

Self-narratives and the *mise-en-scène* of collective memories at university

Narrativas de si e a *mise-en-scène* de memórias coletivas na universidade

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Abstract: *This article addresses the study of aesthetic-political audiovisualities as producers of collective memories, observed empirically through the documentary film Caminhos Abertos, the result of a collective, pedagogical and training process within the scope of the Federal University of Recôncavo da Bahia. Through a sensitive analytical approach to bodies in the scene (Bogado, Alves Junior and Souza, 2018), we analyze how the conception, staging and stylistic choices marked in audiovisual production leave transformative traces in/ of the university environment. In this way, we understand that these tensions produce a *mise-en-scène* that dilates temporalities and reconfigures black bodies, memories and experiences of quota students.*

Key-words: *documentary cinema; memories; self-narratives; black youth; university*

Resumo: *Este artigo aborda o estudo de audiovisualidades estético-políticas como produtoras de memórias coletivas, observadas empiricamente por meio do filme documental Caminhos Abertos, fruto de um processo coletivo, pedagógico e formativo no âmbito da Universidade Federal do Recôncavo da Bahia. Por meio de uma abordagem analítica sensível dos corpos da cena/corpos em cena (Bogado, Alves Junior e Souza, 2018), analisamos como a concepção, encenação e escolhas estilísticas marcadas na produção audiovisual deixam rastros transformativos no/do ambiente universitário. Desse modo, compreendemos que estes*

tensionamentos produzem uma mise-en-scène que dilata temporalidades e reconfigura corporeidades negras, memórias e experiências de estudantes cotistas.

Palavras-chave: *cinema documental; memórias; narrativas de si; juventudes negras; universidade*

Introduction [opening paths and weaving memories]

This article examines the study of aesthetic-political audiovisualities as producers of collective memories, empirically observed through the documentary film *Caminhos abertos: Ingressar, permanecer e concluir, vivências e encruzilhadas de jovens em universidades públicas do interior da Bahia* (2023). The documentary is the result of a collective, pedagogical, and formative process within the scope of the Federal University of Recôncavo da Bahia (UFRB) in an institutional partnership between the Youth Studies and Research Group (GEPJUV) of UFRB and the Trajectories, Culture and Education Group (TRACE) of the State University of Feira de Santana (UEFS).

The documentary *Caminhos Abertos* resonates with Carrano and Brenner's (2017) proposal of a "research film", which aims to investigate social reality in some way linked to a systematic knowledge production process and to represent it to promote the expansion of debates around the issues raised. When reflecting on this proposition, the authors comment that,

The film summarizes the research issues in the form of scripted and edited documentary images and sounds. We feel this work allows a more direct and simple way of communicating research results to different audiences, facilitating the creation of a field of reflexivity between researchers and research participants. The documentary thus becomes, simultaneously, a means of observation, documentation, provocation, and increase of the reflection levels of all those involved in the investigative process. (CARRANO E BRENNER, 2017, P. 443)

In the case of *Caminhos Abertos*, the collective dimension that marks the conception of the product, its condition of being the result of teaching-learning processes (Pibic and TCC), the authorial marks of the director and screenwriter - explicit both in the conducting of the interviews and in the stylistic marks of visual production, sound, and editing - as well as the director of photography and editor are amalgamated in the final result that makes explicit forms and agencies that move between the individual and the collective about what it is like to go to

university, based on the self-narrative of four young black men and women and their life trajectories.

By self-narratives, we mean ways of narrating oneself that open up to otherness and offer interlocutions with forms of lived experience on the subjective or factual dimensions. Therefore, they are ways of saying what it is like to be in the world. That implies the intertwining of ordinary life, memory, and experience as possibilities for legitimizing forms of life. Given this, we assume that the relationship between narrative and memory repositions the gesture of looking at the past, always incomplete, to insert the subject in a moment of sharing that has the potential to disorganize linear temporalities of past, present, and future, disputing and reorganizing memory in the present.

The audiovisual narrative construction uses the bodies and voices of young university students in their family, intimate, and community environments as a “reparative practice” (Almeida and Marconi, 2023). According to Leda Maria Martins, it is through the body and the voice that memory, as a concept in dispute, is inscribed in a continuum whose repertoire is given by the lived and by what reminiscence preserves. In this sense, the filmed subjects produce and create memories as experiences of/in the body, establishing communication and remaking visibilities. From this perspective, the vocal and corporal dimensions are characterized by thresholds of intimacy and community experiences that are specific to the filmed bodies but also common to other bodies, especially when considering the experiences of students from lower-income backgrounds. These scenes comprise a specific form of communication practice — a collective practice. This concept finds dialogue in the thinking of author Jean-Louis Comolli (2008), who calls for reflection on those we film, subjects who, before becoming characters in a film, are individuals who already exist in their *mise-en-scène*:

Listening to the people we intend to film at the very moment of filming suggests they position themselves according to the simple fact that we are listening to them. The camera listens. So, let them act based on their words, heard, accepted, welcomed, and captured by us. Not my words,

but theirs. [...] From that appropriation, the work is constructed. Those we film are, above all, taken at their word, and it is with these words, with their language and speech, that they know they are captured by the camera” (Comolli, 2008, p. 55).

In other words, the conception and stylistic choices position the camera at the service of young university students to capture the subjectivity of those who are filmed in front of themselves, through their personal and everyday staging in relation to the university. That approach enables us to reflect on what it means to be in the academic environment, its implications and disputes, drawing from the narratives of young people subjugated by certain hegemonic media discourses. Furthermore, listening becomes central in this process by functioning as a metaphor for the encounter with otherness.

Hence, the interpretative perspective on the film can also be located according to how our bodies are strongly marked and crossed by the territory of the Recôncavo Bahiano in an intense relationship with UFRB. This also occurs from visual, aesthetic, and political points of view articulated in knowledge and the production of Afro-referenced knowledge. That articulation serves as our starting point for analyzing the documentary *Caminhos Abertos* as a possibility that reveals transformative traces in/of the university environment through collective memory-making. The qualitative methodological strategy employs a sensitive analytical approach to the bodies in the scene or on the stage (Bogado, Alves Junior and Souza, 2018). The analysis looks at the audiovisual production through the elements of stage direction, framing and visual composition, art direction and sound effects, and editing as audiovisual and aesthetic elements of the bodies on the stage. We will also analyze on and off-stage arrangements and movements between directors, characters, and spectators experienced in spectatorship as on-stage bodies.

Establishing communication via *mise-en-scène*

The cinematic experience revealed by the documentary *Caminhos Abertos* shows us that the camera is positioned according to the narrating subjects and not the other way around. Although the audiovisual product was scripted, including a semi-structured interview constructed collectively to provide answers for the ongoing research, a space of intimacy emerges between the interviewer/director, the interviewees, and the camera in a horizontal and listening relationship. Comolli (2008) highlights this space of familiarity that the camera, those who are filmed, and those who film produce:

You have to film from very close, like an ear, more than a gaze. The camera has to be within reach of the hand (of the person being filmed) so it can be touched, so it belongs to the space of the people being filmed, so it participates in their zones of equilibrium, in their territory. (COMOLLI, 2008, p. 55)

Just as Comolli (2008) emphasizes the metaphor of listening as the power of an encounter with the other by placing the camera in favor of those who are filmed, Bogado, Alves Junior, and Souza (2018) highlight this gesture when mentioning the beauty of documentary cinema by “recovering the freshness of the first images in which aesthetic experience and ordinary life were not compartmentalized” (p. 4). In this approach, subjects produce themselves by establishing a performance based on their own experiences, where art is intertwined with/in the experience of everyday life (Dewey, 2010).

In this sense, self-narratives establish an aesthetic and political dialogue, which are creative narratives that inscribe the subject in a moment of sharing and, therefore, of communication. The staging strategies and conceptual choices blur the boundaries between life and the scene by portraying the daily actions of the four young black men, juxtaposing their academic routines with their other everyday roles.

Figure 1 - Alisson's testimonial at her home



Source: a *frame* from the documentary *Caminhos Abertos*, 2023.

Hence, a cinematic experience emerges through the unpredictability of the construction of reality, creatively portraying the entry and permanence of young Black men and women in university. This produces what we call a *mise-en-scène* of collective memories through political imagination. In this regard, researcher Lina Cirino (2023) helps us understand imagination as a form of producing visualities that can erase hegemonic scenarios and destabilize the landscapes of the sensitive, establishing a common ground.

In Cirino's understanding (2023), under the aegis of author Denise Ferreira da Silva, imagination has the quality of sabotaging "the regimented knowledge governed by universal reason" (p. 8-9). At the same time, it creates sensitive images "capable of leading to the emergence of new forms of knowledge" (p. 11). Through this critical positioning, it is possible to think of the documentary *Caminhos Abertos* as a possibility of producing other forms of epistemes, by moving away from the dichotomy of reason/vision, objectivity/subjectivity, identity/otherness that are the foundations of Eurocentrism, placing the performances and the arrangements of the scene as sensitive experiences that (re)invent other ways of constituting memory.

Given this, the plots of memory and imagination appear as the raw material of narratives of the self. Memory and imagination, in these terms, are different from each other. Memory functions as a guide for our paths, reinforcing our social cohesion, belonging, and identity production

by creating traces and vestiges from our practices and knowledge. Imagination, on the other hand, is the capacity to give form to these practices, making it possible to imagine and reposition the future based on a gaze toward memory — it is worth saying, an Afro-indigenous and pluriversal future.

According to Sarlo (2007), the discourses of memory undertaken in marginal subjects' modes of narration are endowed with subjectivity, presenting themselves as a way out of the modes of subjectivization. The narratives of the self, in this sense, reconstitute the complexity of existence and the possibilities of remembrance through experience, valuing the first-person perspective and claiming the importance of the subjective dimension. This quality of remembrance, in the present, will interfere with the way we apprehend the past and project the future, implicitly bringing the idea of the invention of oneself inscribed by the body and the voice.

When referring to the mise-en-scène of documentary cinema, Comolli (2008) exposes a set of audiovisual strategies that include gestures, framing, and camera and scene movements. However, in the context of this work, the concept of mise-en-scène shifts a little to also rest on the characters' performances established by the positioning and displacements of the bodies on/in the scene and intertwined by a fictional performance in resonance that expands the narrative of itself to a collectivity (Gonçalves, 2023).

According to Bogado, Alves Junior, and Souza (2018), the bodies on stage are the elements that constitute the staging, like sets, costumes, lighting, and sound, and composing audiovisual and aesthetic aspects. The bodies on stage are the actors, performers or characters, and spectators who occupy this space and interact with the elements of the scene to create an aesthetic experience, generating a third body, that of the “existing relationships between cinema, directors, and characters experienced in spectatorship” (p. 12), encompassing the audiovisual narrative. It is this aesthetic and juxtaposed movement of the bodies on stage/in stage (fig. 02) that we can see in the creation of *Caminhos Abertos*.

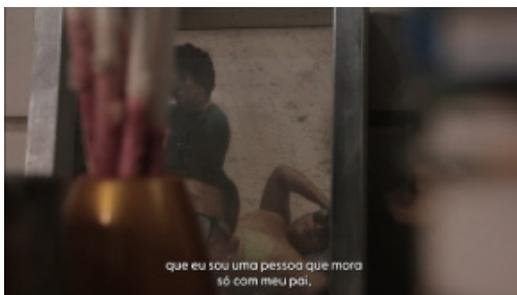
Figure 2 - Matheus Vinicius working and studying at his home



Source: a *frame* from the documentary *Caminhos Abertos*, 2023.

The framing and visual composition are elements that provide texture to the documentary. The framing, for example, is the play between what is inside and outside the frame, present/absent, visible/invisible, foregrounding the objective of the film direction. In the moments when the young adults narrate their experiences in higher education, the director chooses the medium shot, generally framing from the waist up, while mixing between the detail shot to highlight a family photograph (fig. 03) and the close-up to highlight a facial expression, privileging the faces and features that should be seen, while others are out of focus or cut out.

Figure 3 – A photograph of young Alisson with familiar decorative objects



Source: a *frame* from the documentary *Caminhos Abertos*, 2023.

In the spatial scenic constitution, the emphasis on the use of visual and sound elements that relate to the daily life spheres of the four young university students stands out. The study spaces, which also function as workplaces, are portrayed in detail, as is the living room of student Marla Silva, her personal and decorative objects and study material. In this scene, we have the book “Enegrecendo o Direito” (fig. 02) arranged to become visible on top of a pile of technical books and legislation in Matheus’ house or the star symbolizing the Workers’ Party (PT) in the Agronomy student’s room (fig. 04) next to a rainbow and the word love, marking a position taken in the face of a context of evident political dispute, given that the material was recorded in 2022, in the middle of the electoral campaign.

Figure 4 - Marla, in her living room, preparing her material before going to the university



Source: a frame from the documentary *Caminhos Abertos*, 2023.

Figures 5 and 6 below display the household utensils and decorations in the family environment of student Ana Carolina while she narrates her routines as a housewife, university student, and mother. The documentary skillfully intersperses the visual narrative with scenes of proximity to the young woman’s routine, which echo the sounds of animals, such as roosters and guinea fowls, bringing to the stage her life in the rural space, which tends to appear in social imagination as distant from university life.

The narratives of self, undertaken by the young adults, inhabit the scenic spaces as they highlight their experiences beyond academic routines. The strategy, which creative group meetings and the on-set filming crew developed, resonates with the concept of “plural youths” that the documentary showcases and constitutes a fundamental axis in the research groups’ field of studies.

This concept is developed by several authors, including Juarez Dayrell (2003, p.42) when he mentions, “Thus, the young people studied construct certain ways of being young that present specificities, which does not mean, however, that there is a single way of being young in the popular classes. It is in this sense that we emphasize the notion of youths, in the plural, to emphasize the diversity of ways of being young”. What we can expand on and say is that there is also no single way of being a young university student.

Figure 5 - Ana Carolina in the kitchen at her home



Source: a *frame* from the documentary *Caminhos Abertos*, 2023.

Figure 6 - Ana Carolina with her daughter on her lap



Source: a frame from the documentary *Caminhos Abertos*, 2023.

In this context, filmic poetics, while producing images aligned with a resistance project as a “reparative practice” (Almeida and Marconi, 2022), denounce, albeit carefully, the need for more qualified public policies in the context of ethnic-racial and socioeconomic demands related to permanence policies. Thus, film direction reveals a movement that turns the filmed subjects into filmmakers, naming their existence and producing a once denied life.

From this point of view, Comolli (2008) argues that “They decide whether to move or not to occupy the space in one way or another, to endure the duration, to establish their breathing” (p. 56). Therefore, the performances of the bodies on stage are produced by the filmed subjects, who employ their creativity to decide their interventions in their on-stage bodies, while the cinematographic director frames and cuts the scene.

The audiovisual performances in cinematic language reveal a *mise-en-scène* of memories that go beyond individual memory. By manifesting an aesthetic-political production through imagination, these self-narratives expand to a collective body, creating a social and collective memory that is constructed through the presence and listening of the other, recognizing the intimacies and community relations that extend to other peripheral and popular bodies and subjects. The audiovisual

staging, therefore, is based on the communicability of the bodies on stage and in the scene, establishing a relationship with these bodies, not on top of them.

In the argumentative vein, the collective memory uses the stage space to reinforce social cohesion between young university students, spectators, and the filmmakers. That is visible in the performances of the bodies on stage, which externalize the potential of audiovisual performances with resources from everyday life. These elements capture the challenges of being young and a university student in minority contexts, revealing a transformative double meaning linked, first, to the expansion of access to higher education for Black, Quilombola, Indigenous, LGBTQIAP+, and peripheral people and, second, to the dimension of the university environment, struggles, and tensions based on the life trajectories of these marginalized bodies and their experiences.

Through the audiovisual staging, life, work, and characters are intertwined and imbued with a want for the other without ceasing to reaffirm their identities. Identities, here, are synonymous with otherness. As Comolli (2008) states, “The *mise-en-scène* is a shared fact, a relationship. Something that is done together and not just by one person, the filmmaker, against the others, the characters” (p. 60). When stylistic, poetic, and aesthetic choices are designed to welcome and listen to the bodies on stage and in the scene, operating a work of proximity that films the other as close and as possible, an enchantment bursts into the cinematic experience of the documentary, awakening the desire for images and to know the stories of these speaking and whole subjects.

Records of a university in transforma[c]tion

Figure 7 - Ana Carolina, Matheus Vinícius, Alisson, and Marla



Source: a frame from the documentary *Caminhos Abertos*, 2023.

We begin at the end to talk about beginnings because, as the intellectual and Quilombola Nêgo Bispo rightly pointed out, we are a people of “beginning, middle, and beginning again” (Santos, 2023). The image above (fig. 07) is one of the last frames of the documentary *Caminhos Abertos*, which represents what we consider to be the memory of the future in the present, a present that is continually disputed, transformed, and reconstructed according to life trajectories like those of these four characters and so many other young Indigenous people, Quilombolas, and gender and sexuality dissidents who choose and see public universities as possible horizons.

Like fleeting moments of light and flashes of memories, these young Black people resist the atmospheres of oblivion as a colonial legacy of control and domination. They are like firefly memories (Didi-Huberman, 2011), despite the entire process of denial and death, illuminating the path of those who once dreamed of joining higher education and still do. Access, permanence, and completion in public universities are issues of dispute, especially for people from minority backgrounds who demand access to quality public education as a common and collective good. Entering a higher education institution and moving through its

environment in the symbolic, material, social, and knowledge dimensions not only represents the possibility of social mobility, the cultural and economic development of society, considering the success of the educational process, but in particular, it can symbolize a way of defending life, the possibilities of existence, and the territory.

For Iriart and Matos (2023), the meaning of going to university for new students — referring to the entry of people from the lower-income classes — means a relationship of “ambiguity experienced in the university student experience” (p. 64), sometimes with feelings of belonging, sometimes of estrangement, when facing socioeconomic, infrastructural, and symbolic barriers. As the authors explain, the lack of institutional support is a key point affecting these feelings of well-being and discomfort. In this reflection, we can also affirm that the lack of affective engagement contributes to the feeling of ambiguity, which emphasizes the need to create an affective ecosystem among students, teachers, and the university environment.

The self-narratives of the four university students in the documentary *Caminhos Abertos* (Open Paths) highlight the extent of the lack of institutional support, including insufficient scholarship programs, low financial aid, and inadequate student assistance policies, which make it even harder to maintain enrollment. However, as Iriart and Matos (2023) state, the presence of individuals from the lower-income classes in the university environment points to new paths and possible worlds of pluriversity, inhabiting the borders as a place of conflict, encounter, and transformation.

According to Iriart and Matos (2023), from an ethnic-racial and socioeconomic perspective, the entry of new university students has diversified public universities, promoting new ways of thinking and producing knowledge. Even though this insertion happens precariously, it “points to new futures” (p. 43–44). Therefore, we believe that the presence of these subjects enables the qualification of these spaces that, by recognizing their historically marginalized and subjugated position, begin to question the structures of power and with these displacements,

as Kilomba (2019, p. 69) points out, constitute a “becoming as a new subject”.

In this way, we understand that the audiovisual staging of *Caminhos Abertos* positions itself from the edge as a place of creative inscription, erasing the hegemonic landscapes of the sensitive while claiming the right of subjects at the margins to self-narrate and tell their own story as policies of the body, life, and memory. The repositioning of young, peripheral, and dissident subjects in the spaces of power and knowledge is situated in opposition to social-historical processes and dominant narratives, favoring alternative positionalities for their bodies.

The option defined in the collective conception stage to have the four protagonists on stage without the presence of teachers and researchers, for example, puts pressure on a hegemonic logic that still considers young people as incomplete subjects in formation who need to be tutored or explained to by an adult voice as a reference. It is a choice that aligns with reflections that underpin the field of youth studies and youth political movements, which seek to highlight the condition of young people as integral subjects. This positioning becomes even more forceful when it comes to the subjects/bodies of young Black people, those from the periphery, and dissidents since their bodies continue to be associated with and portrayed as violent and causing social panic.

By sabotaging the limits and challenges that belittling processes impose on the bodies of Black, poor, and peripheral people, the documentary seeks other ways of reinvention, drawing from practices of knowledge production through the daily dynamics of plural existences. This construction of new symbolic narratives, through productions and references based on our lives and ways of life, signals collective political practices against the process of erasing our memories and ways of existence.

From this perspective, it is also important to reposition the margin as a vibrant space of inventiveness and imagination of the everyday experiences of Afro-indigenous, queer, and Quilombola communities, producing other agencies and places of dispute in the spaces of power and knowledge. This dimension is very well addressed by author

Saidiya Hartman (2022) when she uses critical imagination to reverse the stereotypical and pejorative representations that tend to portray Black community spaces as places of death and devoid of life.

By recognizing the cultural vitality present in Black communities, Hartman (2022) adopts a critical approach to fight against the perpetuation of the stigmatization of Black subjects, offering a counter-narrative of the enchantment “defined by tumult, vulgar collectivism, and anarchy” (p. 24). The margin or, as Hartman (2022) calls it, the ghetto, is taken as a frontier of encounter and conflict, marked by the improvisation of forms of existence that use scarcity as a gesture of creative and inventive power, (re)making and (re)creating themselves in other lives, via political imagination. Geographer Milton Santos also establishes a relationship with the dimension of scarcity when he discusses how it is central to the production operated by the popular classes or, in his terms, the “classes from below”, based on territory, work, and everyday life. In his words, “Together, people create the culture and, parallel to it, create a territorialized economy, a territorialized culture, a territorialized discourse, and a territorialized politics. This neighborhood culture values at the same time the experience of scarcity and the experience of coexistence and solidarity” (2001, p.144).

This poetic writing appears in the staging of the bodies on stage and in the scene of Caminhos Abertos. The documentary aims to tell other once-denied stories in response to Hartman’s question: “Who would dedicate an afternoon to reflecting on the history of the universe seen from nowhere?” (2022, p. 363). Given the conditions of an anti-Black, anti-indigenous, and anti-LGBTQIAP+ culture in Brazil, the film re-signifies the meanings of being a young Black person and attending university, opening a portal to think about other possible worlds in youth trajectories and educational processes.

Given the above, the transformative dimension of the university environment becomes manifest in the claim to spaces of power and knowledge, as well as in the dispute over the production of life and other symbolic narratives. That stems from a critical reading of the world and

the imaginative capacity to position oneself in the face of the processes of denial historically experienced in Brazil.

Constructing the future in the present

If memory and imagination constitute self-narratives, we assume the past and the future are not given but continuously constructed in the present through interactions and experiences and how we constitute ourselves culturally and socially. In this sense, we consider that the gesture of remembering and the imaginative condition enhance the interface with the future as we understand that those who have access and the right to memory policies exercise the right to choose.

In this conception, the choice is to confront a discourse constructed in the face of the white racial paradigm in which the Black body is abstracted from its humanity, no longer considered in its concreteness and complexity. Therefore, the construction of a memory in front of oneself is fundamental for the processes of self-determination and cultural changes as well as the pulse of Black resistance. According to Cirino and Bogado (2022), “Imaging the present is a way of creating the future, and the future of Black people’s narratives is a web of possibilities that summons enchantment” (p. 303). These enchantments mark the audiovisual staging of *Caminhos Abertos*, energized by the trajectories of young people, their transformations, and their permanencies. Ana Carolina, Alisson, Matheus Vinícius, and Marla reconfigure their Black subjectivities, projecting the future from the perspective of building a collective through stories of uncertainty, insecurity, disputes, self-recognition, and success at university.

Repositioning the Afro-Indigenous and pluriversal future always transgresses the symbolic processes and imaginaries that society imposes when it fixes the body of the Black, Indigenous, Quilombola, and queer person before any reference or place of power that this body is capable of occupying or that is out of tune with the prerogative of the discursive. What is at stake in the constitution of the future of young Black, Indigenous, Quilombola, and LGBTQIAP+ communities in the present is the

movement of rewriting the narratives of oneself based on contact with the communities' memories, ancestry, and the imaginative capacity to reinvent oneself, weaving a network of exchanges by claiming the right to narrate oneself.

With their bodies on stage, the young adults Ana Carolina, Alisson, Matheus Vinícius, and Marla inscribe the future in the present, shuffling and disputing the multiple temporalities. Observations indicate memory discourses are a fundamental part of technology development and life maintenance since, as Sarlo (2007) argues, the right to remember includes the rights to life, justice, and the production of subjectivities.

The author states that “the past becomes present” (Sarlo, 2007, p. 10) because the past lurks in the present as the possibility of a memory bursting unexpectedly. Based on this assumption, the future is fundamental in the present when projecting and envisioning another life between the desire for change and the demand for a future. In *Caminhos Abertos*, we glimpse the web of life possibilities and the future created in the now, discontinuing the linear sense by producing a tear in the historical temporality of modernity. They are images of resilience and resistance, of past, present, and future, creating worlds in the face of impossibilities since we are a diverse people, of circularities and crossroads.

Beginning, middle, and beginning again (Considerations)

The reflections developed here shed light on aesthetic-political audiovisualities produced collectively as constructions of collective memories through the sensitive analysis of the bodies on stage and in the scene in the documentary film *Caminhos Abertos*. The results point to a cyclical and transformative movement in/of the university environment, mediated by concepts, aesthetics, and audiovisual conceptions of the filmmakers in not essentializing their narratives but rather letting the four young students tell their stories, revealing the multiplicity of experiences of being and going to or staying out of university.

The mise-en-scène of collective memories seeks to portray a performance amalgamated by aesthetic and poetic visualities, including sensitive experiences shared through the youth trajectories of the characters in the documentary film. The scenic device in its elements of everyday life and the collective agencies in self-narratives and audiovisual production recover the vivacity of the intersection between cinema and ordinary life as well as the transformative potential of the spectral zone in articulating filmmakers, those who are filmed, and spectators, engendering other ways of experiencing and relating to audiovisual experiences from a territorialized positioning.

Audiovisual creation presents another contemporary configuration of Black youth trajectories, different from those conveyed by traditional and hegemonic media. *Caminhos Abertos* breaks away from the current order of control and subjection by standing against forgetfulness, often used as a colonial policy of subjection that imposes a silencing mask (Kilomba, 2019) over Afro-indigenous, queer, and Quilombola people's voices, memory, and lives.

According to Kilomba (2019), the mask represents the colonial barbarity itself that prevents us from pursuing memory in search of completion (Sarlo, 2007). On the contrary, it imposes a sense of muteness, determining who can speak and what is authorized to speak. It is precisely the opposite sense that the audiovisual staging produces, placing at the heart of its issues the narratives of these young people, their life trajectories, and disputes for visibility.

Therefore, we emphasize the importance of producing guerrilla instruments, especially in the field of visualities, for the anti-racist struggle and the recovery of existences and memories that shape the fabric of remembering and forgetting in dialogue with the memories of Black, Indigenous, and Quilombola communities. Remembering and understanding appear as resources in the reconstruction of the past, especially in the production of discourses taken as truths, as Sarlo (2007) explains.

Black corporealities, drum sounds, gestures of solidarity and collectivity, sharing on the threshold of intimacy and beyond, listening,

changes, and permanence make up the disputes for the future. The four young students from Caminhos Abertos have been involved in these disputes for their benefit and that of others from the popular classes, especially for other young Black men and women, demanding different positions of existence for their Black bodies.

The cinematographic conception displays loyalty to its characters, imprinting a way of seeing and listening to understand the trajectories of Ana Carolina, Alisson, Matheus Vinícius, and Marla in their configurations and everyday routines in a performance that moves close to the bodies on stage and in the scene organized by imagination. Hence, we observe that the production of the documentary builds other social expectations for these subjects by moving in a horizontal relationship with these young people, their stories, victories, and challenges.

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