afrofuturism: the world of black sci-fi and fantasy culture*

Afrofuturism is an intersection of imagination, technology, future and liberation. (...) Whether through literature, visual arts, music, or grassroots organizing, Afrofuturists redefine culture and notions of blackness for today and the future. Both an artistic aesthetic and a framework for critical theory, Afrofuturism combines elements of science fiction, historical fiction, speculative fiction, fantasy, Afrocentricity, and magic realism with non-Western beliefs. In some cases, it's a total reenvisioning of the past and speculation about the future rife with cultural critiques⁷ (WOMACK, 2013, p. 9).

⁷ In the original: Afrofuturism is an intersection of imagination, technology, the future, and liberation. (...) Whether through literature, visual arts, music, or grassroots organizing, Afrofuturists redefine culture and notions of blackness for today and the future. Both an artistic aesthetic and a framework for critical theory, Afrofuturism combines elements of science fiction, historical fiction, speculative fiction, fantasy,

Afrofuturism acts according to post-colonial perspectives, which emerge from the discourses of “minorities” and “intervene in those ideological discourses of modernity that try to give a hegemonic ‘normality’ to irregular development and the differentiated histories of nations, races, communities, peoples” (BHABHA, 1998, p. 239). Hall (2003) observes that in the post-colonial period, re-readings of colonization are produced, updating the great imperial narratives of the past. These re-readings end up maintaining colonial discourses – such as those on the social role of black people – but these discourses act in practices and imagination in a “decentered, diasporic or ‘global’ way” (HALL, 2003, p. 102). We still reproduce these discourses, maintaining their hierarchical aspect, as in the case of the “political-cultural narrative” produced about the brown population in Brazil (WESCHENFELDER; LINHARES DA SILVA, 2018, p. 318–319).

In Brazil, the arrival of Afrofuturism takes place in contact with academic productions and the artistic movement itself, mainly from the United States. Musical and literary works feed a generation that accesses content today mainly through online social networks. Among the studies that stand out in the Brazilian academy, the Afrocentrism line opens space for the perspectives presented by Afrofuturism and also by Afropessimism. Both promote dialogism when approaching the idea of utopia and dystopia. This is the perspective proposed in the text *O futuro será negro ou não será: Afrofuturismo versus Afropessimismo - as distopias do presente*, by Kênia Freitas and José Messias (2018). When analyzing audiovisual productions, researchers perceive the power that dystopia has in the face of the situation of black people in the modern/colonial world. Something that stands out in the productions of Brazilian Afrofuturist cinema. As they clarify,

Afrocentricity, and magic realism with non-Western beliefs. In some cases, it's a total reenvisioning of the past and speculation about the future rife with cultural critiques (WOMACK, 2013, p. 9).

Starting from this premise, of dystopia as an intrinsic element of the contemporary black experience, the optimism of a utopian future that permeates part of Afrofuturist thought (in Womack and Yaszek, for example) does not seem to allow us to think about a considerable part of speculative fiction narratives (which approach the post-slavery diasporic black experience as a post-apocalyptic dystopia in the past, present and future). And, therefore, it seems necessary to tension this positive perspective with Afropessimist critical thinking (FREITAS; MESSIAS, 2018, p. 412).

This need for tension that Freitas and Messias' investigation provokes takes on a different character in the master's dissertation by researcher Waldson Gomes de Souza (2019), *Afrofuturismo: o futuro ancestral na literatura brasileira contemporânea*. His perspective focused on literature allows me to observe the path he built: from the concept of speculative fiction towards representation and black representation. His purpose was to use these elements to approach the concept of Afrofuturism focused on the analysis of three Brazilian Afrofuturist novels: “*Ritos de passagem* (2014), by Fábio Kabral; *Brasil 2408* (2016-2017), by Lu Ain-Zaila; and *Cidade de Deus Z* (2015), by Julio Pecly” (SOUZA, 2019, p. 60). In the conclusion of Souza (2019), I highlight his reading of Afrofuturism as an artistic movement that builds a notion of an “ancestral future”, as it relates to aspects that go beyond the works produced, and that speak about a shared experience that transcends the past. time. As he explains, this term “Ancestral Future” describes “an image that breaks the linear notions established between past, present and future” (SOUZA, 2019, p. 93). That is, the challenge to colonial narratives updated in the contemporary is at the heart of Afrofuturism.

Keeping that in mind, I realize that Afrofuturist expressions are crossed by the relationship that exists between the post-colonial and the creation of myths claimed by hegemonic thought as traditional. That is, if in the previous topic it was possible to perceive the effects of the diaspora in the construction of a model of cultural identity, with the Afrofuturist perspective it is possible to highlight the mythical quality of this construction and its transforming power.

According to Hall, the “(...) narrative structure of myths is cyclical. But within history, its meaning is often transformed” (HALL, 2003, p. 29). The author identifies tradition as an umbilical cord, linking the future and the present to the past. “To have a cultural identity, in this sense, is to be primarily in contact with an immutable and timeless core, linking the future and the present to the past in an unbroken line” (HALL, 2003, p. 29). This connection questions the common sense perception of a tradition linked to a kind of cultural origin to be rescued. Such a rescue of a supposed “authenticity” is not possible in the face of the perception of a flow of events, capable of constantly transforming the way individuals and groups organize and recognize themselves.

This umbilical cord is what we call “tradition”, whose test is its fidelity to its origins, its conscious presence in front of itself, its “authenticity”. It is, of course, a myth – with all the real potential of our dominant myths to shape our imaginations, influence our actions, give meaning to our lives, and make sense of our history (HALL, 2003, p. 29).

Therefore, if tradition is a myth linking past, present and future, Afrofuturism is a manifestation of possible models for the creation of new myths, capable of responding to other myths, in constant dialogue, using means of communication – literature, comics, cinema, television and social networks – to realize, through fiction, a new future for blacks. The bases for the creation of alternatives to the prevailing post-colonial imaginary are presented (HALL, 2003, p. 29).

Paul Gilroy in *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double-Consciousness* (2001), uses the concept of double-consciousness (DU BOIS, 2016) to reveal the transgressive attitude of alternative narratives to the norm – such as the Afrofuturist. This transgression finds a place in the space between discourses, taking advantage of the clash between contradictory or antagonistic narratives to establish new and provocative visions of colonial and post-colonial history.

Striving to be both European and black requires some specific forms of double-consciousness. In saying this I do not mean to suggest that taking on one or both of these unfinished identities necessarily depletes a given individual's subjective resources. However, where racist, nationalist or ethnically absolutist discourses guide the political relations in such a way that these identities appear to be mutually exclusive, occupying the space between them or trying to demonstrate their continuity has been seen as a provocative and even opposing act of political insubordination (GILROY, 2001, p. 33–34).

Double-consciousness coincides with the sensation of “dis-placement” described by Hall (2003, p. 27). Which, in turn, connects me with the experience of being a brown subject placed in an undefined condition, and, more recently, recognizing myself as black. It is Greg Tate who explains how this condition, typical of black people in diaspora, coincides with the Science Fiction narratives from which Afrofuturism comes, they are stories that place “the human into an alien and alienating enviroment”⁸, or – according to Mark Dery – it is about “the ositioning of oneself, literally, as a stranger in a strange land”⁹ (DERY, 1994, p. 209–210).

It is Kodwo Eshun who exposes – based on Tate's formulation – that Afrofuturism goes beyond the search for black protagonism in fiction narratives, or even beyond the attempt to correct history by imagining alternative futures. Eshun notes the coincidence between black existence and science fiction: “Afrodiasporic subjects live the estrangement that science-fiction writers envision” (ESHUN, 2003, p. 298). It is inevitable to compare the fantastical narratives of violent alien invasions, followed by abductions and resource exploitation with the experience of African peoples whose territories were invaded and looted, and their people kidnapped, enslaved and racialized. The condition of structural and psychological alienation that these peoples and their descendants experienced, and still experience, is “double-consciousness” (DU BOIS, 2016, p. 8). But it is in the positive view of Afrofuturism that it becomes possible to triple and even quadruple the “double consciousness”, stimulating the awakening of

⁸ In the original: the human into an alien and alienating enviroment

⁹ In the original: The Positioning of oneself, literally, as a stranger in a strange land.

black people's awareness of their own condition and "creating contexts that encourage a process of disalienation"¹⁰ (ESHUN, 2003, p. 298).

Eshun allows me to locate Afrofuturism within the decolonial perspective by comparing a speech by Toni Morrison with the thought of Nietzsche: "African subjects that experienced capture, theft, abduction, mutilation, and slavery were the first moderns"¹¹ (ESHUN, 2003, p. 288). The Afrodiasporic experience of "homelessness, alienation, dislocation and dehumanization"¹² (ESHUN, 2003, p. 288) is precisely what Nietzsche would later define as the modern condition per excellence. These are the traumas that shaped the contemporary era and that endorse Grosfoguel and Mignolo's understanding of the intrinsic relationship between modernity and coloniality (GROSFOGUEL, 2009; MIGNOLO, 2005).

It is the same feeling that puts me in the gap between spaces whose limits were constructed by discourses – such as the different discourses that say what it is to be European and what it is to be black – a place of conflict. Somehow this enables me to identify the provocative and resistance act that Gilroy (2001, p. 33–34), which may arise from attempts to fill the spaces between identities whose racist discourses have made mutually exclusive.

In these spaces between identities, I perceive what Homi Bhabha (1998) describes as "moments or processes that are produced in the articulation of cultural differences"; the "between-places" where "subjectivation strategies – singular or collective – are elaborated, which give rise to new signs of identity and innovative positions of collaboration and contestation, in the act of defining the very idea of

¹⁰ In the original: The condition of alienation, understood in its most general sense, is a psychosocial inevitability that all Afrodiasporic art uses to its own advantage by creating contexts that encourage a process of disalienation.

¹¹ In the original: African subjects that experienced capture, theft, abduction, mutilation, and slavery were the first moderns (ESHUN, 2003, p. 288).

¹² In the original: existential homelessness, alienation, dislocation, and dehumanization (ESHUN, 2003, p. 288).

society” (BHABHA, 1998, p. 20). According to Bhabha, it is in the “in-between places” that subjects are formed, “in the surpluses of the sum of the 'parts' of difference (generally expressed as race/class/gender, etc.)”. It is also where “strategies of representation or empowerment” are formulated (BHABHA, 1998, p. 20). It is the feeling of being out of place that I experienced and still experience, related to the exceptional context in which the brown population of Brazil was inserted, serving political interests and contributing to the production of subjectivities in Afrodescendant subjects.

In this regard, it reaffirms the fact that subjectivation processes are built in relation, at all times caused by the difference produced in the discourses and visible in the representations. When I was a young Brazilian from the suburbs subjected to the images presented in the mass media, I was able to produce significant parts of my subjectivity from these representations.

Unlike Hall, who from his school days was interested in politics (HALL, 2003, p. 388), my movement was towards another direction. My interest was for the imaginary. In my process, the imaginary also reveals itself as a way of doing politics, displaced, let's say, from the discourses considered more classically political. Still, my story has some nuances that approximate – at least in part – the way Hall describes his ancestry (HALL, 2003, p. 387–388). He can explain how he understands sensitive aspects of culture in his own experience. My intention here is to use the same movement to demonstrate my own dislocation.

Hall is the son of a darker-skinned father to a light-skinned mother and was the little “*coolie*”¹³ at your home. It could not be called black, as that would have been

¹³ As Stuart Hall clarifies: “I was the darkest member of my family. The story that was always told in my family as a joke was that when I was born, my sister, who was much lighter than I was, looked into the crib and said, ‘Where did you get that ‘coolie’ baby?’ Now, coolie is the derogatory word in Jamaica for a poor Indian, considered the humblest of the humble. So she wouldn't say ‘where did you get this black

absurd for the family at the time. Something similar happened where I lived my childhood, in the neighborhood of Barra do Ceará in Fortaleza, capital of the state of Ceará in Brazil. I was, until adulthood, spared the smear of being black, although today, looking back, I can see that I was the darkest-skinned son, who, perhaps thanks to a great interest in fiction – and far from overtly political issues –, never noticed, for more than 20 years, any specific remark about my own skin coming from those I lived with. For all intents and purposes, in that environment, I was not black. This simply did not concern the discourses present in the community where I was raised.

The way I became interested in the fantastic fiction of comics, which a boy had access to in Brazil in the 80s and 90s, kept me oblivious to the political discourses of emancipation present in the period of the beginning of redemocratization. As well as education limited by the school curriculum in Brazil, still marked by the recent exit from the Brazilian military dictatorship. The teachers were early career professionals who limited themselves to the essentials in working with students. Although some were dedicated to encouraging the students' imagination, which, in turn, met with an interest already latent in me. My favorite classes were history classes, mainly because I saw a bit of espionage there (cold war), barbaric heroes (ancient world), and science fiction with cyberpunk concepts (history of the industrial revolution and the modern era). The way North-American pulp fiction and English penny dreadfuls translated this story, influencing comic book authors¹⁴ that I had access to, were a catalyst for the fascination with imagination present in the stories described in textbooks. This was present in my

baby from?', since in that environment it was unthinkable that she could have a black brother. But, yes, she did notice that I was a different color than hers. This is very common in Jamaican middle-class families of color, because they are the product of relationships between African slaves and European slaveholders, and the children are then born with different skin tones" (HALL, 2003, p. 386). This account speaks directly to my personal experience and helps me to understand the subtle and also very common nature of the way I grew up in Brazil.

¹⁴ As is the case with the war and espionage stories in Cannon by Wallace Wood (1970), Spirit (1940) by Will Eisner or the Europeans Sergio Bonelli with Dylan Dog (1986) and the trilogy Nikopol by Enki Bilal (1980); to cite some more emblematic examples that influenced stories from the North American publishers Marvel and DC, the first ones I had access to.

games, simulating battles between heroes and villains – within the context of great wars and dramas –, which I saw fantastically represented in comics and TV movies.

However, something didn't quite fit my experience with these stories. There seemed to be no room for my reality in what I read. There were no people with my skin tone, the streets and cities didn't look like the ones I knew, not even the climate was similar. I initially draw on Hall's experience to describe my own processes, but another recent example is author Ebony Elizabeth Thomas (2019), that in *The Dark Fantastic: Race and the Imagination from Harry Potter to The Hunger Games* investigates how kids and teens of color are affected by their representation in books, movies, comics, and online. Her critical stance considers how those story representations shape not only the lives of young people today but whether they will want to pick up the next book, or the other media associated with it, tomorrow when they do not find themselves represented in what they read.¹⁵ To carry out the task, she chooses to explore what she calls Dark Fantastic, but begins the text by sharing her motivations. She reveals that, as a young black woman who did not see herself represented in what she read, she dreamed of her own fantastic stories located in the most magical place she knew at the time – Brazil, more precisely in Bahia. There she thought there was an “racism-free Afrotopia”¹⁶, a reality in which “the cultural loss and trauma of slavery had been far less severe than it had been in the United States, and that Brazilians of African descent had retained more of their memories from our Motherland” (THOMAS, 2019, p. 16).¹⁷ Only when contacting a Brazilian anthropologist was the author able to perceive that her

¹⁵ In the original: how kids and teens of color are affected by their representation in books, movies, comics, and online. Nor have previous studies of popular culture critically considered how those story representations shape not only the lives of young people today but whether they will want to pick up the next book, or the other media associated with it, tomorrow. One way we can begin this important conversation is by exploring the dark fantastic (THOMAS, 2019, p. 7).

¹⁶ In the original: racism-free Afrotopia (THOMAS, 2019, p. 16).

¹⁷ In the original: It was thought that in Salvador the cultural loss and trauma of slavery had been far less severe than it had been in the United States, and that Brazilians of African descent had retained more of their memories from our Motherland (THOMAS, 2019, p. 16).

vision of an exotic and utopian Brazil demonstrated a racist image controlled by the dominant thought. In this regard, Thomas makes me realize the importance of the political aspect present in literature and how his literary imagination, as well as my own, was segregated, putting us in a place apart, “dis-placed” to an “in-between-place” (BHABHA, 1998; HALL, 2003).

Today, I perceive in the discourses on representation and “place of speech”, explained by Djamila Ribeiro (2017), the “oscillating status” (RIBEIRO, 2017, p. 24) and inconstant that my condition and that of authors like Hall and Thomas represent and how it bothered me without my knowing it, at least not consciously. The changing and indefinite condition of being brown hit me. These experiences, however, allowed me to be sensitive to the issue of diaspora, “far enough away to experience the feeling of exile and loss, close enough to understand the enigma of an always delayed 'arrival'” (HALL, 2003, p. 393). Faced with this reality, recognizing myself as black made no sense. After all, I didn't have access to the references in which I could recognize myself. In this conflict, I was in tune with the estrangement (*unheimlichkeit*) and with the lack that not-being-at-home (*nicht-zuhause-sein*) produces (OSSWALD, 2018, p. 77). The same lack that I identify in Afrofuturist narratives, because their search for protagonism and representation somehow also tries to fill this space.

Afrofuturism appears in these “in-between places”, within a “cultural identity” that – from the media and the arts –, in recent years, has evidenced a transformation in the narrative structure of myths about the image of black people (BHABHA, 1998, p. 20; HALL, 2003, p. 29). It is possible to understand the proposal for a change in the protagonism of the characters – their representation – and in the way in which the themes related to what is understood by elements of culture related to blacks have also been changing. Therefore, Afrofuturism is characterized as a movement that participates

in what Gilroy identifies as the Black Atlantic, that is, “the stereophonic, bilingual or bifocal cultural forms originated by – but no longer the exclusive property of – blacks dispersed in the structures of feeling, production, communication and memory” (GILROY, 2001, 35).

Kobena Mercer describes this critical character of diasporic culture in her investigation of black filmmakers in Britain in the 1980s-1990s, but, at the time, it was something that appeared in narratives generally based on a realistic aesthetic.

A cursory survey of the work of black filmmakers in Britain will reveal the preponderance of a realist aesthetic across both documentary and narrative genres. This insistent emphasis on the real must be understood as the prevailing mode in which black independent film has performed a critical function in providing a counter discourse against those versions of reality produced by dominant voices and discourses in British film and media¹⁸ (MERCER, 1994, p. 56–57).

This counter-discourse, although appearing differently, is also present in Afrofuturist fantasy. And it puts itself in a revolutionary posture, by being able to present something that goes beyond alternative versions of reality in the present, looking for alternatives in the future. So, I see that what Mercer’s investigation observed about black filmmakers in Britain (MERCER, 1994, p. 56–57) was one of the steps in the construction of the discourse present in the narratives about black peoples. Afrofuturism would be a “step forward”. Criticism in Afrofuturism takes on another place, also recognizing in fantastic fiction a space of resistance and proposing the creation of decolonial narratives that challenge hegemonic thinking. Information Information.

While acknowledging Mercer’s warning about the “burden of representation” (MERCER, 1990) and how the discourses of black artists do not necessarily need to

¹⁸ In the original: A cursory survey of the work of black filmmakers in Britain will reveal the preponderance of a realist aesthetic across both documentary and narrative genres. This insistent emphasis on the real must be understood as the prevailing mode in which black independent film has performed a critical function in providing a counter discourse against those versions of reality produced by dominant voices and discourses in British film and media (MERCER, 1994, p. 56–57).

have a combative stance or be directly linked to a stance of resistance or pamphleteering in their productions, this condition is inevitable in a society that – even with the exchanges and hybrids present in post-colonialism – still produces inequalities. Faced with this reality, we can see a new scope of this resistance in Afrofuturism, which extends to several of the media where the aesthetics of the movement is presented. Perhaps this step towards the future is also a step forward in the creation of narratives against the dominant and prevailing discourse of today. It would be as if, initially, it was necessary to affirm, through realistic representations, the subordinate situation of the black people, and then to begin to claim other spaces, including utopian spaces, places that in fantasy stories were almost exclusively occupied by Eurocentric themes and narratives. .

Afrofuturist productions place at the center of their narratives the historical effects caused by the African diaspora. They are part of what Gilroy takes as the “struggle to see blacks as agents, as people with cognitive abilities and even an intellectual history – attributes denied by modern racism” (GILROY, 2001, p. 40). This struggle is at the heart of the Afrofuturist movement, even before the term was created. According to Womack (2013) the roots of the aesthetic began decades earlier with artists such as avant-garde jazz legend Sun Ra, funk pioneer George Clinton and science fiction author Octavia Butler who were “rediscovered and reframed by Afrofuturists as social change agentes¹⁹” (WOMACK, 2013, p. 17). All of them carried in their musical and literary narratives the protagonism of black characters, specific situations of subjectivities in the diaspora and a strong relationship with themes of “cyberculture, modern science, technology, and sci-fi pop culture”.²⁰ (WOMACK, 2013, p. 17).

¹⁹ In the original: rediscovered and reframed by Afrofuturists as social change agents (WOMACK, 2013, p. 17).

²⁰ In the original: cyberculture, modern science, technology, and sci-fi pop culture (WOMACK, 2013, p. 17).

Therefore, it is reaffirmed that the Afrofuturist aesthetic presents itself as an example in tune with the feeling of dislocation, because the contexts in which it appears are produced in the gaps created by the conflict between the need to see oneself represented and the current images. It was in this “in-between place” where “subjectivation strategies” are formed that I felt *unheimlich* (strange), because it did not correspond to that image presented by the discourse in which I saw myself inserted while growing up (BHABHA, 1998, p. 20; HALL, 2003).

It is from this experience that I assume: Afrofuturism brings together a prolific set of aesthetic expressions capable of playing with the feeling of displacement, projecting future alternatives for the descendants of black peoples who lived in the diasporas of the colonial period.

Considerations for the Construction of Other Leisure Curricula

I perceive this change in the image that is made of the black as part of a kind of uprising of the subalternized, the resistance that coincides with the Afrofuturist discourse. There is in the proposal to reallocate the role of black people a “subversive force” (MERCER, 1994, p. 63) that, at least since the end of the 20th century, has gradually built the foundations for the critical presence that Afrofuturism has achieved today in the mass media. Therefore, I understand Afrofuturist aesthetics as a possibility of questioning and displacement of meanings, concepts, ideas, practices and feelings disseminated in the curricula of leisure practices. According to Paraíso (2010), both in the curriculum and in leisure, culture can be understood as a practice of meaning in which different groups produce and are produced, transform and are transformed, govern and are governed.

The practices permeating our culture have produced barriers so that it is possible to build positive black identities, in the face of the dominant hegemonic discourses of valuing whiteness. In this regard, the curricula of leisure practices, engendered within a society that has racism in its structure, produce and reproduce discrimination and false Brazilian racial democracy. It is in this sense that Cultural Studies uses the understanding of culture as a political and pedagogical discourse capable of questioning the forms of subordination that create inequalities between groups, as well as seeking to challenge the institutional and ideological limits that mask their own power relations. The curriculum, as a cultural construction, is the result of a clash in which knowledge and practices measure forces, investing in the production of particular types of subjects and social identities (SILVA, 2021).

In these paradigms, while curricular practices make their investments to control difference, to reduce diversities to a common identity, the curriculum is always subject to negotiations, resistances, leaks and bifurcations (PARAÍSO, 2010). Thus, if curricula and leisure practices, such as cultural texts, have the power to produce routines, imprison forces, divide and discourage, on the other hand, they promote encounters, connections capable of reactivating forces, activating becomings and producing different stimuli (PARAÍSO, 2015).

The proposal of Afrofuturism is to provide black people with other narratives, other futures, other ways of affecting and being affected. In this regard, I seek support in the understanding of Silva (2021) for the proposition of curricula-meetings, curricula that provide diverse encounters, with different powers, between different actors and experiences. For these meetings to be possible, it is necessary to make room for the positive affirmation of creativity and will. “To refuse and criticize what we are, we must, at least in a minimal sense, have discovered what we are or how we are

constituted and have imagined and invented what new types of subjects we could be” (DEACON; PARKER, 2002, p. 107). It is precisely in this game of difference that a leisure curriculum can be productive.

In this regard, an Afrofuturist aesthetic of leisure proposes the composition of other curricula for comics, television, the media, social networks and public and private leisure spaces. An Afrofuturist aesthetics of leisure can contribute to the production of other subjectivities beyond the hegemonic one, linking itself to the potential for political construction of new arrangements.

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