licere
Journal of the Interdisciplinary Postgraduate Program in Leisure Studies - UFMG

‘BLACK RIO! BLACK POWER!’: WHEN BLACK NARRATIVE LEISURE ENTERS THE SCENE

Received on: August 05, 2024
Passed on: November 28, 2024

Lucilene Alencar das Dores[1]
Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais (UFMG)
Belo Horizonte – MG – Brazil
https://orcid.org/0009-0007-5238-4498

Tatiana Alves de Carvalho Costa[2]
Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais (UFMG)
Belo Horizonte – MG – Brazil
https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8192-0842

ABSTRACT: The aim of this article is to analyze the documentary Black Rio! Black Power! and its relations with the production of an imaginary of affirmation of the black race in the sphere of leisure. To do this, we use a film analysis methodology: a) watch the documentary, describing its parts; b) transcribe the speeches and summarize excerpts, identifying moments in which characters remember how young people's consciousness about being black was formed and c) select images from the film that correspond to black consciousness and pride. As results we understand the Black dances, they can be understood as quilombamentos and, therefore, an ideological instrument against forms of oppression. Leisure is at the center of the racial debate scene in which soul and black dances are spaces of freedom to become black, which opposes the negative image of the black body, a result of the imaginary of coloniality.

KEYWORDS: Leisure. Race. Quilombo.

‘BLACK RIO! BLACK POWER!’: QUANDO O LAZER DE NARRATIVAS NEGRAS ENTRA (EN)CENA

RESUMO: Propomos como objetivo deste artigo analisar o documentário Black Rio! Black Power! e suas relações com a produção de um imaginário de afirmação da raça negra no âmbito do lazer. Para isso, utilizamos uma metodologia de análise fílmica: a) assistir ao documentário, descrevendo suas partes; b) transcrever as falas e resumir

[1] Ph.D. student in the Interdisciplinary Postgraduate Program in Leisure Studies at the Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais [Federal University of Minas Gerais]; CAPES scholarship holder; professor at Federal Institute of Education, Science and Technology of São Paulo - Campos do Jordão campus, currently on leave for stricto sensu qualification; member of the Research Laboratory on Professional Training and Practice in Leisure – Oricolé/UFMG.
[2] Ph.D. student of the Postgraduate Program in Social Communication at Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais [Federal University of Minas Gerais]; professor at UNA.

trechos, identificando momentos em que personagens relembram como se formou a consciência de jovens sobre ser negro/a e c) selecionar imagens do filme que correspondam à consciência e orgulho negro. Como resultados compreendemos os bailes Black, podem ser compreendidos como aquilombamentos sendo, portanto, instrumento ideológico contra as formas de opressão. O lazer se insere no centro da cena do debate racial em que o soul e os bailes black são espaços de liberdade para o tornar-se negro/a que se opõe a imagem negativa do corpo negro, fruto do imaginário da colonialidade.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Lazer. Raça. Quilombo.

Introduction

(En)scene! A word usually used in the artistic milieu, it suggests display, performance. The act of staging indicates action and/or the preparation of the necessary conditions to go "on stage", that is, into the area intended for artistic presentation. In the title of this article, we wrote (en)scene with parentheses to bring out this double meaning—display and staging area—relating it to the leisure of Black narratives. We believe that art, as well as artistic practice, are communicative languages sensitive to Black culture.

Art is connected to the context of creation and the production of imaginaries in which artistic performances stand out for their potential for fabulation. "To fabulate is to produce images, gazes, identities, from the critical rereading of history: from the past, operating in the present and the future, through a poetic reading of the world. To fabulate is to speculate in order to produce routes of existential and aesthetic escape" (Martins S., 2023, p. 98).

When the leisure of Black narratives enters "(en)scene", cracks open that can inventory new imaginaries, create the missing images of a Black history yet to be told! In view of these premises, this article presents the results of an analysis of the film Black Rio! Black Power! from an interdisciplinary perspective, revealing its relations

with the production of an imaginary of affirmation of the Black race within the scope of leisure. Released in 2023, the feature film directed by Emílio Domingos uses cinematic language to address a movement that encouraged Black pride, which spread throughout Brazil in the 1970s through the Soul Music Balls.

Bell hooks (2023) taught us about the importance of cinema in the fabulation of narratives that can recreate reality. For her, "cinema produces magic. It changes things. It takes reality and transforms it into something different right before our eyes [...]. Cinema offers a reimagined, reinvented version of reality" (p. 17).

In *Black Rio! Black Power!*, the creation of reality was led by Black people both in the participation of characters who were real attendees of the Soul Music Balls in the suburbs of Rio de Janeiro and in the film's direction and scriptwriting itself. At this point, it is worth emphasizing the racist structure of film production in Brazil. Emílio Domingos is part of a small group of Black Brazilian directors. Emílio Domingos is one of a small group of black Brazilian directors. A study[3] carried out by the Grupo de Estudos Multidisciplinares em Ações Afirmativas [Multidisciplinary Study Group on Affirmative Actions] of Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro [State University of Rio de Janeiro] (GEMAA/UERJ) indicates that only four Black men directed films with large audiences between 2020 and 2022. Research from Agência Nacional do Cinema[4] [Brazilian Cinema Agency] (ANCINE) shows that no Black person has signed the direction of films with more than 500,000 cinema viewers between 1970 and 2016.

[3] Cinema Brasileiro: Raça e gênero nos filmes de grande público. Infográfico Available at: https://gemaa.iesp.uerj.br/infografico/cinema-brasileiro-raca-e-genero-nos-filmes-de-grande-publico/. Accessed at: May 22, 2024.
[4] Raça e gênero no cinema brasileiro (1970 a 2016). Boletim GEMAA n. 2, 2017. Available at: https://gemaa.iesp.uerj.br/boletins/boletim-gemaa-2-raca-e-genero-no-cinema-brasileiro-1970-2016/. Accessed at: May 22, 2024.

This devastating scenario reveals the existence of very few Black people in film directing roles within Brazilian cinema, which exposes the logic that coloniality continues reproducing racial violence since the invasion of the Americas. According to Quijano (2005), the idea of race is the central point for understanding coloniality, considering that its origin, "in its modern sense, has no known history prior to the Americas" (p. 117). It was the idea of the existence of different races that legitimized and sustained the "conquest" of Brazilian territory.

It is interesting to reflect that colonization imposed that the phenotypical distinctions of race are based on biological inequalities that indicate the existence of different types of members of the same species, with the European (white) belonging to a superior level and the non-European (non-white) to an inferior one. From this logic, the idea of race is constructed together with racism. Thus, both race and racism do not seem to have existed before the invasion of the Americas. Therefore, the long duration of colonialism is responsible for the deep and enduring rooting of the idea of racial superiority, such that it came to be accepted as something "natural", granting a status of power to the white man (Quijano, 1992).

The colonial project of invasion of Brazil left, through coloniality, marks that founded the production of an imaginary of the modern world-system, based on the existence of a global power pattern of the white-heterosexual-European man, centered in Europe, so that everything that diverges from this model is determined as peripheral, inferiorized, marginalized, and of lesser importance. In this sense, we recognize that coloniality is the condition of persistence, in the present, of the racial hierarchy among human beings, with race being the element that guides and organizes the discourses of modernity that validate the exploitation of Black bodies in servile occupations.

If, on the one hand, coloniality imposes barriers to the social ascension of black people, on the other hand, there appear to be gaps in the global pattern of power. The documentary *Black Rio! Black Power!* — which we understand as a cultural manifestation within the scope of leisure that points to the possibility of fissures in the colonial project of power — does so both through the performance of a Black director in Brazilian cinema, such as Emílio Domingos, and through the production of Black narratives told and led by Black people themselves. This film is committed to articulating the display of archival images and contemporary testimonies of Black characters who recount part of their lived stories during Black youth in Rio de Janeiro under the Civil-Military Dictatorship.

As it deals with a period of intense repression that demanded resistance strategies, "*Black Rio*" can be understood as a movement that revealed forms of quilombo, as pointed out by Beatriz Nascimento (2018), in its dimension as an "ideological instrument" and a "symbol of resistance". Moreover, "quilombo means fraternal and free gathering, solidarity, coexistence, existential communion" (Nascimento, 2019, p. 289).

The act of aquilombar (forming a quilombo) seems to be related to the need to counteract the dynamics established by racist repression during the Civil-Military Dictatorship. Thus, the coming together of Black people to form a quilombo tends to constitute "an effective instrument for confronting the social order, capable of changing it in their favor" (Nascimento, 2021, p. 114). In this way, the quilombamentos functioned as space/time of collective resistance to recover Black subjectivities; to promote work developed by Black people; to nurture hopes of inserting into the cultural scene manifestations that reinforce Black identity; and to reconfigure cultural

experience based on and with Black bodies. "The quilombamentos are (re)drawings upon existing maps, of new and future paths, taking on the narration of other stories within a national cultural history still to be woven" (Martins S., 2023, p. 44).

Inspired by the possibilities of cinema to fabulate realities, to construct narratives metaphorized by the symbol of the quilombo, and to recover the history of the Black population that was forged by coloniality, we propose, as the aim of this article, to analyze the documentary *Black Rio! Black Power!* by Emílio Domingos (2023) and its relations with the production of an imaginary of affirmation of the Brazilian Black race within the scope of leisure.

Methodology

Brazilian society operates through the racial contract, which is "signed among the equals who count, within which those instituted as unequal are inserted as objects of subjugation, hence violence being its sustaining element" (Carneiro, 2023, p. 35). The racial contract determines both the functions and activities within the productive system and social roles. In this scenario, epistemicide is a constitutive element and functions as one of the "most effective and long-lasting instruments of ethnic and racial domination through the denial of the legitimacy of the knowledge produced by dominated groups and, consequently, of their members, who come to be ignored as subjects of knowledge" (Carneiro, 2023, p. 87).

Given this, we understand that filmic language may continue reproducing epistemicide, as an element inherent to the racial contract, but it also has the potential to oppose this reality as a way of creating new stories not yet told. Thus, both the film and its analysis can be carried out from a perspective named by Bell hooks (2019) as

"oppositional". The author points out the possibility of the "oppositional gaze" opening space for imagining "new transgressive possibilities for the formulation of identity" and for seeing the history attributed to Black people "as counter-memory, using it as a way of understanding the present and inventing the future" (Hooks, 2019, p. 240). The approach to the film considers it "not as a secondary-order mirror raised to reflect what already exists, but as a form of representation capable of constituting us as new types of subjects, and thus allowing us to discover who we are" (Hooks, 2019, p. 242).

From this reflection, it is important that readers know that the two authors of this article are Black women who understand academic writing as an act of resistance. Therefore, we embrace the teachings of Collins (2016), who states that the "role of Black women intellectuals is to produce facts and theories about the experience of Black women that will elucidate the Black women's point of view for Black women" (p. 102).

For this purpose, we used a content-based film analysis methodology that consists of: a) watching the documentary, describing its parts, pointing out its structure and approach to the theme; b) transcribing speeches and summarizing excerpts, identifying moments when characters in this real story recall how the consciousness of young people from Rio's suburbs about being Black was formed; and c) selecting images from the film that correspond to Black consciousness and pride in the sociability of the Black dance parties.

Next, we organized the data production into two categories: 1) the association between leisure and the Black race; 2) the potential of the image's self-reflexivity and Black resistance on screen. This stage allowed comparisons between the narratives of the documentary and also relating them to other contexts and references. For this

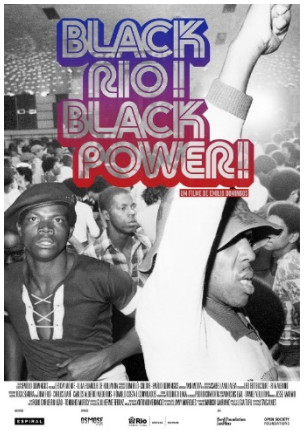
analysis, we used frameworks related to Black identity, Black art, decolonial thought, and leisure studies, focusing on epistemological approaches that dialogue with Black race and leisure.

The Leisure of Black Narratives

Black Rio! Black Power! presents the history of 'Black Rio' Movement through the memories of central figures in its formation. The trajectory of these memories points to resistance, the construction of belonging, identity awareness, and the politics of Black youth during the period of hostility and repression imposed by the Brazilian Civil-Military Dictatorship. In addition to testimonies, the documentary features archival footage and soul music hits that were popular at the dances.

Black Power: These words in the film's title also name a type of hairstyle widely used by black people in the United States in the late 1960s and which served as inspiration for Brazilian black youth in the 1970s, in which curly hair was presented in a natural, voluminous and rounded way, to emphasize the pride of belonging to the black race.

Figure 1: Promotional poster for the documentary Black Rio! Black Power!.



Source: Material available in virtual environment.

The poster [Fig.1] and the title already announce the film's proposition. With the predominance of black and white colors, the poster presents a portrait of a soul dance party featuring, in the foreground, two Black men, both wearing hats. One of these men has strongly marked Negroid features and very dark skin; he appears with his body leaning forward, lips slightly parted, eyes open and fixed, as if staring at the viewer. The other man is positioned sideways, with his mouth open as if shouting, left arm extended with a closed fist—a gesture widely used by the Black Movement to express struggle and resistance against racist oppression. In the background, there is a large number of Black people in what seems to be a dance hall lit by a mirrored disco ball; we predominantly see heads—and hair—in the black power style.

Gomes (2002), when discussing the importance of Black phenotypical characteristics in relation to self-image, affirms that the body constitutes itself "as the support of Black identity, and curly hair as a strong identity icon". The black power hairstyle materialized (and still materializes) an oppositional stance toward the white supremacist beauty standard, which imposed (and still imposes, though to a lesser extent today) on Black people the alteration of their hair structure through straightening—often using toxic chemical products and other violent procedures—or through other attempts to hide their characteristics, such as wigs or very short haircuts.

> Even if we recognize that hair manipulation is a bodily technique and a social behavior present in various cultures, for Black people—and more specifically for Black Brazilians—this process does not occur without conflict. These struggles can express feelings of rejection, acceptance, re-signification, and even denial of ethnic/racial belonging. The multiple representations built around Black hair in the context of a racist society influence individual behavior (Gomes, 2002, p. 21). 21).

There are spaces in which hair can be seen from a perspective of revalorization that transcends the individual and reaches the ethnic/racial group to which one belongs. According to Gomes (2003), "the experience with the Black body and curly hair is not

limited to the space of family, friendships, activism, or romantic relationships" (p. 173). In the process of identity unfolding, the body can be considered a support of Black identity, and curly hair can be an identity icon, since hair plays an especially important role in how a Black person sees and is seen. For Agenor Neto, an attendee of Soul dances and one of the film's characters, the Black Rio movement renewed the image that Black people have of themselves:

> For those who are Black, I can say it was a birth. Or rather, a rebirth! Because we were very subjugated, right! Because you looked around, say, within a radius of 10 kilometers, and there wasn't a single Black engineer. The first Black engineer I ever met was Filó [one of the party organizers], right. So our destiny was to have those subordinate jobs, unloading Coca-Cola trucks, being office boys—there was no such perspective. (Black Rio! Black Power!, 2023, 21 minutes and 11 seconds).

The testimony shows what the professional outlook was like for Black youth in the 1970s—that is, roughly five decades ago. However, this narrative feels so current that it still seems to portray Brazilian reality today. In a recent study, it was identified that Black youth have high rates both in low-paid employment and in unemployment. Data from IBGE for the first quarter of 2021 reveal that the unemployment rate among Black people is above the national average, maintaining the difference of the historical series that began in 2012: the proportion of unemployed white people was 11.9%, below the national average of 14.7%, while that of Black people was 18.6% and of mixed-race people 16.9%, both above the national average. Among young people (aged 18 to 24), the data show that the unemployment rate for white youth is 11.9%, below the national average of 14%, while among Black youth it is 35.5%, above the national average (IBGE, 2021).

Associated with the context of low labor market prospects, the Black youth portrayed in the documentary also suffered under the Civil-Military Dictatorship. The Brazilian State defended the myth of Racial Democracy and blamed the Black

Movement itself for racism in the country, associating the movement for Black empowerment with "communism" and vagrancy. In the film, Dom Filó recalls the conflicting relationship between the presence of youth, with their bodies and hair, and the racist premises of the Civil-Military Dictatorship which, subsidized by the vagrancy law, decree No. 3,688 of 1941, applied a penalty of fifteen (15) days to three (3) months in prison for anyone caught wandering the streets.

> The problem was when he [the Black youth] went out on the street. He got hassled all the time! The aesthetic he liked, the afro hair, right, what's now called Black Power, right. He had to make his own products to create his look. He made that handmade comb to comb his hair and make it as beautiful as possible. He would lose that beautiful energy every time he got searched. Because the police said that was a weapon, and just to mess with him they'd take it. That was the minimum. On top of that came the question: Where's your work card? If you didn't have a job listed in your work card, you were in trouble, man! They called it vagrancy. Your would be reported with vagrancy. Second time—another vagrancy. Third time—you would have a police record. Police record! Do you get that? (*Black* Rio! *Black Power*!, 2023).

During the military dictatorship, the police watched over Black people who moved through the streets without their identification documents, among them the work card. As provided by Filó, the treatment given to Black bodies that were approached for walking freely becomes explicit: "Where's your work card? If you didn't have a job listed in your work card, you were in trouble, man—it was called vagrancy."

It is worth noting that, in the 1960s, Brazil began the political regime in which members of the Armed Forces centralized political and administrative power of the State in their hands, denying people democratic participation, the exercise of citizenship, and the right to live their freedom and humanity. Information and repression control agencies were created through capillary networks, such as the Army Information Center, which operated both in data collection and direct repression, becoming one of the most lethal components of the dictatorship's apparatus (Starling, 2001). All of this

repressive and coercive machinery functioned unequally depending on race, social class, and gender.

The film shows how police treatment varied depending on the person's identity aesthetics. As stated by Filó: "The problem was when he [the Black youth] went out on the street. He got hassled all the time!" This made us reflect on the existence of racism within public institutions, which, instead of protecting the Black population—the most vulnerable—persist in surveilling and punishing it.

The imaginary that the Black population deserves to be watched and punished predates the Civil-Military Dictatorship period. Danilo da Silva Ramos is a Black researcher in the field of Leisure Studies who is dedicated to producing critical research on the relationship between leisure and race. He provokes us to think about what "vagrancy" represented for Black people during the period in which Brazil transitioned from monarchy to republic, from 1890 to 1910, and how they dealt with these conflicts.

According to Ramos (2022), samba was a form of daily entertainment for part of the Black population during this period, and at the same time, this leisure experience appeared frequently in the police columns of the sources he investigated. The researcher verified the existence of strong repression committed by the State against the Black population. "Repression by the state was observed through the legal apparatus, constituted by laws (for example, we cite the Penal Code of 1890, which criminalized 'vagrancy' and 'witchcraft') and its repressive arm, the police" (p. 79).

This idea that the Black population is dangerous and requires legislation to punish it persists to this day. Vagrancy has been on the list of misdemeanors and considered a criminal offense under Brazilian penal law since the Imperial period. However, Bill No. 1212/2021, which repeals the misdemeanor known as "vagrancy", is

currently under consideration (Federal Senate, 2023). Considering that this is a current debate, some questions are raised: Why did it take more than eight decades to discuss, through a bill, the extinction of the vagrancy law? What are the risks for Brazilian society in allowing Black youth to move freely through the streets? Why does the Black population continue to be the target of State repression? After all, there still seems to exist, even between the lines, a tendency and need for punishment and incarceration of Black youth by the Brazilian Government.

Without intending to answer such questions, we are left reflecting on what strategies Black youth have developed to resist and escape State oppression—whether in the post-abolition period (as researched by Ramos, 2022), during the Civil-Military Dictatorship (as portrayed in the film), or even today. There seems to exist a wisdom that enables Black people to overcome difficulties and keep moving forward—and perhaps cultural manifestations within the scope of leisure can contribute to this resistance. Ramos (2022) argues that "the practice of amusements helped Black people become human, through a communal racial condition" (p. 157), which, by fostering a collective racial mentality, encouraged amusement as a way to "move forward, live, and survive".

In the documentary's context, the Soul dances were configured as time-space for racial belonging and refuge in the face of the repression of the Civil-Military Dictatorship period. It is interesting to think that the affirmation of "Black identity does not arise from the mere awareness of pigmentary differences between whites and Blacks or Blacks and yellows", since it carries with it a set of multiple values aligned with the recognition of the historical fact that the Black population was (and is) the victim of the

worst attempts at dehumanization, having its cultures not only targeted for destruction but also denied existence itself (Munanga, 2020, p. 19).

In this regard, it is possible to think that both the challenges imposed by coloniality that subjugates black bodies, and the strong repression arising from the period of the Civil-Military Dictatorship, made it possible for the raising of black consciousness to also be seen as a collective movement of affirmation of solidarity that contributed to the awakening of the feeling of racial belonging linked to black culture. Therefore, it may be that the Black dance parties functioned as quilombamentos—moments of seeing and being seen among peers that reinforced becoming Black as identity reaffirmation and as forms of sharing collective solidarity, in search of recovering the Black identity lost within the yet-to-be-told history of Black Brazil.

For Brazilian Black men and/or women, being Black requires taking ownership of the ideological process that imprisons them in an alienated image in which they recognize themselves, and "creating a new consciousness that reasserts differences and reaffirms a dignity alien to any level of exploitation". This occurs because the Black person does not possess a positive identity that they can either affirm or deny. In Brazil, being born with dark skin and/or Negroid features and sharing a common history of slavery do not, by themselves, organize a Black identity. "Thus, being Black is not a given condition, a priori. It is a becoming. To be Black is to become Black" (Souza, 2021, p. 115).

Beatriz Nascimento (2006) points out that there is an "interrelationship between body, space, and identity that can be remade by the one who seeks to become a person (and not a thing): in the quilombo, in the Afro-Brazilian religious house, in a space of gathering and/or entertainment, in the Black movement, before the mirror or a

photograph" (p. 66). This Black body that desires recognition and appreciation as a human being, fleeing social repression to guarantee its existence, may find in the Black dance parties moments of tranquility in the process of becoming Black identity. For the activist and historian, black bodies carry radical deficiencies in freedom and construct places of transitory reference in black dance parties.

> I think the people who are now moving around Black American music, in a sense, it's very positive in terms of connection, identity, knowing the other, feeling the other, touching the other, dancing with the other. I feel that this young generation organizing around this soul movement—they'll have fewer problems than I had [...]. This process can be a process insofar as soul is something modern, current, on television, in the cinema, in the newspapers—it's from the Americans. That means it also carries the possibility of affirmation at the level of saying I'm beautiful, I'm strong, I have a good body. (Nascimento, 2006, p. 67).

These reflections by Beatriz Nascimento place leisure at the center of the racial debate, where soul and Black dances, as cultural manifestations within the scope of leisure, can be understood as transitional spaces of freedom that enable the unfolding of Black identity with the potential to counter the negative image of the Black body, a product of the colonial imaginary. Race, as created by the logic of colonial difference[5], establishes racism, which strains the dialogue between different groups by constructing symbolic boundaries that create an identity binary between "being Black"—as something negative—and "being white", as something positive.

Thus, Black cultural manifestations such as soul and the Black dances seem to be inspired by the way of life of the quilombos, functioning as "cracks that provoke lines of flight and are elements of dynamization" (Nascimento, 2021, p. 251), which can generate a Black identification that sways against coloniality. Furthermore, Black cultural manifestations also belong to leisure; thus, it is possible to say that leisure, in

[5]The colonial difference "consists of classifying groups of people or populations and identifying them in their faults or excesses, which marks the difference and inferiority in relation to those who classify" (Mignolo, 2003, p. 39).

this context, reaffirms itself as ancestral wisdom[6], grounded in the "body-archive", which reproduces the quilombo's ways of life.

According to Nascimento (2022), the Black body is the body-archive of a collectivity that presents bodily gestures, symbolic objects, orality, and a set of elements that compose its cultural repertoire and reproduce the dynamic memory of a group in a continuous process that translates into a form of cultural resistance. It is an "Amefrican body[7] that carries the inscriptions of quilombolas (cimarrones, marrons, cumbes, palenques) and of various cultural expressions: blues, jazz, jongo, congado, tambor de crioula, marabaixo, reggae, vogue, funk, and rap" (p. 30).

According to Souza (2021), after the family, leisure spaces are the secondary places that reinforce important experiences in the process of becoming Black. Space is an element that interrelates with leisure and can be understood as "space-place," which goes beyond the physical environment, as a "locale" that subjects appropriate in the sense of transforming it into a meeting point (with oneself, with others, and with the world) and of social interaction for leisure (Gomes, 2004, p. 123). Social space cannot be explained without social time, and vice versa, since they are inseparable dimensions. "Thus, time/space is a product of social relations and of nature and is constituted by

[6] The word ancestral comes from ancestrality, which is "a category capable of dialoguing with the African experience on Brazilian soil" (Oliveira, 2012, p. …). 40). Thus, it is a category of relationship, as there is no ancestry without otherness; of connection, the way in which people in a relationship interact, enabling exchanges; and of inclusion, because it is receptive, it is a diffuse space where the black experience is anchored on Brazilian soil. According to Nascimento (2020), "ancestry is not just a relationship that is established with ancestors: it is also, and above all, a logic of continuity that gives meaning – from the present – to the past, giving shape to memory" (p. 42).

[7] Political-cultural category idealized by Lélia Gonzalez in contrast to the terms African-American and African-American, which lead to the reflection that black people only exist in the United States, and not throughout the continent. In light of this, Lélia asks: "As for us, black people, how can we achieve effective self-awareness as descendants of Africans if we remain prisoners, captives of racist language? For this very reason, in contrast to the terms mentioned above, I propose that of Americans (Amefricans) to designate all of us" (Gonzalez, 2020, p. 134).

objective, subjective, symbolic, concrete, and material aspects—revealing conflicts, contradictions, and power relations" (Gomes, 2023, p. 47).

For Gomes (2011, 2014), leisure, situated as a time/space, can contribute to the re-elaboration of values and move toward the process of reconstructing our society, as it is configured as a phenomenon capable of fostering affective sensitivities and encouraging people to reflect upon society and broader aspects. Thus, leisure is "conceptualized as a human need and as a dimension of culture characterized by the playful experience of cultural manifestations in social time/space" (Gomes, 2023, p. 47-48). From this point of view, leisure articulates three fundamental elements: playfulness, cultural manifestations, and social time/space. We understand that leisure can provoke social, identity, and subjective transformations in a way that reinvents Black identity, considering that its first invention occurred within the family and/or its substitute forms, as indicated by Souza (2021).

Leisure, Resistance and Self-reflexivity

The sports court of the Grêmio Social Esportivo de Rocha Miranda [Rocha Miranda Social Sports Association], whose name refers to the neighborhood in the northern zone of the city of Rio de Janeiro, was the place that housed the temple of Soul Music in Brazil. This was the setting where Black and peripheral youth staged one of the greatest movements of Black aesthetics and appreciation ever experienced in our country. "Between 1972 and 1975, few people knew, but there were already almost 1 million young people dancing soul in Rio de Janeiro. Young people who received a cultural shock, an identity shock, a critical and political thought about what it means to be Black in this racist country" (*Black Rio! Black Power!*, 2023, 4 minutes and 25 seconds).

Asfilófio de Oliveira Filho, known as Dom Filó [Fig. 2], is the central character in the narrative of '*Black Rio! Black Power*!' He is one of the creators of the Soul Grand Prix team, a pioneer in organizing "Black" dances in the 1970s and in recording albums by Brazilian Black artists of this musical style. Dom Filó and the dance attendees, Carlos Alberto Medeiros, Carlos Dafé, Agenor Neto, Marquinhos de Oswaldo, and Virgilane Dutra, return to the temple of Soul at the Rocha Miranda court to recall the stories of the dances and evaluate the meaning of that movement of Black resistance.

Figure 2: Dom Filó at the sports court of the Grêmio Social Esportivo de Rocha Miranda

Source: Image captured from the documentary *Black Rio! Black Power*!

For that youth, the dance parties represented the construction of times/spaces of leisure, belonging, and resistance, in dialogue with previous generations. Since before Abolition, in Rio de Janeiro and in other cities in the country, Black workers had created various associative forms, many inspired by Brotherhoods, such as charitable associations, recreational guilds, and social clubs, which were constituted as times/spaces of self-protection, reception, resistance, and appreciation of the Black race.

In the 1950s, in Rio de Janeiro, middle-class Black men and women founded social clubs where they could experience cultural activities in the sphere of leisure

without having to face racial discrimination from other similar establishments in the city. Among them were Clube Renascença and Casca Dura Tênis Clube. In the film, Filó recounts how the creation of Soul Grand Prix as a time/space of leisure and racial awareness generated an intergenerational and ideological conflict within the Black community itself in the suburbs of Rio de Janeiro.

> Its aesthetics, its visual style, its political discourse would have been a problem in clubs like that [Clube Renascença], like Casca Dura Tênis Clube, like Magnata. Why? Because imagine that Black wall, full of Black slides and those political talks, that thing about studying. They liked money, right, but they didn't want that. Then I said: Okay, let's find a middle ground. Then we put, among those slides, the racing drivers of the time and included Fittipaldi [Formula One driver], and we put that right there in the middle of the Black crowd. So there was James Brown, there was Fangio, and there was a race car, and there was the party crowd. Then we created a name: Soul at High Speed: Soul Grand Prix. That's how we managed to get into Casca Dura, which was the first Soul Grand Prix dance (*Black Rio! Black Power!*, 2023, 17 minutes and 13 seconds).

The strategy used by *Soul Grand Prix* to massively spread Black culture was centered on the way the team conducted the dance. There was an insight to combine Formula One races, which were a sporting highlight at the time, with Soul Music, which was of great importance to the African American community in the United States as a demonstration of pride in being Black and as a tool in the struggle against racial segregation. Images of racing drivers, such as Emerson Fittipaldi, were part of the slides shown during the dances, which featured both the Black Soul personalities, like James Brown, and the people who attended the dance, dressed in an aesthetic that awakened pride in being Black.

This way of tricking the clubs into allowing the dances reveals the difficulty experienced at the time in spreading Black culture, which has an aesthetic that differs from hegemonic standards. The dances carried a visible set of characteristics that were influenced by the resistance movements of the Black population of the United States—whether in the lyrics of the songs sung in English, in the way of dancing, in the Black

Power hairstyle, in the use of clothing and platform shoes, or even in the messages inspired by the speeches of American leaders such as Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X. But they also referenced Brazilian Black leaders such as Zumbi dos Palmares.

It is interesting to consider that the display of images of Formula One drivers and even the presence of white people at the Soul Dances cannot be seen as a problem for the realization of the dance parties. For "this is to attribute strength to the dominator. Because the great evil is not the presence of the white man but the departure of the black man" (Nascimento, 2022, p. 131).

The idea of "Black Rio" as a movement that revealed forms of quilombo, that is, a time/space inhabited mostly by Black people, demonstrates its characteristic of being "a warrior when it needs to be a warrior. And it is also the retreat when the fight is not necessary. It is a sapience, a wisdom" (Nascimento, 2022, p. 130). The quilombo does not exclude the presence of the non-Black person—not in the times of Zumbi dos Palmares[8], and much less in contemporary times. Reaffirming the extremism of racial separation linked to the quilombo perspective is dangerous and weakens its ancestral meaning, which is present as a remembrance of a past that moves in the present and points to paths for the future.

The problem of the quilombo was/is not centered on the presence of white people but on the exclusion of Black people, who carry with them ancestral memory and their history of freedom. Thus, the mystique of the quilombo "runs through the

[8] "The hierarchy based on race or skin color reflects the colonial model of society, which, without a doubt, has much more influence on the internal structure of the quilombo than African origin" [...]. Thus, studies on quilombos point to the "existence of individuals of other races, both white and, mainly, indigenous" (Nascimento, 2021, p. 135).

memory of the Black and national collectivity, no longer as a declared war of arms, but as an effort of struggle for life" (Nascimento, 2021, p. 250).

Recognizing "*Black Rio*" as a quilombo makes it possible to attribute to this movement characteristics of racial resistance that marked/mark Black people as belonging to narratives that oppose coloniality. Thus, these premises legitimize and strengthen the idea that it was not enough to have music, dance, and an audience to create a Soul dance—it was necessary to adopt a language of white passability as a strategy for the clubs to accept the realization of the events. The assertion of discourses and the mediation of conflicts took place, among other resources, through the projection of images of people who reaffirmed their Black aesthetics amid other images of Formula One drivers, which served as protective tactics for the continuation of the dances.

Projected on the big screens, photos of Black people inspired by "Black is Beautiful" [Fig. 3] and phrases valuing the Black population were shown and spoken countless times: "I study, and you?", "Where is your Black pride?", "Hold your head up!", recounts Dom Filó. "Something along those lines, more or less, to raise people's self-esteem. Because individually the week was very hard for us. We lived under pressure on the streets all the time" *(Black Rio! Black Power!*, 2023, 19 minutes and 29 seconds).

Figure 3: Two of the photos displayed during the dance parties of *Soul Grand Prix*

Source: Image captured from the documentary *Black Rio! Black Power*!

In the black-and-white image, it is possible to see a Black man smiling with one arm raised above his head and two other Black people, with fixed gazes, light expressions, and Black Power hairstyles. These people are presented in the filmic narrative as attendees of the dance parties of Soul Music. The concentration suggested by the people's gaze and the joy portrayed by the smile indicate to the film's viewers that the dance was an experience of becoming Black and of having fun.

For Martins (2023), Black art, in general, is linked to the civil rights movement, with a character of protest and demand, whose limits transcend what had been achieved by more traditional art up to that point. "The image is a sign that, by its symbolic nature, delimits and circulates a discourse of knowledge and power, bearer of certain truths that sustain the existence of the dominant group" (p. 78). Beatriz Nascimento provoked the reflection that invisibility lies at the root of the loss of identity. The activist understood that "it is necessary to have the image to recover identity. One must become visible, because one's face is the reflection of another's, one's body is the reflection of another's, and in each one lies the reflection of all bodies" (Nascimento, 1989, n.p.).

In this regard, it is possible to affirm that the image is a sign of power and knowledge, and it is necessary to demystify the negative images of the Black person. Black art manifested in the sphere of leisure can be a path that establishes the expressive experience of Black people without reducing it to the values of the hegemonic standard. For that, it is necessary that it be engaged with Black culture, that it respect ancestral memory, and that it recover national identity as a way to promote a Black history that is still to be told, fabulated.

In the tradition of documentary studies, the theme of self-reflexivity appears in the group of films that turn toward the very linguistic operations that constitute narrative forms. In the words of Da-Rin (2004), this category of films concentrates those that, through metalinguistic operations, assimilate "the rhetorical resources developed throughout the history of documentary" and produce "an inflection of these upon themselves, questioning their limitations". When dealing with reflexivity, Da-Rin addresses the analytical categories developed by Bill Nichols (1991), who observes thematic and formal choices, aesthetic proposals, and the ethical dimension of narrative propositions[9]. It is not the intention of this work to discuss what Nichols calls "modes of representation," nor to attempt to observe whether Domingues' film belongs to any of these categories or to the intersection among them[10].

What interests us here is understanding self-reflexivity in the filmic context and how this notion helps us observe a gesture made explicit in *Black Rio! Black Power!* related to a critique of Black representation through hegemonic images and to the way

[9] Nichols uses as some of his criteria the articulation of cinematic discourse and argumentation, affiliations, movements of documentary groups and even a certain chronology to establish what he calls "dominant organizational patterns", around which the extensive production he analyzes is organized. There are six modes of representation proposed by the author: expository, observational, participatory/interactive, reflective, poetic and performative (Costa, 2005).
[10] According to Da-Rin (2004), a Nichols scholar, "if documentary fit within easy-to-establish boundaries, it certainly would not be so rich and fascinating in its multiple manifestations" (p. 15).

the documentary intervenes in the collective imagination, as a continuum of the very movement whose history it addresses. Therefore, we consider here, as self-reflexivity, the gesture of Domingues' documentary—the way in which it, by producing images about Black culture, refers, in part of its construction, to the meaning of Black images within that same culture. In other words, the way the film, as an image, turns toward the very universe from which it arises, to which it belongs, and in which it interferes. In other words, the way in which the film, as an image, returns to the very universe from which it emerges, to which it belongs and in which it interferes.

Final Considerations

The leisure space promoted by the Black dances—in their gregarious and imagetic dimensions—was therefore constituted as a propositional form of inventing places of transitory reference of racial belonging and identity affirmation. The dances can be understood as quilombamentos, based on the teachings of Beatriz Nascimento, in which the quilombo is considered an ideological instrument against forms of oppression. And in this context, leisure takes center stage in the racial debate, in which soul and Black dances, as manifestations of Black culture in the field of leisure, are configured as transitory spaces of freedom for the becoming-Black that opposes the negative image of the Black body, a product of the colonial imaginary.

The Black body is an archive-body that carries with it a memory capable of acting within the times-spaces of leisure that manifest Black culture of ancestral wisdom. Thus, soul and Black dances can function as languages that refer to peace within the quilombo, a moment in which the Black population is free and, perhaps for that reason, is able to reaffirm its Black identity and approach the recovery of its lost

identity. The history of Brazil was built by white hands. Therefore, perhaps Black cultural manifestations in the sphere of leisure, such as soul and Black dances, may be the "cracks" (Nascimento, 2021, p. 251) that provoke lines of flight, speech, and action—the echo-freedom in the unfolding of a history of Brazil that is yet to be made.

From the path presented in this paper, in the analysis of the film *Black Rio! Black Power!*, we understand that the investigation of leisure as a phenomenon can contribute to a fabulation that seeks to re-signify the history of the Black population in Brazil, provoking reflection on the image of Blackness forged by coloniality and which still inhabits the social imaginary. The images of Black people echoing Black is Beautiful that were projected on the big screens at the dances, together with messages of self-affirmation of the Black race, may have influenced the becoming-Black of Brazilian youth, thus resonating leisure as a time-space of education, formation, production, reproduction, politics, identity affirmation, and cultural diffusion of an image of the Black person reinvented by the Black woman or man.

REFERENCES

BLACK RIO! BLACK POWER! Direção de Emílio Domingos. Produção de Letícia Monte e Lula Buarque de Holanda. Rio de Janeiro: Espiral, com coprodução da Osmose Filmes e RioFilmes, 2023.

CARNEIRO, Sueli. **A construção do outro como não-ser como fundamento do ser**. Rio de Janeiro: Zahar: 2023.

COLLINS, Patricia Hill. Aprendendo com a *outsider within:* a significação sociológica do pensamento feminista negro. **Sociedade e Estado**, v. 31, n. 1, p. 99-127, 2016. Available at: http://www.scielo.br/scielo.php?pid=s010269922016000100099&script=sci_abstract&tlng=pt Accessed on: September 26, 2024.

DA-RIN, Silvio Piropô. **Espelho Partido** – tradição e transformação do documentário cinematográfico. Orientador: Rogério Luz. Rio de Janeiro, 2004. Dissertação (Mestrado em Comunicação) – Escola de Comunicação, Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro.

COSTA, Tatiana Alves Carvalho. **O espelho e o bisturi**: o jornalismo audiovisual nas reportagens especiais. Dissertação. Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, 2005.

GOMES, Christianne Luce. Verbete Lazer – Concepções. *In*: GOMES, Christianne Luce (Org.). **Dicionário Crítico do Lazer**. Belo Horizonte: Autêntica, 2004. p.119-126. Available at: https://grupootium.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/lazer-concepcoes-versaofinal.pdf. Accessed at: August 16, 2024.

GOMES, Christianne Luce. Estudos do lazer e geopolítica do conhecimento. **Licere**, Belo Horizonte, v. 14, n. 3, mar. 2011. Available at: https://periodicos.ufmg.br/index.php/licere/article/view/762. Accessed at: May 14, 2024.

GOMES, Christianne Luce. Lazer: necessidade humana e dimensão da cultura**. Licere**, Belo Horizonte, v. 1, n.1, p. 3-20, jan/abr. 2014.

GOMES, Christianne Luce. **Frui Vita**: a alquimia do lazer. Ponta Grossa – PR: Atena, 2023. Available at: https://atenaeditora.com.br/catalogo/ebook/frui-vita-a-alquimia-do-lazer. Accessed at: May 14, 2024.

GOMES, Nilma Lino. Trajetórias escolares, corpo negro e cabelo crespo: reprodução de estereótipos ou ressignificação cultural? **Revista Brasileira de Educação**, n. 21, p. 40–51, set. 2002.

GOMES, Nilma Lino. Educação, identidade negra e formação de professores/as: um olhar sobre o corpo negro e o cabelo crespo. **Educação e pesquisa**. São Paulo, v. 29, n. 1, p. 167-182, 2003. Available at: https://www.scielo.br/j/ep/a/sGzxY8WTnyQQQbwjG5nSQpK/?format=pdf. Accessed at: May 28, 2024.

GONZALEZ, Lélia. Por um feminismo afro-latino-americano. *In*: RIOS, Flávia; LIMA, Márcia (Org). **Por um feminismo afro-latino-americano:** ensaios, intervenções e diálogos. Rio de Janeiro: Zahar, 2020. p. 139-150.

IBGE. Instituto Brasileiro de geografia e estatística. **Norte e Nordeste puxam desocupação recorde no primeiro trimestre do país.** 27 de mai. de 2021. Available at: https://agenciadenoticias.ibge.gov.br/agencia-noticias/2012-agencia-de-noticias/noticias/30785-norte-e-nordeste-puxam-desocupacao-recorde-no-primeiro-trimestre-no-pais. Accessed at: April 08, 2024.

HOOKS, Bell. **Cinema Vivido**: raça, classe e sexo nas telas. 1 ed. São Paulo: Elefante, 2023.

HOOKS, Bell. **Olhares negros**: raça e representação. São Paulo: Elefante, 2019.

MARTINS, Leda Maria. **A cena em sombra**. São Paulo: Perspectiva, 2023.

MARTINS, Soraya. **Teatralidades-aquilombamento**: várias formas de pensar-ser-estar em cena e no mundo. Belo Horizonte: Javali, 2023.

MIGNOLO, Walter. **Historias locales/diseños globales:** colonialidad, conocimientos subalternos y pensamiento fronterizo. Madrid: Akal, 2003.

MUNANGA, Kabengele. **Negritude**: usos e sentidos. Belo Horizonte: Autêntica. 2020.

NASCIMENTO, Abdias. **O quilombismo**: documentos de uma militância pan-africanista. São Paulo: Perspectiva; Rio de Janeiro: Ipeafro, 2019.

NASCIMENTO, Beatriz. **Ori**. Filme. [1989]. Available at: https://negrasoulblog.wordpress.com/2016/08/25/309/. Accessed at: January 23, 2024.

NASCIMENTO, Beatriz. **Beatriz Nascimento quilombola e intelectual**: possibilidades nos dias da destruição. Diáspora Africana: Editora Filhos da África, 2018.

NASCIMENTO, Beatriz. Corpo/mapa de um país longínquo: Intelecto, memória e corporeidade. *In*: RATTS, Alex. **Eu sou atlântica:** sobre a trajetória de vida de Beatriz Nascimento. São Paulo: Instituto Kuanza, 2006. p. 61-70.

NASCIMENTO, Wanderson Flor do. **Entre apostas e heranças**: contornos africanos e afro-brasileiros na educação e no ensino de filosofia no Brasil. 1 ed. Rio de Janeiro: NEFI edições, 2020. Available at: https://philpapers.org/rec/NASEAE. Accessed at: May 14, 2024.

NASCIMENTO, Beatriz. **Uma história feita por mãos negras**: relações raciais, quilombos e movimentos. Rio de Janeiro: Zahar, 2021.

NASCIMENTO, Beatriz. Quilombo: em Palmares, na favela, no carnaval. *In*: RATTS, Alex (Org). **O negro visto por ele mesmo**. São Paulo: Ubu, 2022.

NICHOLS, Bill. **Representing reality** – issues and concepts in documentaru. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991.

OLIVEIRA, Eduardo David de. Filosofia da ancestralidade como filosofia africana: Educação e cultura afro-brasileira. **Revista Sul-Americana de Filosofia e Educação**, n. 18, p. 28-47, mai-out. 2012. Available at: https://periodicos.unb.br/index.php/resafe/article/view/4456/4068. Accessed at: May 14, 2024.

QUIJANO, Anibal. Colonialidad y modernidade/racionalidade. **Perú Indígena**, v. 13, n. 29, p. 11-20, 1992. Available at: https://www.lavaca.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/quijano.pdf. Accessed at: October 28, 2024.

QUIJANO, Aníbal. Colonialidade do poder, eurocentrismo e América Latina. *In*: LANDER, Edgardo (org.). **A colonialidade do saber**: eurocentrismo e ciências sociais. Buenos Aires: CLACSO, 2005. p. 107-130.

RAMOS, Danilo da Silva. **Resistir para se divertir, se divertir para existir:** "os selvagens divertimentos" das pessoas negras em Salvador (BA) na virada do século (1890-1910). 2022. 174 f. Tese (Doutorado em Estudos do Lazer) - Escola de Educação Física, Fisioterapia e terapia Ocupacional. Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, Belo Horizonte, 2022.

SENADO FERERAL. Delito de 'vadiagem' é sinal de racism, dizem os especialistas. Reportagem. [15 de set. de 2023]. **Agência Senado**. Reportagem produzida por Ricardo Westin. Available at: https://www12.senado.leg.br/noticias/infomaterias/2023/09/delito-de-vadiagem-e-sinal-de-racismo-dizem-especialistas#:~:text=A%20punição%20está%20atualmente%20prevista,até%20três%20meses%20de%20prisão. Accessed at: April 09, 2024

STARLING, Heloisa Maria Murgel. Órgão de informação e repressão da ditadura. Portal **Brasil.doc** – Projeto República UFMG. Belo Horizonte, MG. 2001. Available at:https://www.ufmg.br/brasildoc/temas/2-orgaos-de-informacao-e-repressao-da-ditadura/. Accessed at: April 07, 2024.

SOUZA, Neusa Santos. **Tornar-se negro**. Rio Janeiro: Zahar, 2021.

Address of the Authors:

Lucilene Alencar das Dores
Electronic Mail: lucilene.pelc@gmail.com

Tatiana Alves de Carvalho Costa
Electronic Mail: carvalhocosta.tatiana@gmail.com