

*Periodismo e imaginários. Brasil, más allá de lo tropical y lo sensual.*

SOUZA, Maria Badet.

Barcelona: Editora UOC, 2015.

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Dialogues established between Brazil and Spain about Brazilian's women and men media representation

Diálogos estabelecidos entre Brasil e Espanha acerca da representação midiática dos brasileiros e das brasileiras

Camilla Costa Rocha<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract** *The book review summarizes a synopsis of the main points of the doctoral research by author Maria Badet Souza, which resulted in the work *Periodismo e imaginários (Journalism and imaginarieness). Brasil, más allá de lo tropical y lo sensual. The work consistently contributes to the studies on media perception and groups of immigrants. From these references, the author approaches issues gaining prominence in her research, namely, the social representation of **Brazil in Spain**, the perception by the Spanish people in relation to groups of Brazilian immigrants and, in our view, in an even more emphatic and contributive way, the author introduces the issue of the perception of Brazilian women's media image with 120 young people.**

**Keywords:** *Studies on perceptions; Media; Brazilian women*

**Resumo** *A resenha apresenta uma síntese dos principais eixos da pesquisa de doutoramento realizada pela autora Maria Badet Souza que resultou na obra*

<sup>1</sup> Escola Superior de Propaganda e Marketing – ESPM, São Paulo, SP, Brasil. E-mail: camilla@costarocha.com.br

*Periodismo e imaginários. Brasil, más allá de lo tropical y lo sensual. A obra colabora de maneira consistente para os estudos de recepção midiática e de coletivos de imigrantes. Partindo desses referenciais a autora adentra em questões que ganham relevo em sua pesquisa, quais sejam, a representação social do Brasil na Espanha, a percepção dos espanhóis em relação aos coletivos de imigrantes brasileiros e, ao nosso ver, de maneira ainda mais enfática e contributiva, a autora introduz a questão da recepção da figura midiática da mulher brasileira junto a 120 jovens.*

**Palavras-chave:** *Estudos de recepção; Mídia; Mulher brasileira*

The book object of this review brings in its pages the search by author Maria Badet Souza about the media representation of Brazil and *Brazilian men and women* in the mass media in Spain and, from that beginning, two aspects should be highlighted: the amplitude of the author's look towards the sociocultural context and the media reality that pervade her research as well as the total adhesion to a theoretical and analytical density along her entire text.

The work is scoped to fill a gap in research on media perception of news about Brazil held in Spain. With the intention not only to appease such absence but also to problematize it, the author poses the question: *How are Brazilian men and women shown in Spain by the mediae?* The questioning having been launched, its fruits are harvested, as we realize in the development of the research presented. The author fulfills indeed her purpose by a rich and detailed analysis on the appropriation, by Spanish students, of media content that presents the *Brazilian men and women*.

Divided into nine chapters, the book instruments our perception with the tools necessary for us to understand later the opinions presented by the media and the students' appropriation of them. This way, it introduces some reductionism that characterizes the social representation of Brazil abroad, such as, for example, nuances resulting from (Brazilian artistic movement) Tropicalismo, bringing, from Ribeiro (1998; 2002) and Machado (2004), miscegenation, samba, dance movements, soccer.

Upon reading it, two key aspects about this reflection that covers issues of Brazil from the perspective of Spain are worth mentioning. The first one concerns the specific situation of *Brazilian men and women* who are immigrants living there: it is important to know how they are perceived by the Spanish people in social spaces – and this includes the media, schools, streets. Another aspect that we must pay attention to is related to the imaginairiness, that is, besides the concreteness of the groups of Brazilian men and women who are immigrants present in social spaces, it is important to reflect on the media role during the

construction of representations of these *Brazilian men and women*. This distinction is crucial to understanding the author's research.

Here it is worth mentioning the fact that even though the research intent was to ascertain about Brazil and *Brazilian men and women*, the author presents us specially a useful analysis of the image of *Brazilian women* in the media. And in a masterly way she addresses an important question: how the media uses the stereotype of Brazilian women to talk about Brazil. Although the author points to informational possibilities, the media approach focused on Brazilians' sensuality is highlighted.

And if from the point of view of media production we have demonstrated an approach to marks primarily in common sense, structured in a monothematic, reduced, stereotypical and heterogeneous thought, it is necessary that we turn our attention to the appropriation of such content. And at this moment it is worth mentioning the appropriation that the author makes of the studies by Martín-Barbero (1987), contextualizing them in Latin America also by Cogo (2009), which emphasizes communication as a process decentralized from the media itself, and who has as a starting point the culture, mediations and individuals.

Thus, the immersion in the field carried out by the author proves to be critical. By using a consistent methodology that underlies the various techniques applied, she attempts to unveil the meanings of the appropriations of the imaginarieness constructed by the media. We are then presented to the group of 121 young people between the ages of 14 to 18 years from three different teaching centers and the question that remains is: Can we expect criticality from the young people interviewed?

In relation to *Brazilian women*, we are surprised when two female students – in the whole group – look to the potential damage linked to the fact of associating Brazil as the country of Carnival, which implies drawing attention to *Brazilian women's* beauty in their stereotypical images. In a very close contact with young people, the researcher then explores (and manages to show) the strength of this imaginarieness constructed by the media: almost no room is left for a critical appropriation of the content.

This was the case, for example, of the results collected with the presentation of images: two photos, of a Colombian model in a bikini at a beach and a Brazilian Native person with her son in the Amazon rain forest. Which image in this case would be considered of a Brazilian woman? The dispute was never strained. The Colombian woman “was seen” as *Brazilian* for 44.6% of the adolescents while only 4.1% associated the real *Brazilian* woman, the Brazilian Native, with her country of origin. As we can conclude with the author: the tendency for reproduction by the adolescents of the media content built around Brazil and *Brazilian* women was proved.

These are treasures excavated in the search field that solidly tie the author’s intent in unveiling the image of *Brazilian* women in Spain, both in its construction and in its appropriation. If it is true that the process of media perception helps in creating social imaginarieness about the identity of the others (Chillón, 2000; Duch, 2002; Morley, 1996; Nash, 2008), Maria Badet Souza is very sensitive when drawing our attention, with support by major authors (Aguaded, 1999, 2000; Morley, 1996; Martín-Barbero, 1987; Orozco, 1993; among others), to our littleness in view of the research: we need to see every detail from its context. That is, we learn from the research about the nuances surrounding Brazilian women’s image, already previously shrouded in a social imaginarieness that paints them as sensual and beautiful. This implies an opening for hope when we are responsible for these narratives.

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## About the author

*Camilla Costa Rocha* – Master’s Graduate at the Postgraduation Program in Communication and Consumption Practices.

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Date of submission: 1/25/2016

Date of acceptance: 6/20/2016