

Negotiating with adversity: reflections about “race”, (homo)sexuality and social inequality in Rio de Janeiro

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this article is to discuss how the dynamic of affection and pleasure combine with social inequality in the city of Rio de Janeiro's GLS circuit. More specifically, it will look at part of the life trajectories of two young black homosexual men who live in the suburbs of Rio de Janeiro and of one who lives in the favela da Maré. The field work revealed that in this context the darker male homosexuals who live in the suburbs and favelas of Rio de Janeiro have a broader field of maneuver than those in which are inserted the heterosexual male and female youth of the region and even the lesbians and transvestites of different colors who live in these regions.

Key words: homosexuality, poverty, race-color, Rio de Janeiro, inter-racial romantic-sexual relations, social inequality.

Introduction

As Nelson do Valle e Silva and Carlos Hasenbalg highlight,¹ many sociological analyses classify inter-racial marriage and miscegenation as the “acid proof” of racial relations in Brazil. The authors explain this point with clarity:

It is at the moment of constitution of the family, the basic nucleus of social stratification, which the most fundamental marks of the distances that regulate the coexistence of the groups of color should be observed.²

In the study that I conducted for my doctoral thesis, I focused on this and other related issues by analyzing heterochromic emotional-sexual relationships³ among heterosexual couples in

¹ SILVA e HASENBALG, 1992.

² SILVA e HASENBALG, 1992, p. 3.

Brazil and South Africa.⁴ Nevertheless, new contours of this issue can be observed if we turn to heterochromic partnerships among homosexuals. Thus, the purpose of this article is to broaden the previous analysis by following the trajectory of black (*negro*) homosexual youths who live in a situation of poverty in Rio de Janeiro.

In this sense, I will present and discuss part of the field work of a study that I coordinated about inter-racial emotional-sexual relationships among gays in the city of Rio de Janeiro.⁵ The possible transit that the GLS circuit⁶ allows and more specifically, how the dynamic of affections and pleasure interact with social inequality in this context.

The design of the study

For nearly three years I interviewed and lived with gays and lesbians who live in the favelas of Maré and Rio das Pedras,⁷ in suburban neighborhoods and in Rio de Janeiro's Zona Sul (southern zone), and who maintained one or more heterochromic romantic-sexual relationships. The field work consisted in interviews concerning the religious, educational and labor market experiences, as well as the calculations that each one makes concerning the prevention of STDs-AIDS. In addition, I visited *candomble* centers, nightclubs, or any situation to which I was invited to participate and that would facilitate and be propitious for romantic and sexual encounters.

As in the research conducted for the doctoral study, I worked with the self-classification of color-race and sexual orientation supplied by those interviewed. This is also a delicate issue in this

³ "Heterochromic" is a category that Thales de AZEVEDO, 1975, uses to refer to affectionate-sexual relationships between whites and blacks. His reasoning was close to the classic opposition systematized by Oracy NOGUEIRA, 1985, concerning cultures that operate preponderantly with *appearance* (such as Brazil) and those which emphasize *ascendence* as a criteria of racial classification (in the case of the United States). The analysis of Thales de Azevedo, however, offers an important difference in relation to the work of Oracy Nogueira. According to the first author, the mode of classification by color (different from that of race) includes criteria of an *aesthetic order*. This involves a difference in terminology which, nevertheless, allows emphasizing the place and importance of the attributes of prestige in the social construction of color. *Appearance* seems like something given, while an *aesthetic* can be built and manipulated in different manners.

⁴ See details in MOUTINHO, 2004.

⁵ This study was conducted at the Instituto de Medicina Social (IMS) and at the Centro Latino-Americano em Sexualidade e Direitos Humanos (CLAM). The study was initially supported by CNPq and is part of the "Integrated Project in Sexuality, Gender and Family: ruptures and continuities in the experience of the modern Western **individual**" coordinated by Luiz Fernando Dias Duarte (PPGAS/MN/UFRJ) and Jane Russo (CLAM/IMS/UERJ). I received support from FAPERJ, through a Researcher Establishment grant and from the "Young Scientist Program in Our State – FAPERJ/2003". In this phase of the study, I received essential support from Crystiane Castro, a student of social sciences at UERJ. The research team included: Silvia Aguião (who conducted research in the favela of Rio das Pedras), Vítor Grunvald (who conducted research on the Internet and homosexual chat groups) and Débora Baldelli (researching at parties and nightclubs with electronic music in the Rio de Janeiro's Zona Sul).

⁶ Initials referring to Gays, Lesbians and Sympathizers (or suspects, as they say playfully).

⁷ About the relation between race, gender and violence in the favela of Rio das Pedras, cf. MOUTINHO, 2002. Also see Marcos ALVITO, 2001 and Alba ZALUAR, 1994.

context. I was careful to come close only to those that the sociability network defined and who were part of an inter-racial couple. I would only interview one of the partners, my earlier study revealed that interviews with couples are a propitious space for tensions between the partners that can involve the researcher and compromise the work. The ground of gender identities, orientation and sexual experiences is equally swampy. In this sense, I always worked with the classificatory categories of those interviewed.

Sexual gossip composed an important space for the research, above all, in the case of homosexual youths involved with *candomblé*. At times, after an interview, or after a lively discussion with the group about sex and dating, I would be taken to a corner where someone would whisper to me that “so and so” said it wasn’t like that and in reality, he likes... and the conversation went into heated details, always in a mocking tone, about one or more members of the group. The dissemination and presence of these rumors, as well the frequent expression of a lack of trust in the virility of the *ogãs*,⁸ are part of a game that does not create a risk of diminished prestige or position. It is important to highlight, in this sense, that the gossip and the playful relationships are not directly triggered by the issue investigated. They are part of the broader universe of the study, and as various authors highlight, this religious segment is marked by rivalries and gossip, disputes and sarcasm, or that which the literature highlights as “*xoxação*”.⁹

Néstor Perlongher¹⁰ and Patrícia Birman¹¹ even call attention to the way that the “*linguagem do santo*” runs through distinct domains and is not restricted to the universe of the possession cults. In the São Paulo ghetto, for example, this relationship with the world of magic and the supernatural functions as a sign of respect and protection from the *malandros* and *michês* of the locale.¹² A similar situation can be found in the current study in the suburb and in the favela of Maré, but is not present, however, in the *underground* parties in the Zona Sul region of Rio de Janeiro.

It is also necessary to highlight that the regions studied are distinctly marked by violence and drug-trafficking. The favelas of Maré and of Rio das Pedras – the first located in the suburb of Rio de Janeiro and the second in the western zone, close to Barra da Tijuca – are paradigms for studies of violence. The favela of Maré is known in the Rio de Janeiro and Brazilian media for violence among drug dealers or between them and the police. The favela of Rio das Pedras is nationally and internationally known for “non-violence” in particular, violence associated with drug

⁸ The word to identify initiating men who do not enter in trance. Unlike the *adés*, the performance of the *ogãs* is virile and their sexual desire is directed at the girls and not boys as in the case of the *adés*.

⁹ Cf. Peter FRY, 1982; Maria Lina TEIXEIRA, 1986; Patrícia BIRMAN, 1995, among others.

¹⁰ PERLONGHER, 1987.

¹¹ BIRMAN, 1997.

¹² PERLONGHER, 1987, p. 144.

dealing – although there are recurring rumors about the action of the “*polícia mineira*”, a form of parallel power that works to maintain order and check drug dealing and the use of illegal drugs.

The part of the Rio de Janeiro suburb where the study was realized is close to the violent regions, but the residents live in relative tranquility, without direct fear of drug wars or stray bullets. This is an important factor, because in the first study that I conducted in Rio das Pedras, the relationship between gender, sexuality and violence was made explicit in the identification of a virile gentlemanly *ethos*, in opposition, for example, to what Zaluar called the *warrior* ethos found in drug dealing¹³ and also registered by Alvito¹⁴ in Acari. In Rio das Pedras is registered a structure of power, a prestige and a code of honor that are fundamentally different from that found in favelas with very active drug dealing. In this sense, the goal of this study was to analyze the place of homosexuality and race in this context, and more specifically understand the way that the violence characteristic of these regions influences relations between genders as well as different sexual orientations and race. As I sought to demonstrate in other work,¹⁵ the dominant idiom of gender, race and sexuality and its articulation with violence and drug dealing are elements of fundamental importance for the understanding of the dynamic of the sexual-romantic and inter-racial relationships between gay and lesbians partners in these regions.

In Rio de Janeiro’s Zona Sul the study was conducted basically in nightclubs and parties that are associated with the GLS public – such as the clubs Dama de Ferro, Galeria Café, Fosfobox and 00 (Zero Zero), and the parties X-Demente and B.I.T.C.H (Barbies in Total Control Here). All of these parties and nightclubs have at least one night (or dance floor) dedicated to House and Electric music, recognized as the musical genres of preference of those who participate in this circuit.¹⁶

In this article, I will more specifically explore elements of the life trajectory of two young Negro homosexuals who live in the Rio de Janeiro suburb and of one who lives in the favela da Maré.

In this context, it has been interesting to note, as I highlighted earlier,¹⁷ how black (*negro*) male homosexuals who live in the suburbs and favelas of Rio de Janeiro have a “field of opportunities”, in the words of Gilberto Velho,¹⁸ broader than the heterosexual men and women from the region and even, to the point that the field work allows affirming, the lesbians and

¹³ About this theme, see, among other works of this author, ZALUAR, 2004. About styles of masculinity in different social layers, see Fátima CECCHETTO, 2004.

¹⁴ ALVITO, 2001.

¹⁵ Cf. MOUTINHO, 2002.

¹⁶ About this theme see BALDELLI and MOUTINHO, 2004.

¹⁷ Cf. MOUTINHO, 2005.

¹⁸ VELHO, 1994.

transvestites who work in these areas. For the darker (*negro/pardo*) gay men in particular, it is possible to traverse and go beyond, in different ways and with distinct forms of interaction, the class lines of Rio de Janeiro, as will be seen below.

In the suburb of Rio de Janeiro, most of those interviewed divide most of their time between *candomblés*,¹⁹ samba groups and clubs from the region. But not only these places. Visits to the nightclubs in the Zona Sul region, and the Copacabana and Lapa neighborhoods are outings that they take regularly. At times they go to “stir something up” and “flirt”, at other times they go to “make money” as some of those interviewed said.

Some of the experiences of the study touched me deeply. Among the choices that could be made, I decided to present three situations that are illustrative of this field that crosses race, (homo)sexuality, social inequality and, in a distinct manner, violence.

An expression of the lack of government support in the Rio de Janeiro suburb

Mateus has a dramatic and paradigmatic trajectory. He is known as a happy and exaggerated gay [“*bicha alegre*” and “*caricata*”] as one friend alleged. He describes himself as “truly black” [“*preto mesmo*”] or “dark brown” [“*moreno escuro*”], as he says, “cause at 6 P.M. its already night?!”. He is 16 years old and the son of a drug dealer who died before he was born...”by mistake”, as he explained. “They” killed Mateus’ father in the favela of Vigário Geral, 17 years ago, thinking he was another person. His mother is in her third marriage and his previous step-father, also linked to drug dealing, was assassinated.

Mateus has always lived in the Parada de Lucas neighborhood, close to Brás de Pina, a Rio de Janeiro suburb. He dedicated himself for some time to dance and is now taking a high school equivalency course, as do many youths in the region, to compensate for consecutive years of abandoning school. About his educational path, he told me with pride: “I was never left back, you know?” He took dance classes in a public school and showed me various photos of his presentations. At the time of the interview, Mateus was not enrolled in any dance class. I asked if there was no place in the region where he could dance or take some other course that interested him. He said that he had some understanding of computers, that he learned in an intensive course that he took at a Baptist Church nearby and that he even went to the favela of Maré to try to get into a Maré

¹⁹ Despite the visible growth of the evangelical churches, the *candomblés* continue – in a particularly visible manner in the Rio de Janeiro suburbs and favelas – to be essential spaces, not only for the survival and expression of religiousness, but also for sociability, leisure and romantic encounters. About homosexuality in *candomblé*, see BIRMAN, 1995 and 1997, and FRY, 1982.

dance company [Corpo de Dança da Maré], but thought it was dangerous to enter the “community”: he was afraid of being “confused” as was his father and he gave up.

He said lots of men try to pick him up and that he knows that men of different ages like him because he is young and he tries to take advantage of this. Mateus does not like men his own age. He prefers older men. It is interesting to note that the “older ones” include a broad range that runs from the “boys” of 22 to older men of nearly 60.²⁰ Mateus likes to flirt at the beach at Copacabana and classified himself as “a bit jumpy” when it comes to relationships: “Today I am with one guy, but if I see another I am already...” he said laughing.

In the field work, I have identified until now two broad lines of activity of young male homosexuals, and in particular blacks (*negros*), in the circuit of affection and pleasure of Rio de Janeiro’s Zona Sul: those who go to Copacabana, preferentially to the Le Boy nightclub, to find white (*branco*) foreigners for monetary reasons (they can earn up to US\$100 in a few minutes”, he told me in another interview); and those who look for older white foreigners, in order to have fun, but just as much, to have diversified and intense relationships. I will return to this point, although it is worth noting that they are not exclusive positions.

Mateus maintained that he hadn’t liked to date black (*negro*) men, but had a “good experience, it wasn’t bad, so I removed this idea from my head”. He explained the situation in the following manner: “I was influenced by the others, today I’m not, I have grown up”. This is an important point, because this issue came to me through pressure from the group. They all know the subject of my research and pushed me to Mateus to provoke him to say that he didn’t like to “go out with blacks (*negros*)”. The group felt uncomfortable with the way that Mateus expressed his romantic preferences and they seemed to want to embarrass him, exposing him to the study. In reality, the question was not the preference for inter-racial partners (common in the group), but the racist way that Mateus expressed this.

In fact, Mateus said that there are many inter-racial couples in the possession cult that he frequents, because the “people of candomblé are accustomed with black (*negro*)”. This co-existence is the key category that explains why the interviewee does not identify racist situations in candomblé. Mateus feels the discrimination strongly as being “understood”: “at times you are walking in the street, you don’t do anything...and the people pass by and say, ‘hey fag’, ‘there goes the bitch’[‘ah, viadinho’, ‘ah, vai marica, bichona’], who knows what...if they don’t like it, why do they instigate?”, he asks, with a bit of dismay and bitterness.

In sum, as a resident of a relatively quiet region – even if it is close to favelas with a strong history of violence, such as, Vigário Geral and the favela itself of Parada de Lucas – Mateus clearly

²⁰ About aging and homosexuality, see Julio SIMÕES, 2004.

suffers from the lack of public and private opportunities and initiatives in that region. Candomblé appears in his narrative and in his life as one of the few opportunities for sociability, exchange, leisure and encounters. It is worth saying, in conclusion, that this network of contacts also offers, at times, access to some type of employment. A complete economy of exchanges and favors helps the survival process. It was possible to note in the discourses, a certain moralization of poverty, with arguments that evoke the idleness and lack of will of the individuals. There is a horizontal solidarity network, which reveals the fragility of the formal access channels to education and employment. Alba Zaluar calls attention to this issue when he discusses the high incidence of theft and robbery in Madureira, which has a young and impoverished population, as indicated by the data from the Brazilian census institute (IBGE) for the region. According to Zaluar, the issue resides in the “lack of rules” and in the

content of the new rules that rise in the institutional void that is formed from the synergy between the underground economy, the local organizations and the institutions that are supposedly responsible for maintaining law and order.²¹

Some of those interviewed work as waiters, drivers, and other occupations that do not require schooling. Do these homosexual youth have a common dream? Some confide in me: they would like to be hair dressers!

The circuits of desire

Saulo, a 24-year-old “black” man (*negro*), is a resident of the suburbs and part of a group of friends - all from candomblé - who circulate among the *points* in suburbia and the city’s western zone. At times he goes to the clubs Le Boy and Help, both in Copacabana, to “get” some “gringos” and “make some money”. Saulo says he does not work. Like others interviewed, he would like to take a hairdresser’s course and abandoned his studies before completing elementary school. He does not know how to explain why he did this, he thinks it was the influence of “friends” and explains the issue in this manner: “I started going out too much, I stopped studying, but I am going back”, he said evasively.

Saulo is not accustomed to dating black (*negro*) men and also does not know how to explain his preference for white men. In his opinion, “it seems like one black (*negro*) doesn’t like an other. I think there must be some prejudice inside them, some block, something (...) I have already dated one, you know? But others, its very difficult”. In terms of age, he said he prefers older men, because they “have more to offer. A younger person is very immature”.

²¹ ZALUAR, 2004, p. 20.

Saulo is popular with white and foreign homosexuals in Rio de Janeiro's Zona Sul and among the black (*negro*) foreigners he said he passes unnoticed by the Angolans because "they only want whites (*brancos*)". The most handsome, in his mind, are the blacks (*negros*) from the United States with whom he has "gone out". It is interesting to note how the notions of race and color combined with nationality compose an hierarchical framework of sexual supply in Copacabana's market of love and sex. Some of these contacts may even lead to a longer bond. Saulo said black (*negro*) Africans have the least prestige in this context.

This is an interesting factor. Marcelo Ferreira²² works precisely with the discomfort of the Rio de Janeiro tourist market with North American blacks with high spending power, who only circulate in "white" (locations). In this "Afro-American" tourism, with a strongly militant bias, black women (*negras*) have a central position. It is in fact, more of "family" tourism, for which Rio de Janeiro and Salvador are the principal destinations. These are cities in which woman drive the demand for living (and eating), determined by the "authenticity"²³ of the ethnic and racial qualities in this universe. In the case of the so-called "sexual tourism", Ferreira notes that instead of large groups, this traveler comes with at most three people. There is little interest in the traditional tourist locations or even in the form that relationships are organized between whites, blacks (*negros*) and mestizos in Brazil. For these travelers, mixture does not appear to be a problem.

According to Thaddeus Blanchette and Ana Paula Silva,²⁴ who analyzed Rio de Janeiro's heterosexual sexual market, especially that of Copacabana, the city functions as a "field for sexual diversion" for foreigners because of the high spending power of the Euro and the dollar, because the city is relatively safe compared to Asia, Africa and the Middle East and because its sex market has a qualified organizational structure, with thermal baths and clubs. Among the factors profiled by the authors, one that is noteworthy but not surprising is the belief in the special sensuality of Brazilian woman. There is a significant perception that the woman may be prostitutes "but don't act like whores". In this regard, I am interested in the idea that the situation perceived in this way would facilitate the transformation of those sexual involvements into emotional ones, a perception that is also present among the prostitutes.

Piscitelli works with a concept of sexual tourism that helps to understand this universe, which, as has been revealed in my field work, is not restricted to heterosexual tourism. The author maintained:

²² FERREIRA, 2005.

²³ Adriana PISCITELLI, 2004.

²⁴ BLANCHETTE e SILVA, 2004.

sexual tourism is ... any travel experience in which the provision of sexual services of the local population in exchange for monetary and non-monetary retribution are a crucial element for the fruition of a trip.²⁵

The trajectories of Saulo and the other Negro boys also involve interesting similarities with that of the women studied by Piscitelli.²⁶ Marcos' trajectory expresses what I am trying to emphasize. This will be presented below.

Romantic Exchanges and interactions among distinct classes and colors

Marcos was just over 20 when I interviewed him. He was conducting a televised course, had never had a boyfriend or "been" with a woman: "I have never even kissed a woman" he said. He also maintained that he likes handsome men a lot, that he goes to Lapa, a nightclub in Bangu and others in Copacabana. It was at one of them that he met a white, European boyfriend whom he dated for six months and even lived with him in Ipanema. Marcos said that he and a number of his black friends (*negros*) go to the clubs in the Zona Sul to meet foreigners: "There are a lot of gays who come to Brazil and they very much like to date blacks (*negros*)". According to his explanation, the "gringos" think the "blacks (*negros*) are warmer, that they have something different". For him the "gringos" "are cool" because "they have a different culture". Marcos does not think the gringos are physically very attractive. He is "attracted" "to the way" they are: "being someone from abroad, from another country". He also said that "it's cool to have contact with a person who shows me things that I have only seen on television". Marcos explained this type of encounter in the following way: "An exchange of information. He talks about himself, how he lives there, and I speak about how I live here. So this is very interesting, it's very cool to explore this in him and he explores this in us".

He said the sex with these white foreigners is "normal" but that the gringos think that the blacks (*negros*) are "really hot"! In the market of love and sex, Marcos thinks that he has no chance with white Brazilians, "because they prefer the people from here, the Zona Sul"; and that with the "gringos" this is not the case. "They wind up giving preference to us, principally because we are Negro. My friends, gays and whites, say: 'Hey, what do you guys have? We have to stay in the corner'. I also don't know what this is", says Marcos, gesticulating emphatically to express astonishment and uncertainty.

The perspective presented by Marcos is very interesting, because he is constantly speaking of **exchange**. As in the case of the others interviewed, it involves an exchange marked by social

²⁵ PISCITELLI, 2001, p. 4.

²⁶ PISCITELLI, 2004.

inequality, but it is interesting for both parties. He lived with a “gringo”, would go to the parties, got to know people from different countries: he learned as well as provided information and at the same time received. It is interesting, for example, that nearly every day he would go back to the region where he lives to see his friends, because he missed them, as he explained indirectly.

About discrimination, he told me that it is very difficult to be black (*negro*) and homosexual (“no family deserves this!”), and that where he lives it is more difficult to be gay than lesbian, because they are more respected. Marcos says he feels very discriminated, but is “boyzinho” (that is, he dresses like a man) and for him it would be worse to be a “transvestite”. He said the men don’t even talk to the transvestites because if he sits down to talk to one, everyone will say “he is going with a transvestite, a ‘travola’”, as he elucidated.

Marcos said that he feels sexual attraction for white men, but the other reason that he doesn’t go out with blacks (*negros*) refers to the “opportunity”. His declarations echo those of the other men and women interviewees of different classes and sexual orientations: “I think that one black (*negro*) doesn’t like another black (*negro*)”, he affirmed emphatically.

Conclusion

Differences in gender, class, age and even color constitute categories that function as **libidinal tensors** that guide the subjects in their search for bodies and pleasures.²⁷ In this sense, black (*negra*) skin-color appears to have an erotic connotation that hovers over the erotic universe of the amorous encounters – whether homo- or heterosexual.

Since the beginning of the field work, I have noted a non-differentiation of some significant factors in relation to certain social representations transmit by the heterochromic emotional-sexual relationships among heterosexual partners and also among gay men. It is worth highlighting that, both in the heterochromic homosexual arrangements, as well as the heterosexual ones, race and color do not evoke a moral distinction. Character, for example, is something that is developed through socialization; it is not related to race. In this study, the combination of the distinct forms of inequalities is in question. In this sense, homophobia overlaps racism. In other words, homophobia is experienced more intensely than racism or even class discrimination.²⁸

The universe studied approximates some of the reflections made by Perlongher,²⁹ in particular, those concerning the issues related to territoriality, identity and the desires that animate the markets of pleasure and sex. Perlongher maintains that instead of expounding on identities, it is

²⁷ Cf. PERLONGHER, 1987.

²⁸ About this theme, cf. Verena STOLCKE, 1991.

more convenient to speak of **territorialities** – a suggestion that is particularly interesting, given that the theme under analysis unfurls in a space that is deeply marked by violent factions, which act on countless territories in the city of Rio de Janeiro, conferring, as said previously, specific contours to the distinctions of race, sexuality and gender.

Thus, the subjects circulate in a “web” and in “networks” and define themselves by their **“trajectory and ‘topological’ position in the network”**. Perlongher’s reflection that is of direct interest to this study concerns the form of understanding the classificatory systems: they are “indicators” of the libidinal intensities, the changes to which make visible (as the trajectories analyzed reveal) some of the paths (and detours) of a desire that “luxuriates in transgression” as Georges Bataille suggests,³⁰ and is in continuous movement, but which equally, (re)orders, reconfigures and at times hides the hierarchies and inequalities that conform the social realm.

In the search for understanding the dynamic of social inequality, with the background always being the framework supplied by demographic and sociological studies of quantitative orientation,³¹ it is remarkable how factors that many analysts interpret as restricted to the sphere of sexuality are insinuated in and modify the normative sphere, allowing the qualification of the many forms of inequalities to which individuals are submit.

In the case of the study of romantic-sexual heterochromic relationships between heterosexuals, it was interesting to notice how the black man(*negro*)-white woman (*branca*) couple not only operates with a specific logic of eroticism, but how it also reorders current representations about Brazil and the process of miscegenation, questioning the domination of the white man, the “model man” and the asymmetries constituted under his aegis.³²

This study focused on the “field of opportunities” available to darker (*escuro*) and poorer gay men – at least in comparison with heterosexual women and men and the transvestites who also live in the impoverished regions of the city of Rio de Janeiro. We only have access to the other pole of the dyad darker-black man and white man (*homem negro/mais escuro* and *homem branco*) (particularly foreign and older men) through the statements of those interviewed. Nevertheless, their narratives appear to indicate a new “social sensibility” as was highlighted by Júlio Simões.³³ This relationship was not expressed part of a melancholic or decadent scene. It also does not involve affirming any Machiavellianism inserted in a project of social ascendance, but of registering that it is this social subject who possesses a set of characteristics related to gender, color, sexual

²⁹ PERLONGHER, 1993.

³⁰ BATAILLE, 1998.

³¹ Among others, cf. HASENBALG, SILVA and Márcia LIMA, 1999.

³² Cf. MOUTINHO, 2004.

³³ SIMÕES, 2004.

orientation and class who allows a greater chance for experiencing and accumulating new and varied experiences, and increasing cultural, economic and social capital. In other words, the analysis of the trajectories presented above allow glimpsing some of the possibilities for action of individuals who live in a situation of poverty in Rio de Janeiro.

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