



**COMMUNICATION, CULTURE AND PERFORMANCES:
FEMALE EMPOWERMENT AND THE DIGITAL SCENE OF
BRAZILIAN BLACK MUSIC**

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Abstract

In this work we assume that communication and its technologies mediate culture and that, allied to the value interests of the market, they contribute to the operation of meaning among the subjects. In this context we aim to establish a dialogue with studies whose objects are performances of communication in diverse cultures. It is important to highlight the way in which the Brazilian women/artists we have chosen for our reflections – Linn da Quebrada, Ludmilla and Karol Conka – fit into the anti-racist agenda. In dialogue with the perspective presented and focused on the representation of black women in media productions, we are interested in discussing how they perform gender and racial identities. In methodological terms, we conducted a bibliographic research and procedures for collecting empirical data on the YouTube platform. As results, from the communication point of view, we observe that the channels for the circulation of the clips are either the singers' own or built in partnership, which implies greater autonomy for the transmission of content.

Keywords: Communication; culture; performances; gender; Brazilian black music.

1 INTRODUCTION

We refer to those mediated by communication technologies, communicative mediations of culture and its manifestations, cinematographic, televised and videographic performances of the daily life in digital platforms of communication and also, communicative mediations in the scenic arts, rites, popular festivals, its modes and networks of communication: to perform, stage, present, represent and communicate.

Thus, we wrote our text from the also interdisciplinary dialogue among ourselves, three researchers articulating communication, anthropology and cultural performances as a theoretical lens to discuss the performance of female black singers – cis and trans – in the new Brazilian music scene and the limits of black feminine empowerment, also read by the threat of reproducing normative values of gender, race and class.

It is important to highlight the way in which the Brazilian women/artists we have chosen for our reflections – Linn da Quebrada, Ludmilla and Karol Conka – fit into the anti-racist agenda. Such insertion is necessary since representativeness matters, following the perspective pointed out by the black feminism. However, it is necessary to ponder that by itself it is not enough to definitively implement the anti-racist agenda, since the false racial democracy historically relies on the exceptions occupying such spaces.

They form the contemporary music scene as black women maintaining consistency “with the way of living and behaving” (HOOKS, 2013, p. 12), which goes beyond the normative principles of race. Thus, we identify an affirmative movement of multiple possibilities of being black women through the recognition of their own existence. For black women, seeing themselves in media products shows them that it is also their space of existence.

Issues related to black women are important and urgent to us, considering the impact of structural racism on Brazilian society, in terms of the production and reproduction of inequalities, without ignoring the problems related to their bodies. Black women were historically violated by sugar landlords, romanticized in the image of the black, strong and courageous mother, eroticized in the media carnival, imprisoned at work and domestic violence and ignored in the first discussions about gender and feminism. Having all that in mind, it is precisely the body of black women on YouTube that we seek to emphasize and provoke reflections from these existences.

In recent years the issue of black women seems to have proved to be one of the most dramatic cases of minorities in power. From statistical data on the educational situation; insertion into the labor market; access to durable goods and digital technologies; the condition of poverty; vulnerability to violence, and even in love relationships, we can identify black women sustaining the base of the pyramid that portrays the graph of race and gender inequality. Considering this context, the maxim often mentioned by the activist Angela Davis that “when the black woman moves, the whole structure of society moves with her” seems especially valuable to us, particularly if we expand the sense of movement employed by the former black panther and if we consider the idea that the movement is the thought of the body (SILVA; SANTOS; JESUS, 2019. p. 130).

It is also of great interest to us how the intersectionality between these two markers operates. Considering that the projected image of Brazilian black women – from the colonial period to Sargentelli’s well-known mulatto phenomenon – was easily associated with the idea of sexualization, we wonder how the artists, analyzed in the clips contribute to, break or invert the hegemonic discourse through their performances and their bodies that intersect race and gender. We do not intend to create new labels for black women or for these singers in particular, but rather seek to understand how artists from a new Brazilian music and media scene have been inserting themselves into the cultural context and have been collaborating, through their artistic performances, for the production of senses on identity aspects. And, also, to problematize sexualization/eroticism of the female and black body on the threshold between freedom and the patriarchal perspective, which is white, masculine, cisgender and heteronormative.

In methodological terms, we conducted a bibliographic research (STUMPF, 2005, p. 54) in order to form “a theoretical and conceptual referential framework” capable of supporting the reflection. This, in turn, helps the other end of our methodology, which is based on procedures for collecting empirical data on the YouTube platform, in addition to conducting the necessary analysis of the selected material.

For this study, we selected three publications in clips of black women – cis and trans – and contemporary singers to compose the empirical corpus of the analysis: Linn da Quebrada, Ludmilla and Karol Conka. We emphasize that although the three black women are linked to a Brazilian black music scene, we are less interested in the musical aspects and more in the image production of what we can call a black female in their performances, which in some measure is

related to the type of music with which each artist engages. The objects of analysis, however, are not the artistic productions of these singers in general, but a clip of each of them, released on YouTube, with a number of views that we consider expressive.

2 PERFORMANCES OF BLACK SINGERS – CIS AND TRANS – IN THE NEW BRAZILIAN MUSIC SCENE

In this item we expose our arguments from the analysis of the selected clips, with issues related to the racial and gender identity of the artists. We use the notions of empowered and powerful, to rub the concept of power linked to resistance movements that simultaneously put these women in evidence, to a certain extent representing a black and feminine power, but also reinforcing a cultural matrix based on values that sexualize and racialize women. In the second step, we discuss the advent of YouTube as a tool for cultural propagation capable of addressing issues already posed in other spaces of the national cultural matrix.

2.1 Enviadescer (Ingaying)

Fag, trans, black and peripheral are some of the expressions used by Linn da Quebrada to present herself. Born on the outskirts of the capital of São Paulo, she was raised in the interior of the state within the religiosity of Jehovah's Witnesses. Thus, intersected by race, gender, and sexuality, these data from her biography point out some clues about the challenges she faces in terms of homotransphobia and racism. In 2016, Linn da Quebrada released the clip of her first song, entitled Ingaying. By the time this text was written, Linn da Quebrada's official YouTube clip had already reached over 791,000 views.

The performance invests in the idea of sending a “straight talk” to the one called “discreet male”. “I really like the faggots / the ones that are feminized / the ones that show a lot of skin / wiggle / go out in make up” is one of the statements found in the narrative, which bets on debauchery and eroticism with the hip movement as its main focus. The environment of the clip seems to highlight the street as a space to be occupied. There are dozens of people with their bodies marked by diversity of gender, sexuality, affectivity and race, assembled with the colors that guarantee their specificity, from the exaggeration of wiggling and the hot pink of the black fag to the body assembled with backpack and dyke cap.

Regarding hip movements – which is called wiggling in Brazil – it is opportune to recall the discussion held by Elizabeth Travassos (2004) when she proposed reflections on the umbigada Afro-Brazilian dances. She reminds us that the hip and butt movements in African, African-American and Afro-Brazilian dances attract the attention of Europeans, who tend to read the body movement not only as erotic, but as lewd, something vile that incites carnal sin.

We also seek a dialogue with Lélia Gonzalez who, by launching the expression “amefricanity” as a methodology that makes it possible “to rescue a specific unity, historically forged within different societies that have been formed in a certain part of the world” (GONZALEZ, 1988, p. 77), from the African Diaspora, mobilizes us to effectively raise awareness of our collective existence. To “ingay” is to take the floor in order to position a stigmatized movement and bet on a specific unity based on diversity. The “amefricanity” makes it possible to observe similarities in the hip movement of women analyzed here, in addition to triggering the Brazilian imaginary of this movement.

However, it is important to highlight that the hip movement of African dances, the matrix of many traditional Afro – Latin American dances, is exaggerated in urban popular culture as it detaches from rituals and gains space in the mainstream media. An example of this are the samba school passistas (carnival dancers), who went through a gradual appreciation of the butt, while their

feet took a back seat. And also the Bahian pagoda dance, which derives from the samba de roda, displaces the centrality of the movement of sliding the feet of the old Bahian aunts, with their shaking shoulders, to the hip, perhaps already re-reading the Carioca samba. The hip then, especially the butt, gains visibility, especially in the woman's body, which is invited to wiggle, "bump the butt on the ground", "sit", "go down in the bottle's mouth", "make a square of 8" and "swing the butt".

If we also consider the historical perspective of denial of the body from a Judeo-Christian logic, which understands it as a place of sin that needs to be redeemed through the elevation of the soul, we will understand how much this movement can be seen as subversive. The voluntary and provocative adherence to the hip movement arising from African dances represents a place of resistance. What we see in the clip analyzed here is a strong combative incorporation into the logic of imprisoned bodies, making them more sensual, distancing them from the need to fulfill male erotic desires, constituting a source to confront moral values. Requesting the bodies for change is a desire explicit in the musical performance presented by Linn da Quebrada: "But it has nothing to do with liking cocks, or not / You may come and mingle with the perverted dykes / Let's ingay, until touching the butt on the floor".

The wiggle that we have in "Ingaying" is distanced from the seduction anchored to the attendance of masculine standards and fetishes and assumes itself as a form of affirmation and dominion of the body itself. They are wiggling as a way to agency a joyful, colorful and free fag existence in a context marked by homotransphobia and the genocide of the black population.

It is interesting to note that in addition to the historical approach that the hip movement has with African dances, it has also been easily characterized as female action throughout the history of the body. Therefore, wiggling, rolling and shaking the hips, is understood as an indication of femininity. Thus, those who deliberately want to feminize sometimes exaggerate in wiggling caricaturing an idea of "being a woman. Accordingly, many times those who want to deny any possibility of attachment to the feminine imprison their hips.

Conscious and self-sustaining, both movements show a search for new and broad perspectives that find strong support in the expression "amefricanity", by Lélia Gonzalez (1988), against the generalizations that put absolutely all women in the same box. Black activist and academic, Lélia Gonzalez leads us to rethink her own words as a methodological strategy to achieve specificity without losing the profoundly collective character of women's lives, especially black women. This is so true that the dike has its own way to "ingay", which does not hurt and does not prevent so many other "ingayings".

In Brazil, in the 1990s, the media success of the Bahian pagoda, which had the "Gera Samba" group from the city of Salvador as its exponent, breaks with the logic, at least in the sphere of mass culture, that wiggling is not allowed to the cis men, without their masculinities being challenged. Although this legacy of hip liberation has had more emphasis with the Brazilian funk, it did not represent, on a large scale, the total overcoming of prejudices and stigmas regarding the body. Thus, we understand that it is possible for a man not to wiggle, for fear of putting in doubt his masculinity, as well as a man wiggling while dancing funk or pagoda and being homophobic, assuming wiggling as a way to performatize the so-called "womanizer", which reproduces heterocynormativity. On the other hand, hip retention, i.e., the refusal or difficulty in wiggling can also be verified in trans and gay men or lesbian women as a way of performatizing what is read as the male body.

However, in the clip "Ingay", Linn da Quebrada puts everyone to wiggle, even calling attention to the exaggeration as a form of affirmation: "Ih, there, the faggots got crazy / Besides ingaying they have to hit the butt on the back of the head". In addition to the diversity of bodies,

which seem to represent different gender identities and sexual orientation, the clip draws attention to the way Linn da Quebrada mocks some symbols of the female hegemonic context.

We also highlight the contexts linked to maternity, since the protagonist uses a decapitated black doll that appears as a prop in her hands and, at another moment, an empty stroller caricaturally pushed by her, in a movement of emphasizing the female body that lifts the hips to make the movement of levering the stroller. The fact that the stroller, in the clip, is a toy and serves exclusively so that the “faggot” can “hit the butt on the head” says how this body triggers signs of female oppression because of “wiggling” .

2.2 Cheguei (I’ m here)

Ludmilla, a pop/funk singer from Rio de Janeiro, released the album “A danada sou eu” (That bitch is me) in 2016, after being successful with alternative videos on YouTube since 2012. The song “I’ m here” , from the mentioned album registered more than 267 million views until the moment of writing this text, which represents the great success of the singer and also the huge financial investment in her career.

The clip, directed by Felipe Sassi, which takes place in the context of a school in the style of the American high schools, presents easily recognized references of the pop of that country, from where Ludmilla feeds strong influences of singers such as Beyoncé and Rhianna. Although there is a concern in contemplating issues related to diversity, with the performance of trans, fat and black people, the speech of the clip is basically that of personal success: “I’ m here (I’ m here) / As I did, messing up the whole thing / And what the hell, I really want it to explode / Because noone is going to screw my day / Warn them, you can say that” .

While in “Ingaying” the street appears as a space to be occupied, also performed as a marginalized space, in “I’ m here,” the school is a legitimizing scenario of rebellious youth behavior: the mess. In the introduction to the clip, students of this school, including those played by popular people on YouTube, declare that Ludmilla “is the most popular in the school” and how good, admirable and desired this is.

The wiggling is present in the midst of choreographies performed in a festive atmosphere and effusively denotes boldness and power. This idea is expressed in the following passage: “Oh, I’ m here with everything / I’ m here breaking everything / Look at me, turn off the light and turn on the sound / The repressed go crazy/ The phony ones conspire / I am gifted to awaken envy in other people” .

The clip can be considered as a good example to think how the market with the issue of diversity, both in the exaltation of liberal values, as in the merchandising of the brand “Tô de cachorro” , for example, focused on curly hair. Ludmilla, on “I’ arrived” , invests on an empowerment performance. She assumes the place of fashion representative and the preoccupation on being and seeming the unique protagonist of self-esteem and beauty.

While “Ingaying” proposes a flirtation between funk and hip hop, assuming the street as a place of reality, “I’ m here” also flirts with funk, but is more inspired by pop, with the North-American divas, thus creating a fable around an unquestionably powerful figure. It is interesting to observe how the idea of “power” is distinguished in both performative contexts. On the one hand, an empowered trans woman, on the other, a powerful cis woman.

2.3 Tombei

Karol Conka is from the city of Curitiba, state of Paraná, Brazil, was born in 1987, sings rap since she was a teenager, and from 2011 on started to conquer space on the internet. In 2015 she launched the hit “Tombei” , by the production company Kondzilla, recognized as a major agent of Brazilian funk and rap, which became an icon of the so-called “Geração Tombamento” . It can be

understood based on the “black is beautiful” movement, which has its initial moment struggling for civil rights still in the 1970s in the United States. However, it does so in a perspective that emphasizes the articulation of notions of self-esteem and empowerment with ideas of consumption and market demands.

Both Karol Conka and Linn da Quebrada seem, in the analyzed clips, to transit between the frontiers of rap and funk in order to make their content more flexible. We perceive a position presenting variation between the criticality and the confrontation of rap mixed with entertainment, eroticism and debauchery, which is more characteristic of Brazilian funk.

Thus, the clip “Tombei” seems to occupy, by the analysis proposed here, a space located between “Enviadescer” and “Cheguei”. Just as “Tombei” is a great production, not something alternative like “Ingaying”. However, as Linn da Quebrada, Karol Conka’s performance seems to be engaged in dismantling a current discourse and logic, especially with regard to man and what is masculine. In this sense, it is worth mentioning that Linn da Quebrada has more current productions and is more loaded with media values and artistic production, like those of other singers. We mention as examples the productions “blasFêmea (blasFemale)” and “Oração (Prayer)”. However, we selected “Ingaying” to mark our scores in this study because it seems to us something very emblematic of the singer’s career and the way she launches herself and builds her image on YouTube.

Karol Conka, although in her performance she bluntly explains the place of women from autonomy and power, and we can verify this in “It’s in my time / My rules will cause you an effect / It’s when I want, put up with it, that’s the way / If you want to talk to me then do it straight, talk straight”, seems to transit between the idea of empowerment identified in Linn da Quebrada and the powerful woman in Ludmilla. We identify this transit because, at the same time as the lyrics of the song talk about discarding the man who does not fit: “After the alarm sounds / it’s no use running away / You’ll have to mingle / Or, if you hit it head-on, you risk falling,” we see in the clip Karol Conka in intimate relationship with a white man where she shows superiority and control of the situation, while the man expresses his desire and admiration for her. We notice in the performance a discarding of the male figure, but also an attribution of importance to it as Karol Conka is concerned with seducing and being desired. In the production as a whole, butts and breasts are highlighted, being even used as a kind of weapon power demonstration.

It is also noteworthy that Karol Conka plays a role that, based on the perceptions imposed by a male-chauvinist and heterocentric model of social organization, is occupied by men in rap or funk ostentation clips. What we identify is an appreciation and reinforcement of an idea of power from material, consumption and sexual performance. An example of this “power” is the presence of large and showy cars, as well as weapons and lots of gold.

The concern with the diversity of bodies reaches a level not seen in the other clips, such as the presence of a dwarf woman and an Asian woman. However it is interesting to note that Karol Conka’s romantic, or rather sensualized mate is a white, young and muscular man. This seems quite symbolic, since in the social pyramid black women are at the base and white men at the top. In “Tombei”, Karol Conka appears many times on top and above this white man. The hip movement and the wiggling have great prominence in the choreographic evolutions, created from urban dances. Although the tone of the music has something aggressive, characteristic of rap, it does not present the irony and accentuated debauchery as in Linn da Quebrada’s, but it takes place in an amusement park and the look of the group that appears in the clip, especially Karol Conka’s, is what could be called an afro-futurist, demonstrating engagement with black identity and an alternative sophistication.

2.4 Women’s performances: racial and gender identity

By approaching gender and race constructions in the Brazilian contemporary music scene, we glimpse contributing to the strengthening of an interpretive science in search of meaning, as Geertz (2008) teaches us. This place occupied by cultural performances instigates us to look carefully at what people practicing a given culture do, and to seek a “dense description” capable of differentiating movements considered identical, but which may be loaded with different meanings. To understand, and translate this cultural performativity is also to apprehend the concept of culture.

The existential performances of women, black and indigenous people, LGBTs, people with disabilities and all others who carry in their bodies the so-called social markers of difference signal to us that intersectionality creates specific demands in the social structure. According to Angela Davis (2008), the refusal of epistemological neutrality allows us to understand that there is a plurality of bodies and existences, and this can bring us closer to respect for differences. Thus, bringing these deviant bodies from the heteronorm and white colonizing bases into the reflection can help build a counter-hegemonic path to what is imposed by the reference media. In another way, we believe it is possible to understand how these deviant bodies can be abducted by colonized and colonizing normativity.

A possible contribution to think about the cultural performances of black female singers in the contemporary music scene is offered by Luíza Bairos (1995) as she suggests that different oppressions reach different bodies in different ways. What we hastily read as a successful trajectory, accounted for by likes and accesses, can show itself, after a more detailed verification, as a reproducer of oppressive models and compromises a liberating education regarding specificities. Some concepts are embryonic whenever we think about female engagement. Among these, we highlight “woman”, “experience”, and “personal politics” echoing what was proposed by Luíza Bairos (1995). The concept of woman should make us extrapolate the biological dimension and approach the social construction of gender. It is important to remember that the very understanding of gender reproduces the stereotypes of patriarchal oppression and, even in feminist movements, there is a kind of acceptance of a feminine nature and a masculine nature for us to reach the concept of woman.

Because of the complexity that surrounds the concept of woman, we trigger the notion of experience as a common thread that runs through all women, especially when we talk about the domination imposed by patriarchy. Through experience, if a woman says she feels oppression, effectively there is oppression because this is the experience to be considered. There is then a generalization of the concept of woman and we do not perceive in this perspective the problematization about the fact that some women manage to report their experience of suffering oppression and others do not.

In several feminist accounts it is possible to notice that while white and rich women struggle to conquer the streets and claim ownership of their bodies, black and poor women are confined to the homes of their mistresses for the daily handling of domestic services. Motherhood itself has already been used as an element capable of unifying the experience of being a woman, but we already understand that generalization hovers over this understanding since it goes beyond the patriarchal logic of care, love and dedication. There are many different experiences of motherhood and this will not be the characteristic capable of unifying women.

Sexuality has also been used to unify what it is to be a woman, which is defined as “fragile” and submissive sex. Our observation is that this drive to understand women as sexual objects of men excludes women who have social markers of difference. Lesbian and transgender women, for example, become more vulnerable as their deviant behavior in relation to the heteronorm could justify rapes, sexual harassment, and so many other experiences of sexuality that go beyond patriarchal logic.

The whole discussion shows that there is a plurality that should mark the social imaginary whenever it triggers the notion of women. We also aim at this plurality to discuss the power and

presence of black women in the contemporary Brazilian musical circuit. The way these women position themselves in this scenario, based on the observation of historical processes of negation, is configured for us as a concrete action to combat male-chauvinism, as it triggers the experience of bodies as agents of social transformation.

Women, experience and personal politics are then seen as fundamental concepts that strengthen the intersections between gender, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation and social class. Bodies intersected show us daily that there is no gradation of oppression and that the combination of racism and sexism annihilates subjects. However, as different people experience life in different ways from the activation of their bodies, it is possible to affirm that the body that concentrates pluralities – or so-called social markers of difference – is potentially capable of achieving a multiple understanding of life.

In terms of theoretical construction, more recently the theory of the “feminist point of view” (BAIRROS, 1995) makes it impossible to compare different experiences, while we sharpen the perception that different women develop different experiences and also different points of view. The experiences are socially and historically determined and can only be understood in their multidimensionality. Thus, we can infer that racism and male-chauvinism operate from this multidimensionality and are constructed from the very concept of culture.

To turn the debate a little more complex we use the expression queer, configured by the existence of bodies compulsorily marginalized because they do not meet the requirements imposed by the so-called normativity of gender. Initially treated as a pejorative term to classify people who do not fit the normative definitions, queer went through a kind of resignified appropriation in the 1980s to 1990, being used today as a theory that takes charge of understanding and opposing the binary structures of heteronormativity.

Our intention with this discussion is to trigger the queer theory as a strategy to provoke reflections about its interconnection with cultural performances, a field that demands plurality in its approaches, as established by Milton Singer (1955). Through the lens of cultural performances, we believe that queer bodies are important expressions, actions, and manifestations to contest principles compulsorily dictated by the supposedly logical relationship among sex, gender, and desire, as studied by Butler (2013). To develop discussions about the performances of the cis singers Ludmilla and Karol Conka, besides the trans singer Linn da Quebrada, we also seek in the queer theory to inspire our study to reflect the way these bodies challenge and/or reproduce the normativity and oppression systems of race and gender.

In a way, they are bodies occupying and resignifying the virtual space of YouTube, where artists of large, medium and small sizes all perform. In this environment, common subjects publish contents that entertain and inform, but also influence and conform. We find on YouTube productions engaged with gender and sexuality causes that, historically, have had little space in television programming. Regarding bodies, this is the channel of plurality, where fat women, for example, tour their own bodies to question established patterns.

When the focus is on race, we find black faces in the sun, shouting out loud over the place of speech, colorism, racism, afro-affectivity, loneliness of black women, curly hair, and afroconvenience. These are like arrows thrown by this contemporary window that is YouTube.

People who are on YouTube can choose what to access driven by what they like and what they hate. However, when they select content, they open the doors to be influenced by it. Music style, clothing style, hair and even speeches and world conceptions become the agenda and horizon. This platform also projects artists such as Linn da Quebrada and Ludmilla, who launched themselves into the music scene through YouTube and Karol Conka, who reached a large audience. In their music, bodies, dances, aesthetic choices, the three inevitably say something about being a woman and being black. Thus, to discuss the performances of black women on a platform of high social reach means resignifying the representativeness of black women, who are still deeply marked by a cruel history of oppression and submission.

2.5 YouTube, communication and cultural performances

To analyze the cultural performances of and on YouTube it is necessary to extrapolate the theoretical US stimulus-response model, which presupposes an isolation of the subjects from the media. In contrast to this model, Martín-Barbero (1997) begins a shift in field studies to complexify the relations among communication, culture and politics – three terms understood as founding or constitutive mediations in his reflection (LOPES, 2018).

Thus, communication is thought from the author's experience in observing not only the media, but its social and cultural uses in all of its complexity. To do so, he analyzed how people communicate in everyday spaces, such as fairs, supermarkets, cemeteries, churches, dances, bars, stadiums. In an interview, the author stated: "I always started from the point that communication was not only the media," since in Latin America studying people's daily communication network makes it possible to understand "what the people did with what they heard on the radio and what they saw on television" (MARTÍN-BARBERO; BARCELOS, 2000, p. 153).

When he stated that he opposed the hegemonic vision of studying the effects of the media, he did not deny their importance, but understood that it was impossible to understand them if one did not observe how people relate to them. That is why he opposed the study of the effects of the media that seek their influence on people's lives, conceiving them isolated from their power, consuming their contents without any production of meaning.

Thus, the concept of mediations, proposed by Martín-Barbero (1997), establishes a rupture with the informational model that conceives in a linear way that the message is transmitted from the emission to the reception. The advent of the Internet and the structure of networked communication on and from YouTube, the notion of subject's isolation becomes even more problematic as uses imply more than the reception of contents, i.e., the technology of the medium also enables and stimulates its emission. If the Barberian perspective of mediations implies observing what lies between these two communicative poles, it analyses what is equidistant from the emission and reception as part of a process integrated to the cultural and political practices of its communicative agents.

Martín-Barbero answered to Barcelos: "what I started to call mediations were those spaces, those forms of communication that were between that person who listened to the radio and what was said on the radio", since to study the media, isolating children in front of the television looking for answers to stimuli – in reference to Pavlov's studies – disregards the mediations, i.e., that "between stimulus and response there is a thick space of beliefs, customs, dreams, fears, everything that configures everyday culture" (MARTÍN-BARBERO; BARCELOS, 2000, p. 153).

Thus, the perspective of mediations originates from an interdisciplinary viewpoint, since the author, from his anthropological background, considers looking not only at the media, its enunciations and contents, but also seeks to see the subjects who use them as communicators in an approximate way. This implies reviewing the place of the media not as the only actor, but as one of the actors intertwined with others in the communication process, and revising the notion of communication that presupposes only the transmission of information to encompass its entire process. "Even if there is no transmitter, receiver, channel", a look from the mediations considers that "at a dance, people communicate through the body" (MARTÍN-BARBERO; BARCELOS, 2000, p. 157).

Also in the paths of interdisciplinarity, the studies that assume the theoretical-methodological lenses of cultural performances dialogue, with the anthropological viewpoint of Victor Turner (1987) in addition to Singer (1955) and Goffman (1985) and the viewpoint of teatrologist Richard Schechner (2006), with who points of view are forged that seek to observe

what is performed in cultures, including from the roles played in daily life to those presented on stages, rites and popular festivals. Considering the massive presence of communication technologies in contemporaneity, on diverse screens, such as YouTube, we observe in them the performances, i.e., what of cultural and daily practices is to be seen.

Therefore, when we discussed earlier about Linn da Quebrada's debauched bet on eroticism and hip movement, in the Ingaying clip, we considered that this is a deliberate option to put on the scene bodies that are socially disapproved, but that resist stigma and the role of the margin, to lead the performance of gender, sexuality, affectivity and race diversity, as well as the exaggeration of colors, hot pink, hip wiggle. Thus, we recognize the need to discuss how the performances of the bodies in the clip allow us to dialogue with the cultural references of urban dances and identity traits that deal with race and gender. Observing such performances deepens the debate as it widens the view, making us look through the lens of these cultural expressions.

In addition, the performances of these bodies shown to the camera to build an audiovisual production in videoclip, which after being filmed are published on YouTube, give us clues about how Linn da Quebrada uses this platform. And even if for this discussion our point of view be the video clip, we are not only interested in interpreting it structurally in technical or narrative terms, but on the contrary, approaching the uses that singers and their audiences make of YouTube.

The very business model proposed by the platform is based on the stimulation of the emission of content by those who use it. However, free participation is a cultural practice prior to YouTube and the Internet. According to Martín-Barbero (1997), cultural matrixes are long-term mediations and bring a historical perspective to the industrial formats produced by the media. Participatory practices prior to YouTube made possible what Jenkins (2009) calls the culture of participation in the platform. Thus, we have that the cultural matrixes of YouTube were experienced in the daily life of groups with practices of video production and DIY media (Do It Yourself), i.e., although this social network inaugurates the distribution of home videos over the Internet, it does not represent the cultural matrix of this production. About it, zines are part of the political and cultural avant-garde of the 1970s and 1980s, closely linked to the growth of punk rock and the rise of Riot Grrrl feminism; they are also part of a much older history of amateur publishing which, in the case of the science fiction fan community, may have its origins in the 1920s (Ross, 1991). There was an amateur press association in the United States as early as the late 19th century, when people printed periodicals on table-top printing presses (Petrik, 1992). And these Do-it-yourself impulses spread from printed zines to include the production and circulation of recorded tapes and home videos, as Cynthia Conti (2001) suggests in her study of the Le Tigre case, an important feminist media collective (JENKINS, 2009, p. 147).

Thus, we can affirm something equivalent about the Internet. The origin of a culture of participation lies not in its platforms, not even in its technologies, but in the libertarian culture that produced and circulated protests based on individual freedom by counter-cultural movements since 1960, as well as on the notion of research communities built by exchanges among researchers, one of the foundations of knowledge production at the university. "Without the contribution of these pioneering, community-based networks, the Internet would have looked very different" (CASTELLS, 2003, p. 25), and it may not even have expanded globally, since the spread of communication protocols between computers "would not have occurred without the open, free distribution of software and the cooperative use of resources, which became the code of conduct of the first hackers" (ibid.).

Thus, the cultural matrixes of a culture of participation practiced on the Internet and which YouTube adopts as a business model, originate from communicative practices already experienced based on aspects of freedom and decentralization, something not thought for a mass media until its emergence. In this sense, neither the Internet nor YouTube inaugurates a model of use, anchored in network exchanges because it already existed in culture. However, they innovated by creating a technology capable of accomplishing them for many people globally (CASTELLS, 2003), since it is

the uses, institutions and society in general that transform technology through the appropriation and experimentation they make of it. After all, the Internet and YouTube originate from the possibility of a communicative cooperation between subjects, from emission to reception.

Therefore, the Internet marketing model is based on the culture of participation (JENKINS, 2009) and YouTube's profitable success presupposes that whoever uses it is both a transmitter and receiver of content. Thus, YouTube's uses get more complex when we compare them with those of other media, which operate from one to many. That's why Linn da Quebrada, by publishing a clip in which her narrative occupies the streets with a diversity of gender, sexuality, affectivity and race, similarly occupies YouTube with performances that positively trigger the existence of these bodies, by giving them great visibility.

This use of YouTube becomes provocative as it breaks with the heteronormative perspective that is still in force in the one-way media, because, to a great extent, it responds to the conservative perspectives of Brazilian culture. Since Linn da Quebrada, Ludmilla and Karol Conka have their own channels on YouTube, they can use them with a certain autonomy, even with clips whose wiggling affirms the performances of resistant, desirous and provocative bodies, although, to some extent, it continues to negotiate with demands from a market that predominantly meets male standards of body and movement.

The uses that the three female singers make of YouTube make it a space to display their artistic works on demand, i.e. at any time the public can access their content. Thus, YouTube represents a showcase of their works and also of their agenda. If "through its many activities – upload, view, comment and collaboration – the YouTube community forms a network of creative practice" (BURGESS; GREEN, 2009, p. 88), we may consider the platform as a social network.

Unlike the argument of the documentary *The Social Dilemma* (JEFF ORLOWSKI, 2020), in which social network users are only victims of the omnipotent Silicon Valley engineers, the three female singers use YouTube involving more than being on the network to see advertisements from advertising companies or deliver information about themselves to corporations to sell them something. Although they are YouTube users, it is from their channels that they sell their music, representations of their diversity of race, class, gender and affectivity, in addition to promoting the association among their audiences and fans.

In this sense Karol ConKa chooses to post the Tombei clip on the KondZilla channel, "the largest funk channel in the world" (KONDZILLA, 2020, online). Although the singer has her own channel on YouTube, Tombei, when published on KondZilla, is next to many funk hits that "are at the top of the charts all over Brazil and bursting in all the shantytowns" (KONDZILLA, 2020, online). After all, the Kondzilla channel has 32.2 billion views and presents itself as a content portal for young people in shantytowns.

The channel proposes, through a connection with the news portal of the same name, to show the face of the young man from the favela. Thus, making the Tombei clip available there, whose audience is similar, means making strategic use of YouTube, since KondZilla has 61.2 million subscribers, which means reaching a wider audience than the singer's own channel, which has 265,000 (CONKA, 2020, online). Thus, taking advantage of the greater visibility from the KondZilla channel, on YouTube, Karol Conka's clip proposes, in its description, hashtags that aggregate the interests of the public - #Funk #KondZilla #KarolConka #PortalKondZilla #FavelaVenceu (#Shantytown Won) #SomosPlural (We're Plural) - and channel links, which direct us to listen to them through other platforms, such as Spotify and Deezer.

The Ingaying clip was published on Linn da Quebrada's own channel, in which she defines herself as a "multimedia artist and fag transvestite", a description that highlights the perspective that she uses her channel as a showcase for her own work and political agenda. Thus, the singer uses her channel to comment on her daily life as a successful artist when presenting Artistic Tours in Europe, showing the clips of her albums, directing her audiences to her Facebook, Twitter and

Instagram, as well as to present the technical file of the songs and the lyrics of each track of her albums. It also shows live performances, making off recordings, as well as relating its YouTube content to the #transmission program, presented on Canal Brasil, a Brazilian subscription channel belonging to Globo, the largest media group in Latin America. These uses contribute to the construction of a successful artist image.

Ludmila, already in the clip's description I'm here, uses YouTube to make available all digital platforms where the public can access her music, and there are many: Spotify, iTunes, Google Play, Deezer, Amazon, Napster. Its use also includes asking the audience who watched the clip to follow her on social networks. To do so, she provides a link to its official website and also to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat.

In addition, the description of the clip I'm here is composed of a technical file that resembles a Hollywood feature film, even involving specialties rarely seen in national productions, such as photography assistants, electric assistants. It includes a complex list of professionals who helped her produce the clip: script, editing, choreography, ballet, make Hair, Nail Design and other specialties from the celebrity universe of the big screen. The use of a technical file so full of specialists on YouTube builds the image that we are facing an overproduction, something that will be reinforced by the association of the singer with the image of a movie actress.

Another use that Ludmilla makes of YouTube is merchandising: so much so that at the top of the description publishes the hashtag of the brand #todecacho, as in the datasheet, where he exposes brands recognized as supporters of the clip, taking the opportunity to thank them. Being supported by international brands, such as those it links to your clip, contributes to building its visibility as the empowered one that won, showing this through its consumer power.

Another aspect that the uses of platforms such as YouTube present is that from the moment what is shown of cultural and daily practices is done through a camera – film or video, amateur or professional, cell phone or webcam – in the communicative process, we have mediated performances. The cameras, in this case, do not work only as devices that capture what is to be seen in everyday roles and artistic and cultural expressions. Conversely, since the beginning of their invention and throughout the technological innovation they went through, they also operate in the elaboration of languages in audio and video, i. e., they are marked and markers of shared standards and codes, involving, for example, who is to be seen and how it will be done.

In this sense, these female singers have opted for the format of the video clip as mediated performances. The industrial format of a media product, or simply the Industrial format, in Barberian terms, connects with the cultural matrices by a diachronic axis and searches in cultural practices throughout history for references to build and reinvent itself. Thus, videoclips bring a version of the singers' mediated performances, enunciating a hybrid between the public show, where the music would be performed by them and aspects of a cinematographic and audiovisual language, even being able to narrate a story with beginning, middle and end.

As an industrial format, the videoclip fulfills the valuable role of materializing visually and sometimes narratively. The live performance has, therefore, the power to bring singers closer to their audiences, as they can perform in a more accessible way than in a show. The proximity then takes advantage of the direct strategy (MARTÍN-BARBERO, 1997) that, initiated in television, consists of looking directly at the camera recasting a contact with the receiver that is on the other side of the screen. Thus, the Barberian concept of mediations constitutes a theoretical perspective capable of encompassing the complete communicative process, from production, product (in this case the video clips) and its reception (LOPES, 2018). As this whole process is articulated by communicative mediations of culture, we understand that the choices of who and how to perform are mediated by technicalities (LOPES, 2018), since they require technical skills on the cameras, mastery of audiovisual language, but especially the perception of the demands of the public in dialogue with the cultural context of the moment.

In the hit “Tombei”, Karol Conka shows mastery of the music scene as she inserts her production by elaborating a clip whose narrative proposes not only a song, but a whole cultural movement ready to tombar, i.e., to occupy space, challenge and “seal”, attuned to feminist discourses and the black beauty affirmation movement. If before the mediation of technicality was restricted to large communication, film and audiovisual corporations, with the advent of the Internet and the use of video sharing platforms such as YouTube, there is a much wider diversity of social actors and companies to whom are given the experimentation of their mediated performances. Despite this possible democratization, in the three video clips we have the presence of a large number of specialized professionals exercising their language skills. In this sense, we recognize that the three female singers use YouTube valuing the technicalities when building their mediated performances, i.e., if the platform is created as a means of home construction and open transmission, we observe from these three clips certain democratization of enunciation and accessibility. However, we also observe that the mediated performances of these singers are produced in dialogue with audiovisual codes that are present in cinema, video and music, which includes the insertion of the very personality of these artists in the antiracist cultural movement.

In Ludmilla’s clip, for example, in addition to the references already mentioned, we have in the opening the intertextuality with the cinema, since it suggests with the characters “Ludmilla”, “I’m here”, “A film by Felipe Sasse”, which in addition to the icon referring to the movie stars, its plot is inspired by the film *Wicked Girls* (MARK WATERS, 2004). If, in the clip, Ludmilla inserts the diversity updating the feature, she maintains the idea of reproducing the cruel aspects of popularity in the North American high school. So, Ludmilla shows that she is in tune with the “fashion of the moment”, which is to present diversity in the media, showing herself to be powerful, lowering the other person in the logic of contempt and also quite liberal.

Thus, mediated performance requires the dexterity of those who conceive it in terms of language and mastery of the uses of the technologies of capture, production and broadcasting in communication platforms, such as YouTube in this text. But it is not only that, the uses of mediated performances also involve the mastery of cultural (and its fashions) and political scenarios of a time, as well as its uses by its communicative agents.

3. SOME CONSIDERATIONS TO OPEN THE DIALOGUE

Martín-Barbero’s theory of mediations proposes that we observe not only the means, but the uses that subjects make of them, i.e., what lies between the reception and the emission. In this text it was possible to consider aspects of use that the three female singers make of YouTube. We know how much this perspective is still initial to think about the uses in the scenario of mediated performances, as by the end of this discussion it was not possible to observe how their audiences use the content.

The choice of such content, considering the clips and the uses that Linn da Quebrada, Ludmilla and Karol Conka make of YouTube, was interested in the possible dialogue among and from them. Thus, we observed in them issues related to the body, gender and race, without taking them as definers of the work or even style of the singers in question, who besides these hits, produced and are producing other similar and different things, also available on YouTube.

Thus, it is important to emphasize that the selection of the three female singers was not guided by admiration or rejection of their work. The criterion is related to the fact that they are three black women who transit in a converging music scene and because they all have a considerable number of views. Finally, it is also necessary to mention that our previous contact with the production of these artists took place mainly from the point of view of students and younger generations and from the type of access proper of platforms such as YouTube, i.e., that can open

windows to everything that happens. Windows that we sometimes can bend over and at other times just spy on.

Furthermore, recognizing that the respective female singers occupy the digital space of this platform, performing their own identities of race and gender, is to see the various networks and layers of communication mediations of culture that permeate the production of content, receptivity, interaction and reverberations of this in the behavior of the public. This can no longer be seen only as consumers of the cultural industry, since YouTube and social networks, in general, offer other sorts of participation. Indeed, it is about the choice of content as well as the expression of opinion about it, besides interaction and production.

The theory of mediations proposes a break with the informational model that conceives in a linear way that the message is transmitted from the emission to the reception. The Barberian perspective is interested in observing what is between these two communicative poles, i.e., it proposes to analyze what is equidistant from the emission and the reception as part of a process integrated to the cultural practices and politics of its communicative agents. In this direction, we problematize how singers communicate and use the media, from YouTube, for this purpose. In this way, investigating the audiovisual productions conveyed on this platform, from the selected clips, means to complexify the relationships that the performances of these black singers mediate, i.e., it implies observing their communicative practices in dialogue with their cultural and political context. In other words, having autonomy to convey content translates, in terms of production, into greater freedom to produce them, as long as they communicate with their audiences, i.e., without giving up the current audiovisual and commercial codes.

And speaking of freedom, we highlight the importance of the body in the search for this freedom, emphasizing that Linn da Quebrada, Ludmilla and Karol Conka, by wiggling in the face of society, force the currents that still drastically imprison the body of black women, cis or trans, as they impose death and silencing, in scandalous rates of violence and absence. However, it is necessary to ponder that, at the same time that these currents are being forced, these performances of power also act in the sense of feeding the entertainment industry that nurtures capitalism which, as we know, is patriarchal and racist.

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