

Quando a imagem é corpo: modos de sobreviver à máquina colonial

When image is body: ways to survive the colonial machine

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Resumo: *Este artigo parte dos vestígios de uma escrava africana enterrada na região portuária do Rio de Janeiro e do filme “Era o Hotel Cambridge” (Brasil, 2016), sobre uma ocupação no centro de São Paulo, com o objetivo de discutir como a imagem configura um corpo a partir de situações liminares. A proposta é observar a emergência intermitente das imagens e daquilo que é relegado à posição de resto, rastro, e vestígio na estrutura do poder colonial. Dos ossos humanos, que clamam um acerto com um passado escravagista, ao esqueleto de um edifício abandonado pela especulação e reinventado como corpo político por refugiados e sem-teto brasileiros, a imagem é a instância que conduz as demandas políticas no tempo. É a insistência de uma memória marginalizada, violentada, mas que recusa o apagamento. Como gesto de criação, persistência e (r)existência, a imagem nos serve como instrumento analítico para pensar contextos pós-coloniais e suas sobrevivências.*

Palavras-chave: *corpo; tempo; imagem; pós-colonial; sobrevivência.*

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Abstract: *Having as a starting point the human remains of an African slave buried in Rio de Janeiro's harbour and the film "Era o Hotel Cambridge" (Brazil, 2016), about a squat in downtown São Paulo, we will discuss how an image configures a body in extreme situations. We aim to observe the intermittent emergence of images and what is considered rest, trail and remains of colonial power structures. From human bones that claim reparation from their slave past, to the skeleton of an abandoned building reinvented as political body by refugees and Brazilian homeless, image is the instance that carries political demands in time. It is the insistence of a marginalized and violated memory that refuses to be erased. As a gesture of creation, persistence and re-existence, image becomes an analytical tool to understand postcolonial contexts and its surviving remains.*

Keywords: *body; time; image; postcolonial; survival.*

Image in an exhausted geography

This article begins from two radical experiences of violence and annihilation of life to think about how it is possible to create, out of the motionless mud, a body, a life and an image. As a way of thinking our colonial trajectory, we will first look towards the traces of slavery: bones found in the port region of Rio de Janeiro. These remains configure an image, and thinking about them is thinking of the image and its complex layers which, as Didi-Huberman indicates, must be “understood at the same time as document and as object of dream, as work and object of passage, as monument and object of montage, as not knowing and an object of science” (2012, p. 209). In other words, in Rio’s port, the bones of enslaved African people are what shouldn’t exist, are the image of the unimaginable, the image of a genocide that insists in becoming present. However, as we will also see, through multiple agencies, they find a way to the surface, becoming a body that exists, despite of everything.

Looking these bones, images that remain from slavery, will serve us, in a second moment, to understand how *Era o Hotel Cambridge* (Eliane Caffé, Brasil, 2016) also elaborates a body, through those that are the remainders of the world’s capitalism: refugees from different countries and homeless from Brazil, which under the shelter of a body of concrete, the hotel, can produce a common experience that defies the constituted powers. They are from the northeast region of Brazil, from Congo, from Palestine and even nurses, street cleaners, administrative assistants, among so many others, people who the Frente por Luta de Moradia (Movement for Fight for Housing) calls in the film as “the base”. In conditions of extreme expropriation, they constitute themselves as a body through the hotel and the film itself.

The bones, in the Port of Rio, the refugees and the hotel, in the film, are here understood as operators of a bodily and subjective invention, tributary not only of the composition of a body, but an image capable of constituting a body, dilacerated, often, through multiple agencies. As remainders, they share a relation of power that subjugate them to a subjective zero degree we can call “precarious” (BUTLER, 2004).

Through this point of view, the suggestion is to think both on the constitution of a body through bones, but also about “the refugee being” as a condition of political resistance, a process that goes through the articulation of an image and the reinvention of a body, being both, at the same time, survival to the annihilation and evidence of a historical process of symbolical and material extermination. Part of our objective is to align the thought around a “process of Africanization of the world”, where Mbembe (2003) understands as being the precarious and the objectification of the other, with the “We, the refugees”, from Hannah Arendt (2013), in which the condition of the refugee as a stateless person becomes a historical condition of forefront to compose any other and multiple subjectivity.

Under this perspective, we come from the premise that, facing a mechanism of colonial power to which we belong, and which as base the invention and domination of the other, it is possible, despite of everything (DIDI-HUBERMAN, 2003), produce images of the unimaginable. That said, we defend the hypothesis that is possible to produce a thought about our colonial experience, through a reflection about how the remainders, the traces, the gaps, the margins of the colonial machine, be them bones or a film over a occupied hotel, configure images all the time. Thus, we propose to think about this unfinished remainders through the image, since their survivals are all the moment, intermittently, reverberating and producing other images.

Irit Rogoff (2006) says that the contemporary global capitalism engenders “exhausted geographies” which demand different thoughts, approaches and other analytical instruments, distinct from those who help them become what they are today. In these geographies, we understood, the unfinished remainders of the colonial machine converge, through constant power disputes. And it is from the same broken ground, we suggest, that bloom forms of life that will, at their own manner, produce fissures, in an open process that is never finished.

In this sense, if the image is capable of “creating, at the same time, a symptom (interruption of knowledge) and knowledge (interruption of

chaos) (DIDI-HUBERMAN, 2012, p. 214), we suggest that it is the appearance on the port of Rio de Janeiro and its confirmation in the film of *Caffé* that also produces other geographies. That demands permanent attention and also allow us to say that, with it, the image, it is necessary to think. Through this path, much more than brushing (BENJAMIN, 2008), what we seek to do is to *dig* against the grain the survivals around our colonial machinery.

Bones – or what remains of our colonialist project

The ethnographic research performed by Simone Vassallo (2017 and 2018) reveals a complex and multiple process of discovery of bones in the port region of Rio de Janeiro. The year is 1996, when a middle-class family begins a renovation in their home. As soon as the floor is broken, in the middle of the debris, dirt, pieces of bricks and bones begin to appear. The amount and diversity of bone fragment is so impressive that surprises that surprises the family which then interrupts all the work, suspecting that there, where now is located their house, a mass murder had happened. After investigating with neighbors the history of the neighborhood, the couple calls the archeologists of Museu Nacional (RJ), who came to inspect the place and collect the bones. The conclusion: there once was a cemetery destined to the storage of bones of African people. Trafficked to Brazil, they were all newcomers – hence the name “new blacks” – that couldn’t survive to the cruel voyage through the Atlantic Sea.

This discovery collided, later on, with the “2016 Olympic Games”, which promoted a huge process of urban renovation of the port of the city of Rio. Among other actions, the renovation unveiled, through excavations, the so-called “Cais do Valongo”, an old port where landed approximately five hundred thousand to one million enslaved African people destined to the Americas. In the midst of trash, the bones in the Valongo region became, since then, a part of the colonial history of the city of Rio de Janeiro, the most precise proof of the African genocide that happened in the Americas.

Let's look into the pile of bones that emerge from the ground of that house as an image of the colonial experience, which, according to Mignolo (2017), would be the “dark side” of modernity. According to Mignolo, it isn't possible to separate a process of clarification and material abundance that mark the foundation of the modern project without conceiving the America's discovery, which revealed not only an abundant source of material resources, but also the base for a new commercial circuit and, in an equally important manner, a new articulation of relations of power-knowledge.

In the terms of Mignolo (2005), the emergency of the Atlantic commercial circuit is the event that founds the imaginary of the so-called “modern/colonial world”. Supported on Glissant (1997), which understands imaginary as a symbolic construction through which a community – racial or national, for example – defines itself, Mignolo offers the term “imaginary” an artifice of “geopolitical character” (2005, p. 35). What is in question, to Mignolo, is the construction of the idea of a “Western hemisphere”. In its perspective, the imaginary is, overall, a political construction that favors the articulation of cultural differences in favor, for instance, of gestures of racial, economical and sexual domination.

In this sense, when we imagine as white, male and Christian, the “West” is set apart from the rest of the world it wants to dominate. And thus, the imaginary would be the cohesive element of fiction that is understood as a “Western world”. The west, therefore, does not represent here a strictly geographic notion. In the geopolitical connotation employed by Mignolo, the exclusion of Africa, for example, and consequently the idea of the black body as the Other's body, is fundamental for the constitution of this imaginary. And in this sense, the traces of bones do not only incorporate the evidence of colonization, but a modern episteme capable of producing remainders while grinding black bodies.

The Atlantic circuit also presents a strategic character in the articulation between the social-political imaginary and the economy. And in this sense, “imagining” black people as the other is part of a wider project of constitution of margins to be explored by the capitalism, which

begins to consolidate along with modernity. In this process, images also begin to be produced and articulated of what is considered undesirable, marginal, lead to oblivion or erasure (QUIJANO, 2005; MBEMBE, 2014). The colonialist project foresaw and demanded the existence of forms of domination that would be necessary to their subsistence, thus, it is in the crossing of these systems, that create forms of life, that the slave-owning project also finds support.

Today, the family house is the Institute of New Blacks (IPN), a place where the bones that appeared from the ground are exposed. In the entrance, a text describes what is there: a pile of bones – of black bones – discarded without funeral, in open ditches with trash, food and carcasses. In this sense, the bones exposed on the ground of a house located in the downtown area of Rio de Janeiro – this waste that remains – are the remainder of the colonial machine. It is from this rubble that comes to surface the image of our horror; revealing image of the mass destruction of human bodies, transformed in pieces and dust of bones. Image which, as pointed by Didi-Huberman, “is characterized by its intermittence, its frailty, its interval of apparitions, of disappearances, re-appearitions and re-disappearances without end” (2011, p. 86);

The body, its name and the image that shouts

The extreme violence of the African genocide in Brazil is not only in the annihilation of bodies, but in the constant attempt of erasing the evidence of the massacre. These bodies, and any other remainders, could no longer exist; as excrescence, they are all unimaginable in the opacity of our modernity. However, in 2007, the archeologist Reinaldo Tavares decided to scrape and dig deeper into the terrain of Instituto dos Pretos Novos (VASSALLO, 2018). When he removed the earth of one meter deep, to his surprise, where there seemed to exist only rests of trash and pieces of bone, he discovered a complete skeleton of a young woman.

Exactly there, where there was implemented a policy of obliteration of bodies, in that ground, where before was the ditch of common men and where today we witness the massacre, there is a body-image that is

born in the intermittence that she produces, an image that is born out of the effort of its own erasure. This time, the Afro-Brazilian movements got to prohibit the removal of the skeleton; it stayed there, and it is there until this day, since then, through a religious funeral, this place became considered its place of burial.

One of the archeologists give the skeleton the name of the first black and enslaved saint: Josefina Bakhita⁴. According to the register in an interview made by Vassallo (2018), Tavares' desire was that Josefina Bakhita could scream loudly so everyone could hear and say what happened there. As Rancière argues,

Everything is a remainder, vestige or fossil. Every sensitive form, from the rock to the shell, speaks. Each one of them brings, inscribed in their grooves and volute, the marks of their history and the signs of their destination (2009, p. 35).

In this sense, it is necessary to see and listen to Josefina Bakhita. Her bones had a new meaning and her skeleton, exposed and framed as a painting that we see when we look into the ground of the house, is the image that we incorporate here to be, herself, both the witness of our genocide and the unfolding of other journeys that we also witness in our times.

Under this perspective, our challenge is to unveil the history inscribed in this body-image that is, as images always are, a trace. After all, inversely, every trace, every vestige, every fossil is a symptom of a story, and, therefore, of another image. As Didi-Huberman says,

Because the image is something else than a simple cut practiced in the world of visible aspects. It is an impression, a trace, a visual trace of the time it wanted to touch, but also from other supplementary times – fatally anachronic and heterogeneous between them – that cannot, as the art of memory, glue together (2012, p. 216).

4 Este processo, contudo, não se dá sem alguma ambiguidade, visto que se trata da reinserção do corpo da ex-escrava na ordem simbólica, justamente pela sua nomeação como santa católica (OLIVEIRA, 2017).

The skeleton has a face, a history and a body – all of it creating, in the end, an image. An image of the body, that is now alive as subject of its own image. In this process, that we choose to call “r-existence”, the apparition of Josefina Bakhita is political, because as an image and as a body, it incorporates the singularities of existence of every body that were crushed with her; an existence articulated with multiple agents and events that compose the Cemetery of New Blacks, in the downtown region of Rio de Janeiro.

When we think about the image process of the apparition of a nation – which, for us, also mean the apparition of Josefina Bakhita –, Didi-Huberman says that there it creates

A space where the relationship between differences begins to constitute, creating a permanent conflict between what Benjamin would call ‘barbarism and culture’. A conflict that reports, as if in a new perpetual montage of spaces and times, all the tragic history of exposition and dispute of the human being (2014, p. 23).

Thus, the unimaginable present in the image of Josefina Bakhita is the interval that it, the image, produces between bodies and times: an image woven by a skeleton, a story, fragments of bones, debris and ashes; an images that carries a whole port, a city and a group of people. An image, beyond everything else, that configures an ocean, the Atlantic, that served as a path of men and women rejected by their own countries, subordinated and treated as precarious objects in the world of other. It is in this image, we want so suggest, of its own intermittence – of histories, fights, times and spaces it brings out – that we begin to think about other images, surviving and resulting from the same effort of erasure that are submitted the subject-excrescence – the leftovers – of the system of modern-colonial-world.

The hotel – or the living bodies in the city of São Paulo

Chasing the traces of images that survive in/with the cinema, our attention was driven to the film *Era o Hotel Cambridge* (Eliane Caffé, 2016).

Showing inhabitants of an abandoned building talking about themselves in front of a camera, the movie makes it impossible to separate between the genres of documentary and fiction, activating a gesture that refers to the powers of the false by Deleuze,

What is opposed to fiction is not reality, it is not the truth that is always about the dominant or the colonizer, it is the storytelling role of the poor, as far as it gives to the false the power creating a memory, a legend, a monster (2009, p. 183).

This film, that deals about a squatting movement in downtown São Paulo, on behalf of migrants, refugees and members of the *Homeless Workers Movement (MSTC)*, opens with an overview of downtown São Paulo. Little by little, the camera let in the graffiti, the urban noise and the grey concrete to later fixate in one of the buildings with a red flag of the Movement Fighting for Housing (FLM). After locating the viewer in the city, the camera travels inside the building, where we see pipes, wiring and cracked walls that reveal, from the start, one of the main characters of the film: the building itself, the old Hotel Cambridge⁵. Near disappearing, it reappears, in the film as the leading character.

As a character, the building sews and frames the different bodies and lives found there. More than that, it is in it (and with it) that it becomes possible the reunion of so many different bodies: different languages, nations and landscapes, shown there at every moment, through pictures framed by the poor physical condition of the hotel itself: spiral staircases, windows without glass, crammed apartments, a basement. It is in this set of remainders that the Hotel's body becomes a space of juxtaposition of differences.

Era o Hotel Cambridge brings up an urgent and wide debate. Either putting us in front of the problem of (lack of) housing in big urban centers or the own issue related to migration and refuge, what this film evokes, first and foremost, is the precariousness of the human. It talks

5 Located in the Avenue 9 de Julho, in downtown São Paulo, Hotel Cambridge was one of the big hotels in the region. Founded in the 1950, time of importante growth of the city, the hotel would receive guests of all corners of Brazil and the world.

about the existence of undesirable bodies, of remainders that do not fit into an aseptic utopia of modern projects.

In one of these scenes, in which some of the characters gathered in a circle discuss themes for an improv activity, the Congolese Pitchou Luambo suggests a situation: “a boy in an airplane wheel”. Facing the perplexity of the audience and the person responsible for guiding the activity, the character explains it was an autobiographical story. Pitchou Luambo, in an attempt of fleeing the bloody conflict in his birth land, held on to a plain wheel; in an unsuccessful attempt that didn’t make Luambo give up his journey. In another moment, when he sought to migrate to the United States, Luambo got in the basement of a ship, the same one that brought him, without him knowing, to Brazil. Repeating in a symptomatic way the tragic story of millions of Africans, Luambo crosses the Atlantic and arrives, through different forces from those that operated in the regimen of slavery, to an unknown land.

In Brazil, the Congolese finds other individuals that, in the process of squatting at the Cambridge Hotel, share the same precarious condition. This process, which crosses bodies, spaces and times, bringing precarious memories, disputes and forms of life together, is precisely what we see in *Era o Hotel Cambridge*. This is a film, as we want to show, whose images, also intermittent, produce gaps between bodies and times, because they are composed of a story, of fragments of bodies and debris, different cities and different nations. It is a film whose images, most importantly, reconfigure oceans that work as a bridge for men and women that, once they are rejected from their own countries, are subordinated and treated as a remainder in the world of others.

In another emblematic scene of the film, a man looks melancholically to his phone screen. Obeying the touch of his finger, a picture moves, centralizing on the screen a face of a smiling boy. Over the photo, there is a voice that says: “Walikale, I think you will go, but pay attention: beware, because, you know... anything can happen”. Since then, the fingers navigated through other pictures, other memories of a couple, a group of friends. The voice continues: “If you find out, for

example, something wrong with the army of Congo, do you see what I mean? You'll get in trouble".

At this point the screen abandons the reminiscence of an apparently happy life, making a cut to a group of black men working on a mine. Enters the voice that narrates the bloody circle that involves the Revolutionary Democratic Forces in Congo, the business owners that control the mines of coltan and tin, and the conflict financed by the export of these goods. This voice, now embodied in a man that speaks over candlelight, tells us that these goods leave Congo towards Ruanda and other African countries, following, then, the path to Europe, where they are used in the manufacture of telephones; the same telephone that carried pictures of a fragmented past. The narrative continues with the harrowing image of a group of black men huddled together in a dark mine. The only light is the one coming out of their helmets and the sound mix conversations in their native language with the shrill sound of metallic tools on rocks.

The man we see is woken by his neighbor, after what is revealed to be a dream. Out of the context of our character's life, however, the pictures refer to landscapes that are not so dreamlike. It's a scene of the documentary *Blood in the Mobile*, from Frank Poulsen (Denmark/Germany, 2010) which explores the relationship between the war on Congo, responsible for the death of millions of people, and the exploration of ore.

The use of intertextuality, a resource to tell the story of a Congolese refugee in Brazil, reveals itself as symptomatic. In an intermittent manner, intertwining different times and spaces both the composition of scene in *Era o Hotel Cambridge* as Poulsen's documentary, what we have is the return, or more precisely, the continuity of a colonial nightmare that rests over bodies that became vulnerable. In both cases, we recognize the ghost of "coloniality of power" (QUIJANO, 2005), of the spoliation of black bodies and their territories; a process increasingly intense of global distribution of inequality.

The image of a black man that explores a mine in Congo, therefore, is pertinent both in a documentary about the manufacture of cellphones

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in Europe and in the Brazilian film discussing the precarization of life in a squatting territory that shelters subjects seeking housing and in defense of their rights. A black man in a mine is the image that takes place in the event itself, because what we see in it is a synthesis of the processes of production and power relations. If in the conflict of Congo, financed by the international capital, in the process of exclusion and production of remainders, is the precise exercise of necropolitics (MBEMBE, 2003), this image is, on its own, what's left from the system of spoliation of the other.

In addition to that, that same image, whose main character is a black man, references the reasoning of Mbembe (2014) to whom, for the first time in history, it is in our times that the term “black” stops referring only to the African origin, beginning to refer to the maximum condition of a life lived in a state of precarization, or even, paraphrasing Butler (2015), of a precarious life, without the power of mourning. Black, in this sense, is the “naked migrant” (GLISSANT, 2008), the one who is responsible for being the workforce in America and whose memories of traditions and gods are progressively being erased.

Both for Mbembe and for Glissant, the black body is a victim of a violence process of material and symbolic dispossession. It inaugurates a subjective violence from which the refugee, today, becomes an heir. In our times, the bodies of Congolese, Palestinian, Venezuelan refugees, homeless and poor Brazilian people, gather precariously on Hotel Cambridge, are the Josefinas with no name in the 21st century. These are bodies that try to escape the management of death implemented by the binomial State-capital, which is represented, in the film, by the police that is always lurking to fulfill the warrant for their eviction.

Maybe the most emblematic image of this dispossession would be the gesture of the Palestinian refugee Isam Ahmad Issa, that in a dream-memory sweeps the sands of the desert in a refugee camp in Jordan. Soon after sweeping the sand, he sits, with the desert on the background, and smokes a cigarette with his legs crossed. The scene is cut, and he is, once again, on Hotel Cambridge, legs also crossed and smoking a

cigarette. The collage proposes a continuity between the desert and the hotel. Isam remains, in São Paulo and in the desert, sweeping infinite sand. The image of Isam, in Jordan, just like the mine in Congo, is an intertextual resource used on *Era o Hotel Cambridge*. It is a part of another documentary, *A chave da casa*, by Stela Grisotti and Paschoal Samora (Brazil, 2009) showing the same character, Isam, in Jordan, days before his departure to Brazil. It is another resource that creates the same spatial continuity of the desert of the Hotel. Not only that, because it is the same body that crosses both spaces. And it is with this image we have a glimpse of the synthesis of the modern delirium, and, in the generalization of its condition of precariousness, the most exact translation of the form of neoliberal domination.

Under this perspective, the refugee is configured as a group of individuals forced to leave their condition of citizens in a determined society to occupy the position of outcasts, of remainders, in a radically different culture. When we transit from an economy based on the exploration of human workforce, in the industry and in the field, and another, based on algorithms (MBEMBE, 2014), what is left is the unimaginable of an image where we see the precarious – the infinite of the desert – as a vector.

In this sense, what we see is a process of dispossession, which is, also and at the same time, the process of construction of a subjectivity that directly evokes the excluding economic process of the globalized modernity. In the borders of society, what we have is the subject relegated to the ghetto, whose lives are worth something close to nothing. Lives that can be, and often are, buried by the mud that not only guarantees the export of tons of iron, but also the continuous production of wealth of others.

From slavery to refuge (thinking about different space-time instances) from bio- to necropolitics, from the society of control (DELEUZE, 1992) to the neoliberal algorithmic performance, what's left – or what is common – is the process of subordination and objectification of the other. What we see, in what is and “was the Hotel Cambridge” is an

amalgamation, an unequal accumulation of times and bodies. What previously was a part of the scenario and also a stage of the colonialist project, that in the 1950's was inscribed in the bodies of big cities, the architecture, the rhythms and the systems of exclusion, the building of Hotel Cambridge, nowadays with its façade marked by the abandonment, graffiti and cracks, its apparent wiring and piping, becomes, in the film, the "dirty" body, the excrescence that occupies and inhabits downtown São Paulo.

In the neoliberal modern economy, poverty approximates the remainders and forcefully expands the notion of "refugee". It becomes the description of those who don't have a name, since it is ex-centric, a subject that, because he is a remainder, a leftover, lives inside, however, always on the border of the neoliberal project. United by the "lack of rights" – as, still in the same meeting, points out Carmem Lúcia, character of the film and leader of the Homeless Movement – and amalgamated to the building where it used to be a hotel, are the decaying and unwanted bodies. All miserable, obligated to form new bodies through the experience that is common to them around the precariousness.

It is in this body – and these bodies – that the film weaves and re-configures when narrating the experience of the hard harmony between solidarity – forced by the precariousness of life – and the construction of another way of living. In the images the movie produces are Palestinians, Africans and Northeastern Brazilians, all without a home. Despite the differences they have and that emerge in the hard endeavor of coexisting, what is left is a precarious, fragmented and threadbare life into several threads that compose and weave a microcosmos created both by the images in the film and the materiality of the building itself.

It is in the gesture of occupying the old hotel, however, that these "Josefinas with no name" also recognize themselves and create names for themselves. When gathered in a meeting, two of the residents get into a dialogue in which one of them, who is Brazilian, opposing to share the space with refugees and migrants, hears from Isam Ahmad Issa: "I want to say something", he says, pointing to himself. "I am a

Palestinian refugee in Brazil”, and then points towards the group, “and you are Brazilian refugees in Brazil”. In this scene, one of the most important scenes in the film, Issa – character of himself, since he is, in real life, a Palestinian refugee in Brazil – at the same times synthetizes the contemporary problem of structural precariousness, proposes a name that offers them the possibility of sharing and constituting a community.

In the final scenes, outside of the building, the police officers, protected by shields and helmets, throw tear gas bombs initially against the building, and later, in the sequence presented by the film, against men and women that are left and do not fit into the streets of downtown São Paulo. During the confrontation, a series of images are piled up in a overwhelming way. In the filmic plan, there are images inside the hotel of parents trying to protect their children from the gas thrown by the police. On the other side, the camera, positioned in the streets, reveals coconuts thrown by the residents against the battalion.

In the transposition of the battle to the street, recurring scenes of protests in large cities, especially Brazilian cities, take shape. Protesters with their faces covered by T-shirts throwing rocks against police officers that begin to act in a less articulated manner and more focused on specific targets. Buses catching on fire, we see smoke and spray-painted buildings, generating images that could be anywhere (or nowhere).

Those who don't fight are dead, that is the chant of FLM when the police arrive to evict them. We notice that, within the narrative, the battalion arrives when the Hotel constitutes a community in the difference, when after a series of discussions, Congolese, Northeasterners, Palestinians and Colombians are lovingly affected to one another, even though they don't speak the same language. Luambo defines what is love in French to a Brazilian woman; the two of them kiss. Gilda tells her sad story to a Palestinian young man that doesn't know how to speak Portuguese, but comforts her with an Arabian lullaby, while Lucia Pulido, through the computer, sings a Colombian song that touches everyone listening.

The singular languages no longer matter, the differences are a part of this new community of dispossessed that, in order to survive, need to fight. In a gesture of resistance to the invasion of the Battalion of São Paulo, we see them united in favor of their own bodies and names, which reinforces the hypothesis that we raised: if they are all refugees, it is as homeless-refugees that everyone is articulated.

The image that precedes the attack is the hotel seen from the outside with numberless different bodies in the windows. That is an intolerable image to the power, the image of living bodies creating a community out of differences. It is in this point that there is no alternative to the government other than to beat this body, like in other times they used to, as a state practice, the black bodies. That is how the Hotel, that was Cambridge, becomes a body of bodies – diverse and with dense geographies and temporalities, as it is the body of Josefina Bakhita as well.

Intermittence and (r) existence – an image that looks at us

We began with the bones and skeletons of the black genocide in Brazil, arriving to the bodies that occupy a hotel in downtown São Paulo: we can't say that these fragments of different times and spaces, juxtaposed, reconfigure the geography of a African Atlantic (GILROY, 2017). Furthermore, how to watch these scenes of men and women throwing rocks in an attempt to defend their housing, their territory, without remembering the several images we see daily about Palestine and their occupied territories? When we see the desperation of men and women, especially black and northeasterners, but also African and Arabian refugees, in a crowded place, improvising stairs to get to the ceiling to Hotel Cambridge, how we cannot think about the few but dense images we have of slave ships or even the several images about the wars on slums which, through the news, daily invade our territory?

These multiple territorialities, reveal and expose undesired unimaginable and forgotten subjectivities, bodies and temporalities. The image that is formed, through the multiple agents presented here, incorporates and gives visibility to forms of existence destined to invisibility. But

before, and at every moment, they are bodies and images that bring to the surface undesirable pasts and possible futures of resistance. Therefore, it is in the juxtaposition and the counterposition of these multiterritorialities (HAESBAERT, 2016), that we want to think that coexist unequal aesthetics, affection and time.

In the intermittence of these images, that come and go, crossing different times and spaces, it is what is seems possible to find the resistances. They are bodies – and bodies are images – that insist in emerging; they are collective traces and remainders of small flames that light fires in the darkness. Just like fireflies, these bodies and images survive, in an intermittent form, disappear and continue to appear, despite everything (DIDI-HUBERMAN, 2011).

Therefore, if from an exhausted geography (ROGOFF, 2006) like the one we are immersed in, a demand for a reflection is created seeking resources from other analytical instruments, this article, in some way, bets on the image as a fundamental resource in the context of post-colonies. The challenge is to dig the image that looks at us, in a way of making it, as an analytical instrument, can also be capable of making us see.

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Data de submissão: 12/08/2019

Data de aceite: 04/10/2019