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COMMUNICATION AND MEDIATION IN /OF ART
COMUNICAÇÃO E MEDIAÇÃO NA/DA ARTE

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Comunicação e Mediação na/da Arte: Introdução

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In the current (tensive) backdrop of contemporary art (Jimenez, 2005/2021), given the complexity of its formal, compositional, procedural codes, yet also its imbricate entanglement with the social and political (Bishop, 2004), and economic (Afonso & Fernandes, 2019) dimensions, the imperative of *communication and mediation* has been accentuated.

Communication and mediation between (and within) art, artists, artistic and cultural institutions, and its professionals (critics, curators, strategic communication specialists, cultural journalists, researchers) and the public is motivated by the importance the principles of accessibility, democratisation, participation or collaboration, or even art education, have in opening the "art worlds" (Becker, 1982) to the multiple spheres of communalised aesthetic experience (or, desirably, made common; Stiegler, 2004/2018).

The risk of the growing communication gap, identified in recent research (Anastasiya et al., 2020), motivates many existing practices and experiments committed to transforming the paradigms that persist in art and culture.

Confining the practice of artistic mediation merely to its transmissive/decoding dimension is ignoring the fact that mediation, since it interferes in the weave of social relations, is always permeated by a certain conception of those relations "therefore, bearing both in its discourses and in its devices, an ideological component (Caune, 2012, p. xi). Thus, it is important to focus precisely on the action of communicating, that is, the act of building relationships of mutual exchange or interaction between audiences, works, artists and institutions. This interaction always involves sharing the experience of the sensitive and it is inscribed in a particular lifeworld and socio-political context (Caune, 2012, p. xiii), the basis for producing meaning.

To rethink the performance of the action of communicating, we evoke the idea of a "contact zone", proposed by the anthropologists Mary Louise Pratt (1992) and James Clifford (1997) and evoked by Russian curator Maria Lind, to replace the common assumption of a gap — or something negative — that needs to be reduced between art and what is called "the public". According to Lind (interviewed by Schipakina, 2020), "artworks, visitors, artists, people working in institutions, together inhabit and create contact

zones" (para. 17), that is, spaces of interaction and co-presence often within radically asymmetrical relations of power (Pratt, 1992, p. 7). As such, they open up multiple possibilities — negative and positive — and it is important to understand how signification moves along these lines or across them.

Accordingly, all artistic mediation includes a political or transformative dimension, which can be driven by reproductive forces and de-constructive, critical and dialogical movements (Mörsch, 2005; Rodrigo, 2012) and should be understood and debated in this tension. Reason enough to reflect on the how or on the pedagogical arts of art mediation.

The meaning of artistic mediation, like cultural mediation (Lafortune, 2012), a more comprehensive field in which we can inscribe artistic mediation, is a vector of movement, "an open space of theoretical and practical perspectives constantly renegotiated according to the evolution of societies and the role played by culture" (Lafortune, 2012, p. 1).

In this volume, we present contributions that are part of this debate around the notion of artistic mediation, its professionalisation/teaching and how it operates in different institutional contexts. In cultural studies and communication sciences, particularly in the Lusophone context, the interest and research on the relationship between mediation, communication, and art are still incipient. This issue highlights the need to further invest in this area.

Marina Clauzet Ferraz de Mello and Ascension Moreno González's article opens the volume. It reviews the nature and evolution of the concept of artistic mediation in the Ibero-American context. The authors collect, from Google Scholar, a set of scientific publications in Spanish, from 2010 to 2022. They classify the different articles into two classes, those where artistic mediation is understood as a form of social intervention through art, and those that circumscribe it to museum spaces, as an intervention that aims to bring art closer to the public, making it more accessible, understandable and meaningful, an understanding inherited from the work of the previous educational or pedagogical departments of museums and cultural centres. In the Ibero-American context, the first understanding — artistic mediation as a form of social intervention — seems to be the most recurring in the *corpus* of scientific works analysed.

The second article of this collection, signed by Cristina Barroso Cruz and Laurence Vohlgemuth, also addresses the concern with defining the nature of artistic mediation. The contrast between the symbolic importance ascribed to the role of the mediator in the field of arts and the frailness or precariousness of their social status is well known (Pro Helvetia, p. 36). This paper draws on data from the research project *Entre: Investigação em Mediação Artística e Cultural* (In between: research in Artistic and Cultural Mediation) to address what teachers, institutional partners and some graduates in artistic and cultural mediation from the Escola Superior de Educação de Lisboa share about the role of the artistic and cultural mediator, artistic and cultural mediation and the knowledge and skills deemed necessary for the exercise of this profession, in a country where the professional category of cultural mediator does not yet exist, as is the case in Portugal. In their definitions of artistic and cultural mediation, the respondents include several concerns (educational, social, cultural, political, and economic...) and identify a wide range of skills required for an intervention in this area.

As part of a doctoral research project aiming to explore the involvement of communities in the development of urban art projects in public space, Ana Luísa Castro and Ricardo Campos provide a discussion about the project *Meu Bairro, Minha Rua* (My neighbourhood, My Street), promoted by the Municipality of Vila Nova de Gaia. In this project, the community was invited to participate in the decision-making process regarding micro-interventions in public space in ten locations in Vila Nova de Gaia, including urban art painting. Through an analysis of the project's official discourse and the fieldwork developed with local communities, the authors show how the project studied can be used as a reference for the development of participatory projects in urban art.

Regarding community participation, within the framework of artistic mediation and museums, Luis Campos Medina, Cynthia Pedrero Paredes and Mónica Aubán Borrel write about the *Mirada de Barrio* project in Santiago, Chile. This project was developed by the Museo de la Solidaridad Salvador Allende from 2017 to 2019. It aimed to create a link between the museum and the neighbourhood where it is located: the República neighbourhood in Santiago de Chile. The innovation of this initiative in the Chilean context lies in the search for a new form of territorial co-production, which "considers sensitive and affective elements previously not consciously regarded by the residents" of the neighbourhood. Supported by the systematisation of experiences and ethnographic tools, the authors show, in their article, how this writing of the territory — understood as a field of forces through microscopic actions — occurred, in which each of its inhabitants had a relevant role.

The last of the three articles highlighting the participation processes within the scope of artistic mediation is a text by Fernando Fontes, Cláudia Pato de Carvalho and Susete Margarido. The article focuses on a community generally excluded from the contexts of cultural offers and experiences, people with disabilities. The authors draw on the experience of implementing a project for inclusion through artistic activity and promoting inclusive art — *A Meu Ver* — by a professional artistic structure in theatre in the city of Coimbra – O Teatrão. It is a three-year theatre training and practice project for people who are blind or have low vision, funded by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation and the "La Caixa Foundation" under the Partis & Art for Change programme. In their article, they report the results, collected through different methods (participant observation, questionnaire survey, semi-structured interviews and focus group) of an exploratory study between October 2021 and August 2022 to monitor and assess the impact of the project's first year of implementation. The authors analyse the individual impacts of the project on those who took part in it directly, focusing on how it contributed to the construction of the identity of participants with visual impairment in the *A Meu Ver* project

Closing the volume, we have included two papers focusing on the crucial role of communication in the processes of artistic mediation aimed at bringing art closer to the public, allowing people to experience and engage with art in a meaningful and personal way. Communication can include different formats, such as informal conversations, workshops, lectures, and presentations. In his article, Yuji Gushiken takes us to

the contemporary theatre scene, focusing on dramatic reading in arts, a form of theatre performance where the actors read a text aloud, without scenography, costumes or full staging, and where the *audience-foyer* offers an interesting strategy for dialogue and public formation. It is a moment of encounter between the artists and the public, which takes place in the *foyer* or the audience before or after the performance. Drawing on the Latin American model of communication as dialogue, Gushiken, based on the case of Teatro Mosaico (Brazil) and the staging of two dramaturgical texts, Sandro Lucose's *Prólogo* and director Alcione Araújo's *A Caravana da Ilusão* shows how the *audience-foyer* works to create an audience and simultaneously a public that, "more than enjoying a show, hypothetically has the theatre as a mediating instance of new sociability".

Finally, with Manoela Barbacovi and Maria Angélica Zubaran, we go back to the world of museums to reflect on these spaces as producers of "hybrid" culture. The example selected is the Gramado Film Festival Museum in Brazil and its connection with the Film Festival and local cultural tourism. Using an ethnographic perspective of participant observation and field diary records aiming to capture the materiality of the permanent exhibition of this museum, the authors discuss the cultural meanings produced and disseminated to its visitors, showing how the museum, through interactivity, also plays an educational and media role.

Translation: Anabela Delgado

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Thematic articles | *Artigos temáticos*

The Concept of Artistic Mediation in the Ibero-American Context

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Abstract

Different fields define artistic mediation, but it is possible to explain that at the heart of these definitions are different ways of accompanying the educational and social processes linked to artistic practices. In the Ibero-American context, two conceptions of artistic mediation currently coexist. One refers to professional support through artistic interventions for people and groups in situations of vulnerability and/or exclusion. The aim is to improve their psychosocial condition, promoting well-being, fostering creativity and participation, enabling an improvement in individual, group and community situations, leveraging social inclusion and community development processes and fostering a culture of peace. The other conception is to bring art closer to the public in cultural or museological contexts, promoting new ways of thinking about the relationship between art, society, and the public. This research reviews both perspectives. To better understand each concept's scope, it draws on how the scientific publications identified below refer to the concept of artistic mediation in their content.

Keywords

artistic mediation, art, audiences, social improvement

O Conceito de Mediação Artística no Contexto Iberoamericano

Resumo

Existem diferentes campos que definem a mediação artística, porém, é possível explicitar que no centro destas diferentes definições, estão diferentes formas de acompanhamento dos processos educativos e sociais vinculados às práticas artísticas. No contexto ibero-americano, coexistem atualmente duas conceções de mediação artística. Uma refere-se ao acompanhamento profissional por meio de intervenções artísticas a pessoas e grupos em situação de vulnerabilidade e/ou exclusão, com o objetivo de melhorar sua condição psicossocial, promovendo o bem-estar, fomentando a criatividade e a participação, possibilitando uma melhora em situações tanto individuais, como grupais e comunitárias, alavancando processos de inclusão social, desenvolvimento comunitário e fomentando a cultura de paz. A outra conceção é descrita como a intervenção realizada para aproximar a arte do público em contextos culturais ou museológicos,

promovendo novas formas de pensar a relação entre arte, sociedade e público. Nesta pesquisa, ambas as perspetivas são revistas, com apoio na forma como as publicações científicas especificadas a seguir quando e como apresentam o conceito de mediação artística no seu conteúdo, com o fim de ganhar uma maior compreensão do alcance de cada conceito.

Palavras-chave
mediação artística, arte, públicos, melhoria social

1. Introduction

We present the results of the theoretical research in scientific publications in Spanish on the concept of artistic mediation based on Google Scholar. We considered articles whose title includes the concept of artistic mediation, both theoretical works and those stemming from one-off projects or interventions. We analysed how they define the concept to discern how they understand artistic mediation, and if it is not specified, we examined into which of the two conceptions they fall. We also included conference papers available on the internet. We excluded graduation projects but considered doctoral theses and books. Furthermore, we did not include presentations or publications unavailable on Google Scholar. We believe that this systematisation is important to clarify how this new concept is taking shape since it has different definitions in the current literature, and it does not always refer to the same type of intervention. In this article, we analysed only the publications which include the concept under research in the title. There are, however, other publications where the concept is used in the text of the articles as a synonym for other educational, cultural and research practices. The clarification of the concept helps discern the different types of intervention.

This paper's study of the artistic mediation concept aims to further the knowledge on the topic based on the current knowledge. Identifying the commonalities between published work reinforces the concept, facilitating the assimilation of knowledge generated in academia and sharing it, improving its reach and implementation.

2. Purpose

Since 2010, multiple scientific texts on artistic mediation projects have been published, and there have been conferences and presentations at congresses on the topic. These publications offer two approaches to this concept. One refers to support through projects in different artistic languages for people and groups in vulnerable situations, aiming at social inclusion, health improvement or community coexistence. The other is described as the work undertaken in museological contexts to bring art closer to the public, the legacy of the previous educational or pedagogical departments of museums and cultural centres.

This research aims to discern how the concept of artistic mediation in Spanish is currently understood from scientific publications, with no specific initial date, to December 2022.

3. Research Design

We draw from Bunge's (1999) position, for whom a theory is a system of hypothetical propositions from which valid arguments are constructed from the deduction. According to Barahona Quesada (2013): "in general terms, we can conceive of theoretical research as the systematic activity of elaborating, constructing, reconstructing, exploring and critically analysing the conceptual (that is, theoretical) bodies into which the different areas of knowledge fall" (p. 7). Accordingly, we designed a theoretical investigation based on Google Scholar.

We identified the articles published in this database that include "artistic mediation" in the title. We analysed how the authors define the concept based on Moreno González (2016b) argument, which highlights how two concepts of artistic mediation currently coexist: one as a form of social intervention through art and the other as a bridge between art exhibited in museums and cultural centres, and the public:

> in Spanish, we currently identify two approaches to Artistic Mediation. The first, as a model of art education for social intervention through art (Moreno, 2010), and the second as the intervention that takes place in museological contexts between the works and the public, referred to in publications of the National Council of Culture and Arts of the Government of Chile (Governo do Chile, 2015). In the first case, we refer to a form of intervention that addresses the needs of socially excluded groups to promote processes of transformation, inclusion and community development. The second refers to the work undertaken by museums and cultural centres to bring art closer to the public. This book builds on the first concept of Artistic Mediation, and we will focus on its development. (Moreno González, 2016b, p. 17)

We analysed the relevant publications, discerning how they define the stated concept and checking whether they fit into the two categories proposed above. Moreover, we reviewed in what contexts the projects are developed and what issues are addressed.

In this research, we did not consider publications that do not include the studied concept in the title, even though they may refer to artistic mediation at some point in the text.

4. Research Development

From the Google Scholar search, we identified 35 publications that include "artistic mediation" in the title: one book and one book chapter (stemming from a congress), 22 journal articles, one doctoral thesis, five masters' dissertations and five conference papers.

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In Table 1, we arranged the publications in chronological order, except for the graduation projects, including the year of publication, the title of the text and the title of the publication (in the case of journals, we included volume, number and pages). The last column is the output of the analysis of how "artistic" mediation is defined in each text.

	AUTHOR	TITLE	PUBLICATION	CONCEPT
1	M. Wimmer (2002)	"La Mediación Artística en los Procesos Educativos" (Artistic Mediation in Educational Processes)	*Perspectivas, 32*(4), 55–70	Relationship between art and education
2	A. Moreno González (2010)	"La Mediación Artística: Un Modelo de Educación Artística Para la Intervención Social a Través del Arte" (Artistic Mediation: A Model of Artistic Education for Social Intervention Through Art)	*Revista Iberoamericana de Educación, 52*(2), 1–9	Support through artistic processes
3	J. Sanchez-Ruiz and P. Chacón (2012)	*Artemediación, un Modelo en Desarrollo* (Artmediation, a Developing Model)	Congresso "Arte, Educación y Cultura. Aportaciones Desde la Periferia"	Support through artistic processes
4	A. Moreno González et al. (2013)	"Transitando identidades. La Mediación Artística en el Proceso de Rehabilitación de Personas con Problemas de Adicciones" (Transitioning Identities. Artistic Mediation in the Rehabilitation Process of People With Addiction Problems)	*Cuadernos de Trabajo Social, 26*(2), 445–454	Support through artistic processes
5	S. Contreras (2014)	*La Percepción del Sí Mismo Como Generadora de una Mirada. Dos Estrategias de Mediación Artística Basadas en una Educación Integral* (The Perception of the Self as a Generator of a Gaze. Two Strategies of Artistic Mediation Based on Integral Education)	Master's thesis, Ibero-American University	Support through artistic processes
6	J. Rodrigo (2015)	"Kunstcoop: Experiencias de Mediación Artística en Alemania" (Kunstcoop: Experiences of Artistic Mediation in Germany)	*Arte, Individuo y Sociedad, 27*(3), 373–392	A bridge between the public and art
7	M. Ruiz Carrera and T. Vidal Arbonés (2015)	"Arte, Mediación Artística e Inclusión en Centros Penitenciarios. Reflexiones y Estado de la Cuestión en España" (Art, Artistic Mediation and Inclusion in Detention Facilities. Reflections and State of Affairs in Spain)	*Heritage & Museography, 16*, 151–161	Support through artistic processes
8	A. Moreno González (2016b)	*La Mediación Artística* (The Artistic Mediation)	Book (Editora Octaedro)	Support through artistic processes
9	A. Moreno González (2016a)	"Inclusión Social por el Arte: Mediación Artística" (Social Inclusion Through Art: Artistic Mediation)	*La Sociedad Académica, 47*, 41–47	Support through Artistic Processes

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10	E. Catalá Collado and M. J. Perales Montolío (2017)	"El Giro Socioeducativo en las Prácticas Culturales. El Proyecto de Mediación Artística *Nau Social*" (The Socio-educational Turn in Cultural Practices. The *Nau Social* Artistic Mediation Project)	*Revista de Educación Social*, (24), 825–833	Support through artistic processes
11	A. Moltó Borreguero (2017)	*El Departamento de Mediación Artística en los Espacios Expositivos, Culturales y Artísticos Dentro del Ámbito Universitario. Caso de Estudio: CulturaLAB* (The Department of Artistic Mediation in Exhibition, Cultural and Artistic Spaces Within the University Framework. Case Study: CulturaLAB)	Dissertation, Miguel Hernández Univeristy of Elche	A bridge between the public and art
12	M. Huerta and C. Vicari (2017)	*La Mediación Artística en Comunidades de Mujeres con Riesgo Vulnerabilidad Social a Partir del Audiovisual* (Artistic mediation through audiovisual work in communities of women with risk of social vulnerability)	Conference "III Congreso Internacional de Investigación en Artes Visuales"	Support through artistic processes
13	A. Rasteli and R. Formentini Caldas (2018)	"Mediación Artística y Cultural en las Bibliotecas: Tesitura en Proceso" (Cultural and Artistic Mediation in Libraries: Structures in Process of Construction)	*Métodos de Información*, 9(17), 22–44	A bridge between the public and art
14	J. Fernández-Cedena (2018)	"Educación y Mediación Artística en Prisiones. Trabajando por la Permanencia de un Taller en la Cárcel de Navalcarnero" (Education and Artistic Mediation in Prisons. Working to Keep a Workshop in the Navalcarnero Prison)	*Revista de Educación Social*, 1(27), 311–331	Support through artistic processes
15	A. Palacios (2018a)	"¿Debemos Explicar el Significado de las Obras de Arte? La Mediación Artística Como Experiencia Formativa en la Universidad" (Should we explain the meaning of a work of art? Art mediation as a learning experience in College)	*Observar. Revista Electrónica de Didáctica de las Artes*, 12, 71–91	A bridge between the public and art
16	C. G. González (2018)	*Mediación Artística: Rescatando la Voz de los Mediadores de Seis Espacios Culturales Chilenos* (Artistic Mediation: Reclaiming the Voice of the Mediators of Six Chilean Cultural Spaces)	Conference "Congreso Internacional de Educación y Aprendizaje"	A bridge between the public and art
17	A. Palacios (2018b)	"Diálogos Creativos un Proyecto de Mediación Artística en la Formación Inicial del Profesorado" (Creative Dialogues - a Project of Artistic Mediation in Initial Teacher Training)	Chapter of the book *Arte, Ilustración y Cultura Visual. Diálogos en Torno a la Mediación Educativa Crítica Dentro y Fuera de la Escuela* (Art, Illustration and Visual Cultural. Dialogues Around Critical Educational Mediation Inside and Outside School; pp. 479–484)	A bridge between the public and art

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18	M. M. Zapata (2019)	Itinerarte: Orientaciones Educativas Para el Acompañamiento de los Procesos de Mediación Artística y Cultural de la Secretaría de Cultura del Municipio de Bello (Itinerarte: Educational Guidelines for Monitoring the Artistic and Cultural Mediation Processes of the Secretary of Culture of the Municipality of Bello)	Global Knowledge Academics conference, "Congreso Internacional de Educación y Aprendizaje"	Support through artistic processes
19	T. Peters (2019)	"¿Qué es la Mediación Artística? Un Estado del Arte de un Debate en Curso" (What is Artistic Mediation? A State of the Art of an Ongoing Debate)	*Córima, Revista de Investigación en Gestión Cultural, 4*(6), 1–24	A bridge between the public and art
20	M. Castro Pacheco and N. S. Brito Cárdenas (2019)	"Mediación Artística Para Acompañamiento al Duelo: Resultado de una Experiencia de la Universidad de Cuenca" (Artistic Mediation to Accompany the Duel: Result of an Experience of the University of Cuenca)	*Revista de Investigación y Pedagogía del Arte, 6,* 1–7	Support through artistic processes
21	L. S. Cálix-Vallecillo (2020)	"Mediación Artística. Intervención Social a Través del Arte y la Cultura en Honduras" (Artistic Mediation. Social Intervention through Art and Culture in Honduras)	*Communiars. Revista de Imagen, Artes y Educación Crítica y Social, 3,* 11–30	Support through artistic processes
22	R. González-García (2020)	"La A/R/Tografía Como Perspectiva Metodológica Inicial en Programas de Mediación Artística Basados en Arteterapia" (The A/R/Tography as an Initial Methodological Perspective in Artistic Mediation Programs Based on Art Therapy)	*Arteterapia. Papeles de Arteterapia y Educación para Inclusión Social, 15,* 57–65	Support through artistic processes
23	J. P. Moreno Pérez (2020)	*Experiencia de Intervención con Mediación Artística en Educación Básica Especial* (Intervention Experience With Artistic Mediation in Special Basic Education)	Master's thesis, University of Valladolid	Support through artistic processes
24	F. Palma (2020)	"Mediación Artística en Concepción: Aproximación a una Práctica Cultural de Vinculación con los Públicos" (Artistic Mediation in Concepción: Approach to a Cultural Practice of Linking With the Public)	*Revista Actos, 1*(2), 54–70	A bridge between the public and art
25	C. Adaros (2020)	*Mediación Artística y Cultural en Chile (2010-2020). Una Exploración Sociológica a Sus Formas, Estrategias y Conflictos (Artistic and Cultural Mediation in Chile [2010-2020]. A Sociological Analysis of Its Forms, Strategies and Conflicts)*	Master's thesis, University of Chile	A bridge between the public and art
26	C. Guerrero and C. Alonso (2021)	"Personas con Diversidad Funcional y Fomento del Envejecimiento Activo a Través de la Mediación Artística. Un Estudio de Caso" (People With Functional Diversity and Promoting Active Ageing Through Artistic Mediation. A Case Study)	*Actualidades Investigativas, 21*(2), 1–30	Support through artistic processes
27	J. Tarragó (2021)	"La Mediación Artística Como Estrategia de Inclusión Social con Juventud Migrada" (Artistic Mediation as a Social Inclusion Strategy for Young Immigrants)	*REIRE: Revista d'Innovació i Recerca en Educación, 14*(1), 1–18	Support through artistic processes

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28	M. Paczkowski Reloba (2021)	*Arte y Resiliencia. Los Relatos de la Mediación Artística en los Contextos de Vulnerabilidad y Exclusión, Desde el Propio Sujeto* (Art and Resilience. The Narratives of Artistic Mediation in Vulnerability and Exclusion Contexts, by the Subject Himself)	Doctoral thesis, Ramon Llull University	Support through artistic processes
29	K. Y. Agudelo (2022)	*Interacciones de Mediación Artística y Su Papel en los Procesos de Recepción. Caso del Museo de Arte Moderno de Medellín* (Interactions of Artistic Mediation and Its Role in Reception Processes. Case of the Medellín's Modern Art Museum)	Master's thesis, Universidad de Antioquia	A bridge between the public and art
30	S. M. Cano (2022)	"La Mediación Artística en Entornos Universitarios: Lo Corporal, lo Emocional y lo Performático" (Artistic Mediation in University Environments: The Corporal, the Emotional and the Performative)	*Arteterapia. Papeles de Arteterapia y Educación*, 17, 37–48	Support through artistic processes
31	R. Nicolás Ortuño (2022b)	"Todos Somos Arte: Proyecto de Mediación Artística con Jóvenes con Trastorno del Espectro Autista" (We All Are Art: Art Mediation Project With Young People Suffering From an Autism Spectrum Disorder)	*Arteterapia. Papeles de Arteterapia y Educación*, 17, 131–142	Support through artistic processes
32	J. M. Mesías-Lema et al. (2022)	"Prácticas Artísticas Situadas: Mediación, Activismo y Derechos Ciudadanos en los Procesos Participativos (También) Situados" (Situated Art Practices: Mediation, Activism and Human Rights in the Participatory Processes [Also] Situated)	*Encuentros*, 15, 228–249	Support through artistic processes
33	A. Moreno González (2022)	"Mediación Artística y Arteterapia. Delimitando Territorios" (Art Mediation and Art Therapy. Delimiting Territories)	*Encuentros*, 15, 32–47	Support through artistic processes
34	M. Ranilla (2022)	"Mediación Artística Para la Mejora de los Entornos Digitales en Personas Mayores: Un Proyecto de Medialab Prado" (Artistic Mediation for the Improvement of Digital Environments in Older People: Medialab Prado Project)	*Encuentros*, 15, 204–213	Support through artistic processes
35	R. Nicolás Ortuño (2022a)	*El Autismo en la Juventud y Su Trasformación Social a Través de la Mediación Artística* (Autism in Youth and Its Social Transformation Through Artistic Mediation)	Conference "III Congreso Interdisciplinar de Jóvenes Investigadores"	Support through artistic processes

Table 1. *Scientific publications on artistic mediation*

Once we identified the published articles on Google Scholar, we proceeded to analyse how they define the concept of artistic mediation.

5. Development and Research

Based on Moreno González' (2016b) approach, we found in all the texts one of the two conceptions of artistic mediation explained before (the museums or as support through artistic processes) clearly described: 10 texts perceive the concept as the work undertaken by museums and art centres to bring art closer to the public, including educational centres; 24 texts conceive it as the support of groups in vulnerable situations through workshops and artistic activities; and one discusses the relationship between art and education.

Based on the articles identified, we can state that artistic mediation has been in scientific publications for 20 years. The first article was published in 2002, and the latest in 2022. The first article on artistic mediation, in Spanish, was published in 2002 by the Austrian Michael Wimmer, executive director of the Austrian Department of Culture, professor at the University of Vienna, expert of the Council of Europe and founding member of the European Artsandeducation network. Although this article is not from the Ibero-American context, we have included it because it is the first time the concept has been mentioned in scientific publications. In this article, Wimmer (2002) reflects on new approaches between art and education so that a "new culture of teaching and learning" is created, integrating learning processes based on interdisciplinary projects, emphasising the experience of pupils, where they have the opportunity to be productive, letting themselves be guided by their own experiences to discover themselves. Art education would play a crucial role in this kind of "self-discovery", guiding the way towards spontaneity, imagination and tolerance.

Eight years have elapsed from the first publication to the second. The second article is by the Spanish Ascensión Moreno González (2010), a professor at the University of Barcelona, director of the master's degree in artistic mediation and president of the Professional Association of Artistic Mediation. In the article, the author states:

> artistic activity acts as a mediator; that is, the underlying goal is not that the people who participate in it learn art but that the activity is an educational tool that allows educators to focus on other objectives, mainly aimed at promoting people's autonomy and social inclusion processes. (Moreno González, 2010, p. 2)

We identified five publications by the author, three articles (Moreno González, 2010, 2016a, 2022), one book (Moreno González, 2016b), and one co-authored article (Moreno González et al., 2013); becoming the author who has written the most on the subject. They all describe the concept as a form of intervention through the arts to promote processes of biopsychosocial improvement of people participating in the projects and, also, to promote social transformation.

The line of artistic mediation as a form of supporting creative processes has the most publications: two refer to projects in prisons (Fernández-Cedena, 2018; Ruiz Carrera & Vidal Arbonés, 2015), and two to interventions with people with autism, both by Rocío Nicolás Ortuño (2022a, 2022b). As for other contexts, there is a text for each

of the following: addictions (Moreno González et al., 2013), women in situations of vulnerability (Huerta & Vicari, 2017), special education (Moreno Pérez, 2020), functional diversity and ageing (Guerrero & Alonso, 2021), older people at large (Ranilla, 2022), young migrants (Tarragó, 2021), citizens' rights (Mesías-Lema et al., 2022), support in bereavement processes (Castro Pacheco & Brito Cárdenas, 2019), contexts of vulnerability (Paczkowski Reloba, 2021) and university context (Moltó Borreguero, 2017); finally, we highlight an article exploring the difference between artistic mediation and art therapy (Moreno González, 2022).

The publications mentioned above include topics of interest, such as the concept of "artmediation", which we only found in one of the publications (Sanchez-Ruiz & Chacón, 2012); the remaining ones opt for "artistic mediation". Another aspect highlighting this discussion for the first time is the distinction between artistic mediation and art therapy. In 2022, Moreno González wrote an article specifically addressing this issue.

Analysing in which aspects of support through the arts the articles have an impact, we identified references to the purpose of improving personal and social well-being (Cano, 2022; Moreno González, 2010; Nicolás Ortuño, 2022a, 2022b; Paczkowski Reloba, 2021; Tarragó, 2021) in settings where they work with people in situations of vulnerability. According to Nicolás Ortuño (2022b), the artistic practice developed in contexts of functional diversity is an increasingly accepted and integrated activity in different institutions, given the benefits it brings to subjects, promoting their development at both individual and collective levels. We note that since the first publication, where artistic mediation is first conceptualised as a form of intervention through the arts with social objectives (Moreno González, 2010), this perspective has been widely developed both in Latin America and in Spain.

For Peters (2019), artistic mediation is part of cultural mediation: "artistic mediation is construed as a specific space within a general field, which is cultural mediation" (p. 8). This author outlines the difference between these two conceptions of mediation:

> cultural mediation seeks to build bridges between people and communities through communicative, cultural, emotional and sensitive exchanges - where the parties share their biographical, historical and relational resources. Artistic mediation seeks, instead, to build dialogic bridges between an artistic proposal and the biographical questions of an audience-observer vis a vis their social and cultural context. Reflecting on the condition in the observer's world is one of the principles of artistic mediation. (Peters, 2019, p. 19)

Some other publications use artistic and cultural mediation as a synonym: "we would speak of cultural mediation as that space of social and educational intervention generated through artistic and cultural projects, with groups that need certain social and cultural help" (Ranilla, 2022, p. 206).

On the meaning of artistic mediation as a bridge between art and the public, Peters (2019) sees it as a critical experience-generating device:

artistic mediation is not simply a tool to generate and/or attract communi-
ties or new audiences. It is, first and foremost, a critical device that seeks to
design, think and transform the ways of thinking about the common space
in and with art. And it does so by generating various novel experiences be-
tween the observer, the artistic work and the other participants. (pp. 11–12)

For Rodrigo (2015), "the word artistic mediation offers an endless range of possi-
bilities and educational, communication and approach strategies to the various sectors
that form the official and unofficial public of the art discourse in a variety of institutions"
(p. 376). Besides developing the mediation perspective of art institutions, Rodrigo also
explores the potential to cause social change through the development of visual percep-
tion, creative imagination, the development of flexibility in the creative solution of all
kinds of problems and the formation of aesthetic values that impact on the human and
urban environment and artistic expressions. In his approach, the methodological as-
pects of mediation are not explained to produce the potential he proposes.

In his master's thesis, Adaros (2020) explores the development of artistic media-
tion in Chile and highlights that "a few years ago, the cultural and artistic field in Chile
started to use the concept of mediation to refer to dynamics of connection between
different spaces and their visitors" (p. 6). The author speaks of artistic and cultural
mediation without any distinction, proposing that "artistic and cultural mediation will
be understood as a device of social intervention that seeks to establish new ways of
thinking about the relationship between art, society, the public and cultural institution"
(Adaros, 2020, p. 45).

Palma (2020) also situates his research in Chile, specifically in Concepción, as his
"mediation in this context keeps a distance from the formation of spectators and/or
audiences, as it does not seek mere cultural consumption, but – also – tries to provoke
critical reflection" (p. 55). For the author, artistic mediation is a cultural practice.

Palacios (2018a) describes the experience developed in the Centro Universitario
Cardenal Cisneros, specifically in the subject of art education didactics of the teaching
course, working on the design and application of didactic workshops for students who
visit the centre's exhibit.

Analysing the aspects discussed in the perspective of artistic mediation as a bridge
between art and the public, we note that besides situating the concept, the author ques-
tions how to conduct these mediations. Palacios (2018b) points out:

about the role we should play when the visit takes place, what we ask our-
selves is how to mediate: what kind of activities would be the most suitable,
how to guide the dialogue, what kind of questions we should ask, in which
aspects we should influence the meaning, etc. (p. 481)

6. Conclusions

Google Scholar helped us identify the scientific publications. However, we identified
some unusual situations: some articles in indexed journals did not appear in our searches.

On the other hand, we found publications in non-indexed journals. Furthermore, there is no unified criterion regarding publications: some end-of-course projects appear, but not all. We found some papers in congresses, and we know of others that are not available, and we found some masters' dissertations.

Artistic mediation has a 20-year history in the Ibero-American context. The professional and scientific community has clearly opted for the concept of artistic mediation and not for that of artemediation. The concept is being developed in two different contexts: groups and communities in situations of vulnerability and cultural centres and museums.

We verified that there are two perspectives on artistic mediation. According to one, workshops are held where the participants are those making art and expressing themselves through different artistic languages, with the support of a mediator. These workshops aim to improve the situation of their participants by developing resilience, empowerment, well-being, health and social inclusion, which is the line of work introduced by Ascensión Moreno González at the University of Barcelona. In the second, participants visit artists' exhibitions, and the mediator proposes a tour of their works. The goal is not always explicitly stated; special reference is made to fostering the visitors' critical thinking, reflection on art and cultural exchange. This perspective includes the work done by museums and cultural centres' former educational or pedagogical departments.

Although both conceptions coincide insofar as people who relate to art are concerned, there are major differences between the two: regarding the artistic experience, the extent to which participants are involved in artistic mediation, the objectives of professional interventions and how the activities take place. In the case of mediation in museums and cultural centres, it mainly refers to guided tours. In contrast, socio-educational projects are workshops where participants have a monitored experience of artistic creation.

On the other hand, artistic and cultural mediation are sometimes used as synonyms, with no distinction between them. Some authors use both concepts interchangeably.

The author with the most articles on artistic mediation is Ascensión Moreno González, from the University of Barcelona, with four articles. Following are Jorge Fernández-Cedena, from the Complutense University of Madrid; Ricardo González García from the University of Cantabria; Rocío Nicolás Ortuño from the University of Murcia; and Alfredo Palacios, from the Centro Universitario Cardenal Cisneros, with two articles each. We identified only one publication in a book focusing on the topic, *La Mediación Artística* (The Artistic Mediation), published in 2016 by Octaedro publishing house.

Since 2002, when the first publication was made, there was a period without publications until 2010. From 2010 up to 2022, we identified publications in every year except 2011. There are two publications in 2015, two in 2016, three in 2017, five in 2018, three in 2019, five in 2020, three in 2021, and seven in 2022. Artistic mediation is growing rapidly, both in developing initiatives and projects and in research and scientific production. In the case of museums, the former educational services are now mostly called "mediation". Moreover, as far as artistic mediation in social, educational, health and community

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contexts is concerned, it provides intervention methodologies that favour the development of social improvement and transformation goals.

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Artistic and Cultural Mediation: What Professional Profile?

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Abstract

The emergence of a new professional group to meet the challenges posed by the changing role and place of artists and arts in current societies, as well as the relationship between the public(s) and the various artistic and cultural manifestations, has prompted us to try to (a) understand how some potential employers, trainers and graduates see the role of the artistic and cultural mediator; (b) identify the definition(s) they propose of artistic and cultural mediation; and (c) identify the knowledge and skills they consider necessary for this professional exercise. A brief literature review (Arnaud, 2018; Henry, 2014; Lussier, 2015; Mörsch & Holland, 2012) contributes to a better definition of the concept of artistic and cultural mediation that reconciles the rationales of the democratisation of culture and cultural democracy, highlighting, among other things, the purposes that can be pursued. Drawing on a specific context of the degree in artistic and cultural mediation of the Lisbon School of Education, graduates, teachers and cooperating professionals who supervise the trainees of this degree were engaged in focus groups. The respondents provide definitions of artistic and cultural mediation with educational, social, cultural, investigative, political and economic dimensions, a wide range of knowledge and skills necessary for an intervention in this area, and various roles played. We conclude with the importance of pursuing research to better circumscribe a domain of specific knowledge and the field of intervention as conceptual for artistic and cultural mediation.

Keywords

artistic and cultural mediation, professional profile, citizenship,
cultural democracy, democratisation of culture

Mediação Artística e Cultural: Que Perfil Profissional?

Resumo

A emergência de um novo grupo profissional para responder aos desafios colocados pela mudança do papel e do lugar dos artistas e das artes nas sociedades atuais, bem como da relação entre o(s) público(s) e as diversas manifestações artísticas e culturais, levou-nos a tentar (a) compreender como alguns potenciais empregadores, formadores e graduados veem

o papel do mediador artístico e cultural; (b) identificar a(s) definição(ões) que propõe(m) de mediação artística e cultural; e (c) identificar os conhecimentos e competências que consideram necessários para este exercício profissional. Uma breve revisão da literatura (Arnaud, 2018; Henry, 2014; Lussier, 2015; Mörsch & Holland, 2012) traz contribuições para uma melhor definição do conceito de mediação artística e cultural que concilia as lógicas da democratização da cultura e da democracia cultural, destacando, entre outras coisas, as finalidades que podem ser prosseguidas. Ancorado num contexto específico da licenciatura em mediação artística e cultural da Escola Superior de Educação de Lisboa, foram realizados grupos de discussão com diplomados, docentes e profissionais cooperantes que enquadram os estagiários desta licenciatura. Os inquiridos apresentam definições da mediação artística e cultural com dimensões educativa, social, cultural, investigativa, política e económica e um largo conjunto de conhecimentos e competências necessários para uma intervenção nessa área assim como uma multiplicidade de funções exercidas. Concluímos com a importância de continuar a investigação no sentido de melhor circunscrever um domínio de conhecimento específico e o campo de intervenção como conceptual para a mediação artística e cultural.

Keywords

artistic and cultural mediation, professional profile, citizenship,
cultural democracy, democratisation of culture

1. Introduction

The role and place of artists and arts in today's societies and the relationship between the audience(s) and the various artistic and cultural manifestations are changing. To meet the need for new professionals skilled in developing a new role in artistic and cultural mediation, the Lisbon School of Education launched, in 2016, the degree in artistic and cultural mediation (DACM) at the intersection of the arts and social sciences.

This degree is essentially inspired by the French concept of "cultural mediation", which combines the democratisation of culture and cultural democracy. It aims to train professionals to build relationships between cultural producers, all professionals in the field of arts, artists and citizens who form the so-called "audiences" to develop working strategies in hybrid territories that combine distinct but complementary characteristics, such as education, programming, creative and artistic processes.

Since some graduates are integrated into the labour market, and the professional category of cultural mediator does not yet exist in Portugal, it is important to (a) understand how some potential employers, trainers and graduates see the role of the artistic and cultural mediator; (b) identify the definition(s) they give to artistic and cultural mediation; and (c) identify the knowledge and skills they deem required for this professional practice.

To achieve the objectives previously mentioned, in the first part of this article, a brief literature review brings contributions to a better definition of the concept of artistic and cultural mediation, highlighting, among other things, the conditions of its emergence and the purposes that can be targeted. To contextualise the study, we present the DACM focusing on how it has materialised the theoretical principles that sustain it.

An empirical section outlines the methods followed and the results of an exploratory study aimed at collecting the representations of teachers, institutional partners and some graduates who invested in the creation of the Associação Portuguesa de Mediação Artística e Cultural (Portuguese Association of Artistic and Cultural Mediation).

At this research stage, it is a descriptive work without any prescriptive or normative vein.

2. The Emergence of Artistic and Cultural Mediation

To better understand the emergence of the concept and the practices of artistic and cultural mediation, we have to remember those of democratisation of culture and cultural democracy. The first in our text, and the chronological order, refers to cultural policies that tried to respond to a design which gained much relevance in the discourses in the first half of the 20th century. Furthermore, they can be found in the Constitution of the Portuguese Republic (1976), specifically in Article 43: "the State promotes the democratisation of culture, encouraging and ensuring the access of all citizens to cultural fruition and creation". The democratisation of culture is based on the assumption that there are "works" of universal value to which everyone should have access. Therefore, the strategies implemented to achieve this goal are mainly based on geographical decentralisation and reducing people's costs in accessing cultural facilities. These policies are considered paternalistic since they select for individuals the works that deserve to be known, recognised and appreciated, and elitist since not all cultural manifestations are recognised as relevant, for only some are granted legitimacy to be part of the heritage. They take as an assumption that "aesthetic enjoyment is universal and does not bring any knowledge either about the object of enjoyment or about the one which is its subject" (Caune, 2005, para. 47). By denying the subjectivity and uniqueness of those who look at the works, social and cognitive barriers subsist. Furthermore, looking at the typology of the shows and events attended, we come across a commonality: the so-called erudite artistic and cultural manifestations, legitimised by the "cultural entrepreneurs" (Arnaud, 2018), are attended by a very small number of people and these attendants belong to the privileged socioeconomic classes (Pais et al., 2022).

Another concept that subsequently made way for other cultural policies is "cultural democracy", which recognises and values the diversity of culture, and artistic manifestations, placing all subjects simultaneously as consumers and producers of culture. It has abandoned the universalistic definition of culture in favour of a broad, anthropological, pluralistic, relativistic definition, including amateur practices, community cultures, and audiovisual media (Martin, 2013) based on a cultural plurality (Lahire, 2006; Lopes, 2009). Thus providing the grounds for fundamental texts of international scopes, such as the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (Organização das Nações Unidas para a Educação, a Ciência e a Cultura, 2002). With these policies, there is a risk of crystallising cultural identities, of a marked social reproduction, without mobility and, therefore, of the ghettoisation of culture (Baracca, 2010; De Certeau, 1974/1993).

The concept of artistic and cultural mediation emerges in a perspective of reconciliation of the two logics. Special attention is given to the specificity of the audience(s), considering their needs and their tastes and the relationship between the audience(s) and the artists, between the audience(s) and the art(s) is reconfigured (Lafortune, 2013; Maurel, 2010; Rathier & Innocenti, 2010). In such a paradigm, it is not about trying to convert the non-audience of a sensitive activity or a certain institution into engaged spectators, a design of cultural democratisation that should not be disregarded. Rather, it is about enabling each citizen to better construct him/herself through cultural practices in which art brings its efficiency in expressiveness, enunciation and relationship in an everyday life environment and a certain socio-political context (Henry, 2014). Along these lines, the work of the artistic and cultural mediator will be modulated and redefined according to the specificity of individuals and according to the intervention's artistic, cultural, social, political and economic context (Lussier, 2015). We understand, then, that cultural acting is at the centre of social, political and economic tensions, at the boundaries of what is cultural, also contributing to the definition of groups recognised as cultured, enlightened and dominant (Arnaud, 2018). Hence, the work of the artistic and cultural mediator goes beyond the limits of established cultural facilities, such as museums or cultural centres, and involves expressive creative processes using languages that are not always recognised and valued by academia. Artistic objects may be quite distant from the "works" once considered in the policies of democratisation of culture. In these processes of "artification" (Shapiro, 2007), the strengths and implications are not limited to the artistic or cultural domain. For a social group to assert its culture as a valuable heritage, it must have a culture to assert and the means to do so. These means involve a power game at the social, political and economic levels. Since Bourdieu (1979), we know that some cultural practices are marks of distinction of socially privileged groups and that certain cultural manifestations are considered popular, mass or high. For example, Juliano (as cited in Trilla, 2004) provides a classification of culture into three categories according to the social group that produces and/or enjoys it: (a) the official or dominant culture that is normative, sets the standards and has prestige; (b) mass culture based on standardised production and consumption, generated by "official culture", aimed at sectors of the population that do not have access to the products of "dominant culture"; and (c) popular culture based on face-to-face relations, which meets local specifications, devalued and proper to subaltern classes. On the other hand, when Pereira (2016) tries to define the value of art, it always comes back to recognition by peers, by the market, by curators... In other words, political, social and economic power games will allow some recognition of certain cultural manifestations. The artistic and cultural mediator cannot ignore these aspects and work in mediating certain works belonging to a certain collection without questioning how the works gained that place nor the perspective that the various audiences may have of this recognition. The symbolic violence exercised by legitimised works may prompt contrary reactions in people excluded from dominant groups.

The citizen who constructs him/herself through art(s) interacting with others and their socio-political context may thus no longer be seen as the target audience of an

intervention but as a participant. Their participation can be categorised at different levels: (a) reception of the works and the mediators' discourses; (b) interactivity, when mediators ask questions or propose activities; (c) participation, when mediators allow people from the audience the opportunity to make changes in their project; (d) collaboration when the project is co-constructed by mediators and people from the audience; and (e) claiming when the project initiative comes from people to respond to the specific desire of a given community (Mörsch & Holland, 2012). It is, therefore, important that the artistic and cultural mediation professional can develop a reflection on these levels of participation by confronting some of the goals he/she declares to pursue with the strategies he/she implements in the course of his/her profession. The type of intervention or activities developed assign roles to each stakeholder, allowing more or less room for people to make decisions. Artistic and cultural mediators should be aware that participation is not exhausted with activities led by professionals asking for interaction with the audience, which is still at a very low level of participation.

The terminology used to refer to interventions in artistic and cultural mediation reflects this transformation of the role and place assigned to the participants and their increased participation. There are no longer "guided tours" in which the visitors must follow their guide, but "targeted tours" in which the visitors follow their own route, considering the given guidelines. There is a shift from "audience training", which is based on the trainer's action, to "audience development", which entails growth from the inside. The "educational services" are replaced by "participation departments"; the "groups of programmers", "groups of curators", and "groups of participatory art" flourish, all composed of people from territorial communities or others and not of professionals in arts or culture. In fact, we can identify these practices in venues (such as Culturgest, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation), cultural organisations (such as Teatro Meia Volta, Comédias do Minho, Acesso Cultura, among others) and cultural projects (such as 23 Milhas and Bons Sons) where the processes of cultural production are shared between artists and audiences according to the logic of the emancipated spectator as proposed by Rancière (2008/2010).

Arts and culture are considered important for the person's and the citizen's development and pillars for the sustainable development of territories in their cultural, social, educational and economic dimensions (Carta do Porto Santo, 2021; Comissão da Cultura da Cidades e Governos Locais Unidos, 2004; Costa, 2018).

Within this theoretical framework, it is clear that a degree in artistic and cultural mediation should be multi- and interdisciplinary and develop competencies and knowledge in the fields of social sciences and education, but also of the arts, together with the technical competencies required for intervention and practice within professional contexts.

3. The Conception of the Degree in Artistic and Cultural Mediation

The DACM was built at the Lisbon School of Education, a degree launched in 2016 (Cruz et al., 2021). The degree study plan includes curricular units on the scientific areas

of social sciences and education, arts, languages and communication technologies and aims to develop the following specific competencies:

- To know and understand the audiences, contexts and facilities for artistic production and dissemination (cultural organisations and territorial intervention, anthropology of culture, sociology of culture, diversity, cultures and social intervention);
- To identify networks of stakeholders and policies in artistic and cultural dissemination (cultural organisations and territorial intervention and cultural policies);
- To know and understand the multiple forms of artistic intervention and expression (theory of arts, aesthetics, and the optional curricular units taught in schools or artistic degrees under protocols of exchange of curricular units offered);
- To communicate effectively with the different stakeholders of the artistic and cultural mediation process (foreign language, oral and written expression technique and multimedia communication).

Besides these curricular units, there are two structuring and more transversal sets. On the one hand, the curricular units of project methodology I, II and III (Bell, 2010; Rangel & Gonçalves, 2010) in each of the first semesters of the course and, on the other hand, the project of intervention in artistic and cultural mediation (PIACM) I, II and III in the second semesters of the course which, besides mobilising the competencies developed in the previously mentioned curricular units, specifically contribute for students' ability to design, implement, manage and evaluate a project. The three PIACMs consist of work placements in multiple contexts, monitored by renowned professionals, the cooperating supervisors, within the framework of seminars in which particular emphasis is placed on the articulation between the theoretical-practical curricular unit and the professional intervention.

The rationale presented when the course was created states that training is based on the model of the reflective professional (Schön, 1994). Although developed transversally in the training units of project methodology and the PIACM, this reflexivity competency deserves specific attention in a curricular unit of the third year: professionalism in artistic and cultural mediation.

4. Method

The results reported here stem from exploratory work (Cruz et al., 2021) and were the subject of an oral communication at the colloquium "Prendre part à l'art et à la culture. Pratiques, théories et politiques de la médiation culturelle aujourd'hui" (Participating in art and culture. Practices, theories and policies of cultural mediation today) on October 7, 8 and 9, 2021 at Aix Marseille Université, France. They stem from a study under a research project named *Entre: Investigação em Mediação Artística e Cultural* (In between: research in Artistic and Cultural Mediation), funded by the Research Centre in Education. The project aims at the following objectives: (a) to establish artistic and cultural mediation as an area of research and scientific production contributing to the development of its conceptual and methodological frameworks; (b) to contribute to the definition of the artistic and cultural mediator's professional profile; (c) to identify and analyse the role

of artistic and cultural mediation for the different socio-cultural agents (artists, cultural institutions, mediators, students, audiences).

Given the complexity of the phenomenon under analysis, we adopted a qualitative approach (Crahay, 2006; Vandenberghe, 2006), thus materialising our concern with respecting the uniqueness of the participants. Our option for an essentially qualitative approach was motivated by the complexity of the situations (Vandenberghe, 2006) we intend to analyse and because only by considering the interpretations of the stakeholders will we be able to contribute to our questions. "The term action replaces the term behaviour: an action encompasses physical behaviour and the meaning that the agent and those who interact with him attach to it" (Crahay, 2006, p. 36).

Like Verhoeven (2006), we consider that, from semi-inductive research, based on a logic of intersubjective and pragmatic construction of knowledge, a generalisation is possible, not by statistical representation, but by an analytical generalisation. Therefore, our purpose here is not to create representative groups but to collect a diversity of understandings about the role of the artistic and cultural mediator, the definition(s) of artistic and cultural mediation and the knowledge and skills deemed necessary for this professional activity.

Three focus groups were held by the end of the academic year 2020-2021. The first, with graduates, was attended by master's students employed in the cultural sector and founding members of the Portuguese Association of Artistic and Cultural Mediation. The second gathered teachers engaged in the DACM from anthropology, visual arts, communication, psychology and sociology. The third involved professionals with different activities: actors, filmmakers, museum employees or local government officials, all welcomed and supervised trainees in different school years and from different curricular years. The script focused the discussion on three major dimensions: the definition of artistic and cultural mediation, the roles played by artistic and cultural mediators in employing organisations and the profile of these professionals.

The data collected were subject to content analysis with the categories corresponding to the three dimensions included in the script, namely (a) the concept of artistic and cultural mediation, with three subcategories: definition, scientific areas and methodologies; (b) the role of the mediator in society, with four subcategories: the dimensions of intervention, the purposes of artistic and cultural mediation, the relationship with communities and the roles played in the organisations; and (c) the profile of the mediator identifying the competencies and knowledge required for the professional activity.

With our qualitative and comprehensive approach and the number of people involved in the focus groups, the quantification of responses has little relevance. When planning the procedures for data collection, we tried to diversify the sources of information and collect particular, complementary and/or diverging views (Alves & Azevedo, 2010). At the moment of analysis, we tried to consider all the conceptions expressed and explain the representations' diversity, multiplicity, and contradictions.

5. Representations of the Graduates

When we asked the DACM graduates to define artistic and cultural mediation, their first reaction was to ask for time to ponder. They state that this definition is controversial and variable, and finally, they give it enunciating the purposes it can pursue. For them, artistic and cultural mediation dimensions encompass the educational, social and investigative dimensions, although they state that it goes beyond the educational dimension. From their perspective, during their professional intervention, artistic and professional mediators establish relationships with employers who are unaware of the profession, with the media and with representatives of local authorities to make their work known and try to enhance it, and also with the audiences, the people. In all situations, the relationship must be thought of in the long run. Furthermore, in their contact with the communities they work with, they must be very open to diversity, with effective proximity and empathy. As for the duties performed by recent graduates in artistic and cultural mediation, they point out that they are quite varied, ranging from communication and management to the organisation of events and the organisation or inventorying of collections. These duties do not always reflect what they had envisioned during their training:

> I think that throughout the course, I developed a really nice idea about what mediation was, which is very much my own personal idea. Now that I'm working, I cannot implement it, which makes me a little upset. I mean, I think I learned a lot, and I'm trying to implement it, but it's not working that well. (Focus group 1, 16 March 2021)

However, they believe that their interventions transform people and the workspace itself.

For recent graduates, the purposes of artistic and cultural mediation and the role of the mediator in society fall on a continuum between economic and political poles. In the economic pole, it is a mediator/seller who works towards the commodification of culture, using communication, marketing, and advertising to increase the number of people attending cultural events: "how to attract more audiences to our activities" (Focus group 1, 16 March 2021). The data collected is the least present in the DACM graduates' discourses. We also find a mediator/pedagogue who strives to democratise culture by breaking down cognitive obstacles and explaining the works to people who alone did not have the competencies to do a good reading. In this perspective, which coincides with some of those collected by Martinho (2013), the mediator defined contents that people should acquire. Part of their work focuses on the search for strategies, more or less active or directive, for the acquisition of knowledge and development of attitudes: "the mediator can make a guided tour, the mediator can simply translate the works in writing or provide a brief context and is already mediating, he can engage in activities with groups" (Focus group 1, 16 March 2021).

> I think what was most worthwhile was the impact I had on the kids at school and the difference it made just having been with them for those few days.

> They didn't care about theatre at all and suddenly, "Wait a minute, maybe this is interesting; maybe I'll even go and see it". (Focus group 1, 16 March 2021)

In the study mentioned (Martinho, 2013), some professionals who develop artistic and cultural mediation activities introduce themselves as "teachers" and value pedagogy as a required training area.

On the political pole, we find a mediator/mediator making room for cultural democracy, reflection and positive encounters between people and between people and works. As Arnaud (2018) says, cultural acting will enable a better understanding of oneself, others and one's surroundings, hence a possible position-taking for social transformation. The graduates surveyed state:

> the role of the mediator must allow people the time to reflect (...) I think that people generally like to participate and give their ideas about what they are seeing or reflect on what they are seeing. The mediator eventually is just a fly on the wall or is only there to instigate the conversation, and I think that's where you get the best results." (Focus group 1, 16 March 2021)

"I think the mediator must have the ability to provide the room for reflection" (Focus group 1, 16 March 2021).

"The spaces should be a little bit more democratic, that include all people because the goal is not to exclude" (Focus group 1, 16 March 2021).

"I think that the mediator must have the ability to create this space for reflection (....), but also a space of encounters between completely opposite realities or realities that are rather very similar, or different realities, whatever they may be" (Focus group 1, 16 March 2021).

Concerning the competencies required for the professional exercise of artistic and cultural mediation, we can see a great coincidence between the decisions of the DACM course coordinator and the representations of the graduates. The core competencies: (a) knowing and understanding the audiences, contexts and equipment of artistic production and dissemination; (b) identifying networks of stakeholders and policies in artistic and cultural dissemination; (c) knowing and understanding the various forms of artistic intervention; and (d) communicating effectively with the different stakeholders in the process of artistic and cultural mediation are also considered central by the graduates who, however, did not mention the idea of networking. Similarly, the transversal competencies listed in the presentation of the study cycle, such as designing, implementing, managing and evaluating a project and being a reflective professional, are valued. However, the group surveyed admits as important some competencies not taken into account by the group proposing the degree, such as those stemming from knowledge in marketing and management and aimed at the profitability of projects. They also focus more on psychology-related competencies in a more practical dimension: "I talked about empathy, about listening to people and trying to understand" (Focus group 1, 16 March 2021).

6. Representations of the Teachers

The teachers are unanimous in considering that the definition of artistic and cultural mediation is very broad and non-consensual. Some see this non-consensual aspect as strategic, as it would be a way of encompassing a wide diversity of practices in this term:

> mediation can sometimes be used like this; it can be such an abstract concept, so broad, and then maybe it is worth closing, or not closing; when is it useful and functional to help us think about what doing artistic and cultural mediation is. (Focus group 2, 15 July 2021)

For some, artistic and cultural mediation is a form of translation that aims to make works accessible to the public:

> so this idea that they are mediating something, between something, they are in the middle of something... And they must have this ability to translate in the sense of turning something strange into something familiar to one side or the other, right? So, to make it familiar, to make it close, to make it... to decode, to make it involving, to make it appealing, to make something strange or unknown, become familiar or recognisable, right? (Focus group 2, 15 July 2021)

The teachers also mention that artistic and cultural mediation can be a driver for transforming the cultural sector organisations or institutions.

Artistic and cultural mediation can be seen from a more individual perspective with an emphasis on personal development and, in this case, as a facilitator of experience and construction for others. It may also be seen in a more social dimension, either as the use of cultures and arts or of artistic expressions, as a link between people, between communities, between audiences and even between individuals themselves in a horizontal perspective: "it has this role of, from an artistic or cultural expression, bringing us all closer to each other (...) it may also be a way for us to come closer to ourselves" (Focus group 2, 15 July 2021).

As for the scientific area with which they associate artistic and cultural mediation, there seems to be no doubt among the focus group participants. They state that it is the social sciences and humanities. However, when asked to elaborate on more specific subfields or domains, the answer is not so unequivocal; the arts, psychology, sociology, anthropology and communication are mentioned, and their hybrid nature is underlined. To define their conceptual framework, the teachers mobilise various concepts such as public space, public and cultural sphere, cultural democracy, cultural translation, cultural rights, mechanisms of cultural contact, collective, and otherness and they quote as reference authors Jürgen Habermas, Bruno Latour, Clifford Geertz or Emmanuel Levinas.

There is consensus among the focus group members that part of the mediator's role in society is to be the interface between organisations and the audiences; some emphasise that this role can only be developed through integration in institutions, others, in networks or in the very communities with which they interact. The purpose of their

intervention in society would be to reinforce the significance of art and culture in society or even to include vulnerable people or groups such as the mentally ill, migrants, and the unemployed... To develop this role, the trainers define a very demanding professional profile with communication, analytical and reflective competencies, with knowledge in a wide range of scientific areas, with the will to always learn more, with transversal skills such as empathy and the ability to adapt to different contexts:

> they can bring transversal competencies, i.e., beyond technical knowledge and beyond scientific knowledge, that they can provide about essential concepts, right? Since they will be mediators, the mediator dimension has an underlying communicational dimension, right? There is a set of transversal competencies. (Focus group 2, 15 July 2021)

These teachers' representations pose challenges for training in artistic and cultural mediation. The first observation is that the teachers' own training domain contaminates their reading of what artistic and cultural mediation may be. It may be necessary to claim a domain of specific knowledge based on a better definition of artistic and cultural mediation, its conceptual framework and the competencies of this professional to avoid that contamination. Whether due to incomplete knowledge of the intervention contexts or ontologically, as a result of inherent contradictions or strategically, this hybridisation of artistic and cultural mediation seems to consolidate the idea of an initial broadband training that specialisation may follow at a post-graduate or master's level, for example. Given the complexity of artistic and cultural mediation itself and its intervention contexts, training should favour the capacity for analysis and reflection and the ability to adapt to diverse professional situations. It is deemed essential to endow students with:

> competencies from the point of view of analysis. As I said before, not in the sense of being social science researchers, not in that sense, but robust analytical competencies precisely because there is a reading of a complexity that I think is important for them to be able to do. (Focus group 2, 15 July 2021)

The centrality of the practical dimension, namely the internships in diversified contexts, emerges then as an adequate response when associated with a training model based on the reflective professional (Schön, 1994).

7. Representations of the Cooperating Professionals

The cooperating professionals consider that part of their work falls within the scope of artistic and cultural mediation. Therefore they did not hesitate when presenting some definition of this concept and did so by taking their own professional activity as a starting point. Generally, they define artistic and cultural mediation as what is between, in the middle of, and the multiple parties may be creators, audiences, institutions, programmers, people... However, the definitions given are not all coincident; one aspect that

varies is the activity versus the passivity of the audiences. For some, mediation is the passing of information and knowledge. For others, it is listening to both what is received and created. Others consider it to be the act of creating tensions, restlessness and possibilities for discussion, or even a driver for transformation. They recognise four dimensions in the intervention in artistic and cultural mediation: cultural, social, educational and political. In the organisations where they work, they consider that the roles played by mediators are: to bring people closer to the institutions, to make artists' work known, to contribute to increasing the number of people attending cultural facilities and to promote dialogue and knowledge sharing. Professionals have a prescriptive discourse on the qualities that artistic and cultural mediation should have: empathetic and affective, educational, participatory and promoting active citizenship. They also mention the relevance of the need for artistic and cultural mediation in schools at all levels of education, including university. When we approach the profile of the artistic and cultural mediator, the list of knowledge and competencies is extremely long, which can be understood when we also analyse the purposes to be achieved by the intervention of these professionals. The knowledge to be mastered by the artistic and cultural mediator covers several fields: arts (visual arts, cinema, theatre, music, etc.), sociology, history, art history, aesthetics, philosophy, law, foreign languages, and participatory methodologies. Besides knowledge, these professionals must have soft skills such as humility, willingness to listen, openness towards the other, absence of prejudice, and empathy. They must be guided by social, civic and humanistic values and must be able to not impose their aesthetics on the other. Regarding know-how, professionals consider it important for artistic and cultural mediators to know how to diagnose a territory, understand the work of a creator and the creative processes, involve people in a creative process, build a capital of trust with people, communicate and create spaces for dialogue. This wide range of knowledge and competencies required for the professional exercise of artistic and cultural mediation coincides with the diversity of purposes ascribed to this intervention. For some, these have an essentially educational dimension, the mediator being the person who explains what should be seen in work, hence the importance of knowledge of the arts of creative processes: "we were actually filmmakers, so we already had knowledge of the artistic part, and we were trying to pass this knowledge on to children, young people, others. However, this is mediation by people who know art" (Focus group 3, 7 May 2021).

This educational dimension does not always correspond to a transmissive model, and professionals value the contributions that can be given by the elements that form the audience:

> we don't have to be the only ones passing on this information. I think it is important to have this collaboration. When we talk about the mediator, we don't have to be the one passing on the dialogue. If we have to call people, if we have to bring them to our side, talk to them, these are processes that are a little long at first, but then eventually flow, and I think that when we think about the mediator, it is important to understand that we don't have

to be the centre, but maybe the middle. That is, we have to call people and promote dialogue, but we do not have to be the ones to convey everything. (Focus group 3, 7 May 2021)

The educational dimension is mitigated by a rather social dimension that places the mediator not in the position of a transmitter but actually as a mediator who will provide encounters, bonding and social integration. Talking about art and culture is also a way of talking about oneself and one's surroundings:

I think that the work of mediation is also a work of raising awareness of the realities that these people who are in the surroundings of the reality in which each of us works, have the opportunity to speak out, to give them a voice, to be able to complain about their troubles, their problems, and somehow we try to find solutions that allow for a better way of life or to improve the person's living conditions. (Focus group 3, 7 May 2021)

Artistic and cultural mediation assumes a political dimension since people cease to be passive audiences and become stakeholders who make decisions to transform their surroundings. For some of the professionals in the focus group, the mediator's intervention actually aims at this transformation:

but when I am instead, at the service of the spectator, at the service of the citizen, being a professional in this sector, we may transform people into spectators, and my concern is rather to transform people into more active citizens, more aware, more participatory, more available for their sensibility to develop through artistic provocations (Focus group 3, 7 May 2021)

8. Clues for Reflection

The data collected points to large areas of intersection between the representations of the groups surveyed regarding the definition of artistic and cultural mediation and the professional profile and the purposes of intervention. However, we must acknowledge some divergences. For example, the graduates borrow from the area of the economy the knowledge and techniques of advertising and marketing that the trainers did not integrate into the DCAM curricular plan. The cooperating professionals have a much wider range of knowledge and competencies that artistic and cultural mediators need than the teachers, including law, which is not included in the training areas of the study plan. However, there is a point of sharing between all the elements that made up this exploratory study: the idea that artistic and cultural mediation is made of a space intersecting knowledge and competencies. We may ask ourselves the risks of this lack of definition of the field of intervention and the conceptual one. We may think that the absence of a clear definition of the field of intervention of artistic and cultural mediation allows this field to be widened and, therefore, to include more typologies of practices and, consequently,

to reinforce a professional group by increasing its number. Nevertheless, this absence carries the risk of absorption and dissolution in other more consolidated fields, both in intervention and scientific affirmation.

Another clue that we believe is important to explore further is the understanding of the contradictions between the profiles and competencies outlined by the teachers and the cooperating professionals, both of whom train the same groups of students. As we have seen, the range of knowledge identified as necessary for the three groups surveyed is extremely wide and incompatible with a three-year degree training plan. The tensions verified in the respondents' representations between more economical, more educational or more political and social dimensions reflect the tensions in the definition of cultural policies. The sources available in Portugal reflecting on artistic and cultural mediation proposed by Mörsch and Holland (2012) ou Lafortune (2012) are scarce. Even so, it is possible to identify some relevant contributions (Martinho, 2013; Fradique, 2019). *A Cultura e a Promoção da Democracia: Para uma Cidadania Cultural Europeia* (Culture and the Promotion of Democracy: Towards a European Cultural Citizenship; Porto Santo Charter, 2021) is the document closest to the assumptions behind the degree intended to train professionals in artistic and cultural mediation. There is still a very operative, formalised and scholarly understanding of mediation in cultural contexts. However, this path is similar to those seen in countries like Canada, France, Germany and Austria in the last decades. Through this maturation regarding artistic and cultural mediation practices, these contexts have contributed to a better conceptual and methodological definition of this field of knowledge and action. Therefore, further research is pertinent to better circumscribing a specific domain of knowledge for artistic and cultural mediation, drawing clearer boundaries with arts education, cultural programming, cultural management or other related professional activities.

Translation: Anabela Delgado

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Mediation for Urban Art: The Case of *Meu Bairro, Minha Rua*

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Abstract

Urban art is increasingly used as a means of urban regeneration by the municipalities of several Portuguese cities, noting, however, that sometimes urban art projects are developed with the simple purpose of "beautifying" the urban landscape, disregarding the communities that use or live in the targeted spaces. This type of intervention raises questions about the role of urban art as a form of public art developed in certain urban territories. This expression has often been used in territorially and socially deprived and peripheral urban territories. In this sense, it plays a role that is not exclusively artistic but also communitarian and social, aiming at certain neighbourhoods' territorial, symbolic and identity rehabilitation. Through this article, we intend to raise awareness about the importance of using participatory processes in developing urban art projects in the public space, encouraging the involvement of communities. Assuming that in the public space, art mediation must play a greater role, we decided to focus on a case study — the project *Meu Bairro, Minha Rua* (My Neighbourhood, My Street) — that invited the community to participate in the decision-making process of a set of micro-interventions in public space in 10 locations in Vila Nova de Gaia.

Keywords

mediation, urban art, public space, participation

Mediação Para a Arte Urbana: O Caso *Meu Bairro, Minha Rua*

Resumo

Cada vez mais, vemos a arte urbana a ser utilizada como meio de regeneração urbana por parte das autarquias de várias cidades portuguesas, constatando-se, no entanto, que, por vezes, são desenvolvidos projetos de arte urbana com o simples intuito de "embelezar" a paisagem urbana, não tendo em consideração as comunidades que frequentam ou vivem nos espaços intervencionados. Este tipo de intervenção levanta uma série de questões acerca do papel da arte urbana enquanto forma de arte pública, desenvolvida em determinados territórios urbanos. Com frequência esta expressão tem sido empregue em territórios urbanos desqualificados e periféricos, do ponto de vista territorial e social. Neste sentido, cumpre funções que não são exclusivamente artísticas, mas também de índole comunitária e social, visando a requalificação territorial, simbólica e identitária de determinados bairros. Com este artigo, pretendemos chamar a atenção para a importância da utilização de processos participativos no desenvolvimento de projetos de arte urbana a implementar no espaço público, incentivando o envolvimento das

comunidades. Partindo da premissa de que no espaço público a mediação de arte deve ter uma importância acrescida, decidimos focar-nos num caso de estudo — o projeto *Meu Bairro, Minha Rua* — no qual a comunidade foi chamada a participar nas tomadas de decisão sobre um conjunto de micro-intervenções, realizadas no espaço público, em 10 locais de Vila Nova de Gaia.

1. Introduction

Urban art is increasingly used as a means of urban regeneration, communication and promotion by public and private entities in various cities (Andrade, 2020; Barbosa & Lopes, 2019; Campos & Barbio, 2021; Costa et al., 2017; Goes, 2021; Grond eau & Pondaven, 2018; Schacter, 2014), thus seeking to contribute to the decentralisation and democratisation of culture, to promote the territory and boost tourism (Andrade, 2020; Campos & Sequeira, 2019; Pires, 2018). Although the use of this type of art has several benefits, it is also possible to observe that the political power has been developing projects in this area with the simple intention of "beautifying" the urban landscape, often disregarding the communities that use the targeted spaces (Campos et al., 2021; Raposo, 2018).

Thus, through this article, we intend to raise awareness about the importance of using democratic processes in developing urban art projects in the public space, encouraging the participation of the communities that use the targeted spaces and allowing them to participate and intervene. To do so, we focus on a case study that invited the community to participate in the decision-making process of the interventions created in the public space, including urban art. It concerns the project *Meu Bairro, Minha Rua* (My Neighbourhood, My Street), promoted by the Municipality of Gaia (MG). The analysis of this case, and the reflections produced in this article, are part of an ongoing doctoral research that aims to study the connections between urban art and community participation.

In the first section, we will briefly review and discuss some of the concepts we believe are essential to sustain a reflection on the object under consideration: "public space"; "public art" and "urban art"; and "participation" and "community art". This approach is inevitably brief and obviously does not exhaust all possible approaches, given the complexity of the conceptual framework at stake. We begin by discussing the public space from its political and democratic perspective and how it can be envisioned through the art produced or exhibited in it. Thus, we provide a brief overview of our approach to public art, describing it as an artistic expression that should be based on dynamics open to the community from a democratising and participatory perspective. Then we will discuss urban art, trying to relate it to the previous concepts. Finally, we will address the concept of community art and the importance of mediation in this type of art.

In the second part, this article analyses the implementation of the project *Meu Bairro, Minha Rua*, according to public information obtained from the websites of the project and the MG and two interviews conducted in 2022 . We based this article on the official statements of the project (websites, news and interview with the head of the project) and the methodology developed (based on fieldwork involving local communities) to reflect on how urban art can be used in participatory projects. This paper proposes a reflection on democratic ways of conceiving the public space, showing that some projects in Portugal are based on these principles. However, it refrains from analysing the project's impacts, as it would require a broader methodological design involving a survey of the communities studied.

2. Art in Public Space: Conceptual Review

2.1. Public Space

The concept of public space can be employed according to different theoretical interpretations or models. It is also worth noting that the multiple approaches contribute to the lack of a consensual perspective on public space. However, in this article, it is important to consider public space as a territory that tends to be open and democratic, where people and communities with different profiles meet (Campos & Câmara, 2019). That is a sociological approach, more aware of how space is formed as an environment constructed and lived by different people and groups (Lefebvre, 1974/1992). Public space is the stage and witness of multiple social, cultural and symbolic environments. In other words, it is a territory of fusion and various hybridisms, but also of tensions and negotiations, where various social practices, cosmovisions and ways of interpreting and using territory are expressed.

An eminently political dimension to the public space should be considered in the discussion. The political dimension derives from how the nature of the *public* within the territory is perceived. That refers to how the different social actors and institutions deal with (and appropriate) public space. The jurisdiction of public space belongs to the public powers, although there are different and increasingly powerful forms of privatising it. The powers regulate public space and use it to their benefit, according to a certain vision of the territory and how it should be inhabited and enjoyed. Public space is thus constantly exploited to serve economic, social and political interests. That has been verified throughout history, namely through the use of art in the public space to serve propaganda and disseminate hegemonic values[1].

However, we advocate that public space should play an eminently public role in a democratic spirit. It is a space "of exchange and dialogue, but also of conflict" (Campos

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[1] The most paradigmatic example of this situation is the conventional sculptural monument that, over a long period, served to represent and celebrate dominant social values and enshrined power. Public art as a practice and concept has been established as anti-monumental, moving away from this perspective (Regatão, 2015).

& Câmara, 2019, p. 26). Rosalyn Deutsche (1992), an art historian and critic, also argues that public space is intrinsically linked to democratic ideals. However, she questions how democratic public space really is when it excludes certain social groups from deciding what happens in that space:

> is it possible to speak with assurance of a public space where social groups, even when physically present, are systematically denied a voice? Does anyone "hold the key" to a public space? What does it mean to relegate groups to a sphere outside the public, to bar admittance to the discursive construction of the public, and, in this way, prohibit participation in the space of public communication? (p. 38)

This debate around the public function of space leads us to one of the central questions of this article. What to think about the artistic dimension based on public space? How to define what can be considered public art? How to distinguish public art from art in public space? Once again, we find distinct approaches.

2.2. Public Art and Urban Art

The concept of public art is far from being consensual. There are theoretical perspectives that support different objectives: "some focus more on exploring the physical-perceptive characteristics of the space aimed at the observer's experience, while others defend its social and educational function by fostering work with communities" (Regatão, 2015, p. 67). The first debates on what is called public art date back to the late 19th century (Abreu, 2015a), although this is a concept whose main developments arise from a series of social, political and artistic movements and a paradigm shift triggered in the second half of the 20th century (Regatão, 2015). These trends, emerging in the second half of the last century, especially in the last decades, have definitively influenced the definition of contemporary public art. Borrowing, again, the words of Regatão (2015), who systematises the main premises of public art today, we can state that

> this concept describes the full range of artistic interventions, from sculpture to installation, from graffiti to performance (among other forms of expression), undertaken in (or related to) the public space, whose design rejects the traditional commemorative form and function, seeking to establish a specific relationship with the environment and the public. In other words, this concept marks the end of the era of the traditional public monument opening the way to a new aesthetic conception, where the participation and sensory perception of the spectator is increasingly requested as a constituent part of the work. (p. 73)

This definition is based on a thorough analysis of the evolution of public art as an artistic manifestation. We would also like to highlight the political dimension of its existence, implantation and permanence. Therefore, we will always have to consider that,

as Miles (1997) mentions in his very generic definition, public art encompasses "works commissioned for sites of open public access" (p. 5). This perspective emphasises the formalist dimension, considering a regulated art that is, therefore, dependent on the authorities' approval and management. This interpretation introduces a political vector insofar as it sees these manifestations as determinations "imposed from above".

This definition aligns with most artworks in the cities' public spaces. However, nowadays, we should consider the role played by non-canonical formats, borderline, unregulated, unpredictable and vernacular expressions, which often wander between the margin and the centre, between transgression and the socially legitimated. In other words, the public space is a ground where different desires for aesthetic expression may coexist, often revealing tensions. To public art, as a manifestation of commissioned works, we can oppose other gestures that arise unusually or even disruptively, challenging the dominant logic and cosmovisions. That is the case of what has fallen into the ambivalent category of urban art.

Several authors argue that urban art is a broad concept that includes different artistic expressions in urban space (Blanché, 2015; Campos & Câmara, 2019). This artistic expression, despite multiple influences, derives essentially from the urban graffiti of North American tradition, an essentially transgressive and illegal expression (Campos, 2010). However, since the beginning of the millennium, we have witnessed a gradual *artification* (Shapiro, 2019) and institutionalisation of graffiti and street art (Bengtsen, 2014; Schacter, 2014), giving rise to urban art increasingly seen as a form of public art (Campos, 2021). That means a growing proliferation of projects associated with graffiti and street art that are sometimes tolerated and sometimes sponsored by public entities. Thus, we witness a growing attempt to regulate and exploit this expression which is, as we said before, originally transgressive.

In the Portuguese context, municipalities have been particularly active in promoting urban art as public art (Campos, 2021; Campos & Barbio, 2021; Grondeau & Pondaven, 2018). On the national scene, Lisbon emerged as a pioneering municipality by creating, in 2008, the *Urban Art Gallery*, a project that gained national and international recognition, highlighting the importance of urban art for the revitalisation and embellishment of the city's public space. In this way, the potential of these expressions was proven at different levels: landscape, community, symbolic and economic.

Some of these urban art projects have been developed in underprivileged social and urban contexts, often marked by stigma and marginalisation (Campos et al., 2021; Raposo, 2018). Thus, urban art has been employed in urban embellishment and revitalisation processes, seeking not only to change the neighbourhoods' external image but also to favour inhabitants' self-esteem and improve the enjoyment of public space. Therefore, the community dimension of art is part of many of these ventures. This makes us wonder about the role of communities in producing works for public space.

2.3. Participation and Community Art

The participatory approach is, for many, a requirement of art that wants to be truly public (Abreu, 2015b; Andrade, 2020; Correia, 2013; Deutsche, 1992). José Guilherme Abreu (2015b) argues that for art to be truly public, it must involve the community. Other authors (Bishop, 2012; Carpentier et al., 2019; Catellano & Raposo, 2019) also emphasise the importance of community participation in political decisions about public space. They emphasise that projects should be created based "on systems of participatory democracy, contemplating the multiple existing voices" (Madeira & Gariso, 2016, p. 7) instead of imposing "a system of signification and intentionality to the urban space, aside from the public and democratic participation of non-specialists" (Fortuna, 2002, p. 127).

An important term in this discussion is the *new genre public art* created by Suzanne Lacy in 1994, where the author "defends this new genre of public art as essentially an activism, often created outside the institutional context, which takes the artist to a form of direct engagement and relationship with the audience while evoking political and social themes" (Catellano & Raposo, 2019, p. 9).

According to the authors previously mentioned, it is important to meet the communities in their usual places for socialising and debate, seeking, humbly and collaboratively, to understand their wishes and needs for the public space. Thus, we believe it is important to consider "the integration of art in the public space also from a social point of view" (Correia, 2013, p. 32), working to develop a sense of community and involvement in political decisions of the people who live in these places (Grodach, 2009; Kay, 2000). Mediation plays a very important role here.

The concept of cultural mediation has various interpretations — from the German term *Kulturvermittlung* and the French *médiation culturelle* — however, it generally refers to the process of "gaining and negotiating knowledge about the arts and social or scientific phenomena through exchange, reaction and creative response" (Mörsch & Chrusciel, 2012, p. 14). This article focuses on the French ideas. In the 1990s, a "Cultural Mediation of Art" school programme emerged at the University of Aix-Marseille. This programme was founded on the idea that art is often created from an individual act in opposition to the collective and is, for that reason, rarely accessible to a wider public in the absence of prior knowledge. This current was followed by authors such as Jean Caune (1992, 1999), who advocated the democratisation of culture and art. Accordingly, *médiation culturelle* is understood less as knowledge transmission and more as the act of forming relationships of mutual exchange among publics, works, artists and institutions. The aim of "*médiation culturelle* is to place the various different perspectives involved in relation to one another (...) focus on the individual perception of artworks by participants" (Mörsch & Chrusciel, 2012, p. 18). The point is not to fill in lacunae in understanding with specialised knowledge but to understand the lacunae as a point of departure for dialogue and aesthetic experience (Caune, 1999).

We believe this type of mediation, which values the dialogue between different agents, is essential for art projects in the public space. After all, public space is attended by people from different backgrounds and knowledge. In this article, we argue that

political powers should play a more active role in establishing dialogue and mediation with their citizens in developing their public spaces. Such actions "can strengthen people's commitment to places and their engagement in tackling problems, especially in the context of urban regeneration" (Matarasso, 1998, p. 74).

In the 1960s and 1970s, the concept of community art emerged within social movements and as a form of struggle against the institutionalisation of art (Melo, 2015). This art favours community participation in all artistic creation processes, inspired by the cultures and identities of a place that values the positive impact of social participation in the arts more than the final artistic result (Bishop, 2012).

It seeks to be a truly democratic art and is "as uncertain and precarious as democracy itself; neither are legitimated in advance but need continually to be performed and tested in every specific context" (Bishop, 2012, p. 284). The participatory dialogue between the producing agents and the local communities becomes even more pivotal, and "mediation has, in this context, an increased relevance" (Nogueira, 2010, p. 25).

The project we present below — *Meu Bairro, Minha Rua* — is built on a dialogue with local communities to listen to their problems regarding the public space and to develop solutions for them. By analysing the project's official discourse, we aim to show that this case can be a possible reference for further research in these areas since it demonstrates the Municipality's willingness for a relationship with the communities. However, its limitations and possible ways of improvement must be analysed.

3. Case Study: *Meu Bairro, Minha Rua*

3.1. Project Assumptions

The project *Meu Bairro, Minha Rua* (My Neighbourhood, My Street) was created in 2019 to solve micro-problems in the public space of 10 zones[2] in Vila Nova de Gaia through a participatory and co-creation methodology. This article focuses on two zones where murals were painted. They are the neighbourhoods of the Library and Cedro. This article is based on information available online (on the websites of the MG, www.cm-gaia.pt, and the project *Meu Bairro, Minha Rua*, www.meubairrominharua.pt) and on two interviews we conducted on October 26 and 27, 2022. The first interview was with the artist responsible for painting both murals, Nuno "Third" Palhas. The second was with the person responsible for the project *Meu Bairro, Minha Rua*, Cristiana Nóbrega, head of the multidisciplinary citizen support team at the MG. To write this article, we decided to rely on the information gathered by the *Meu Bairro, Minha Rua* team through surveys and informal conversations to show both the work undertaken by this team and their vision.

Meu Bairro, Minha Rua (Figure 1) is a project run by the MG, aimed at promoting citizens' engagement and active participation in public space management, and is

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[2] The term "zones" is used by the Municipality of Gaia when referring to the project *Meu Bairro, Minha Rua*. Each zone has about 1,000 residences around a public school.

divided into four stages: diagnosis, preparation/communication of proposals, implementation and monitoring.

Figure 1. *Logo of the project* Meu Bairro, Minha Rua, *the logo of Vila Nova de Gaia Municipality and the signature of the artist on the Library mural*

Credits. Ana Castro

According to the website of the MG (Câmara Municipal de Gaia, n.d.-a), this project:

> aims to contribute to creating a new way of community living through very close work with people, families and institutions, seeking to ensure that their concerns are synonymous with a process of permanent revitalisation participated by all. This project encompasses two areas of intervention which, though distinct, are inevitably inseparable: the material dimension, which includes small works in public spaces and the relational dimension, which promotes social cohesion and aims to create bonds of trust between citizens and institutions. (paras. 1–2)

Through the interview with Cristiana Nóbrega, it was possible to understand that this project is put into practice by the Multidisciplinary Citizen Support Team, which is the result of the Open Presidency sessions that "are moments when the Mayor visits each civil parish and talks to the people" (Nóbrega, personal interview, October 27, 2022). As the interviewee explains, since 2019, there have been two different services connecting the citizens of Gaia to the public authorities:

- *Presidente Direto* (Direct to Mayor) is a passive service: an email channel where people's concerns and complaints are received, classified and forwarded to the service concerned for resolution;
- *Meu Bairro, Minha Rua*, is an active initiative: a team of people who meet local people to learn about the communities' problems and, with their participation, seek to develop solutions to implement in the public space.

The head of the *Meu Bairro, Minha Rua* team, explained that each of the 10 neighbourhoods has a school as its anchor. Furthermore, once the school has been identified, a territory of approximately 1,000 residences is defined. The school and the surrounding area together form a "neighbourhood". Once the neighbourhood has been defined, questionnaires are sent to the community to establish its demographic composition. Once this preliminary work has been done, the first stage of the project begins, the diagnosis of each neighbourhood's needs:

> We talk to the chairpersons of the parish councils, the priest (if applicable), the school directors, and the shopkeepers (...), and we also listen to the residents. However, we also realised that it was important to listen to people who do not live there but use that space during the day. (...) The questionnaires are sent to people, and those who do not live there can answer through the website. (...) [These questionnaires are] built according to the reality of each space, without ever conditioning the answers. We have a feedback box where people can write what they would like to have available to use the public space more. Our intention here is that people use a space that may be less appealing currently. (Nóbrega, personal interview, October 27, 2022)

By analysing the two questionnaires for the zones mentioned above and according to Cristiana Nóbrega's explanation in the interview, we understand that these questionnaires changed through time. The first, in the Library zone, asked respondents to classify eight aspects of the surrounding public spaces — lighting, street cleanliness, waste collection, car circulation, pavements, walkways, parking and public transport availability — and in the following questionnaire, they added another topic: safety. After this classification, there is an open-ended question about how to improve the area surrounding the residences. It is followed by two close-ended questions about how they commute and use the public space. The project manager explains that the open-ended question is where they get more detailed information and where the mural painting was mentioned.

The second page of the questionnaire refers to specific places in each zone:

- Library: municipal auditorium, the municipal library and the municipal library garden
- Cedro: urban green spaces

These questionnaires also aim to understand each location's residents' and workers' habits in public zones and why they use these spaces. Here again, there is a feedback box where the user can write down what they would like to see improved in each of these places. The questionnaire ends with closed-ended questions such as "are you proud to be from Gaia?" or "do you relate to the neighbourhood where you live?" and other socio-demographic data questions.

The architect Francisco Saraiva, responsible for designing the space, refers in his interview with radio Antena 1 (GaiaTV Município, 2020a) that they "select a territory that had been identified with certain problems (...) and to solve them simply, also

respecting the local identity and doing so that people feel involved and feel that they are part of this place" (00:05:45).

This project follows the Ubuntu methodology, centred on local communities and using a participatory and democratic approach. As the website (www.academialidere-subuntu.org) of the Ubuntu Leaders Academy (n.d.) states, quoting Desmond Tutu: "my humanity is intrinsically linked to yours and, therefore, I am human because I belong, I participate and I share being in community. You and I are made for interdependence and to complement one another" (para. 1). Thus, this philosophy encourages participation and sharing to build a more democratic and participatory society.

When we questioned Cristiana Nóbrega (personal interview, October 27, 2022) about why they decided to adopt the Ubuntu philosophy, she replied that this project started by listening to people and understanding their physical needs for the public space. However, they quickly understood that there were also non-material problems, adding that "when we talk about transformation it is not only of the space, but also of the relational part". So they teamed up with the Padre António Vieira Institute, which has been running the Ubuntu Leaders' Academy since 2010. According to Cristiana Nóbrega, the Padre António Vieira Institute team has been working regularly in the municipality's schools to "transform from a very young age the awareness that the relationship is very important. (...) They develop many activities with businesses, involving young people in helping the elderly. There is a great community awareness here" (Nóbrega, personal interview, October 27, 2022). On this subject, she adds that "it makes a huge difference having Ubuntu with us" and that it is the glue that gives meaning to this project: "the relationship is created not only by providing a practical response to people's needs in the physical space but also by the relationships between people" (Nóbrega, personal interview, October 27, 2022).

In this same interview, Cristiana Nóbrega (personal interview, October 27, 2022) highlights the project stage she calls "transformation", which seems a good explanation of the essence and mission of the project *Meu Bairro, Minha Rua*:

> transforming is to truly collect people's contributions and step out into the field. (...) Here, when we talk about transformation, it is not only about the space but also about the relational part. Because when people realise that what they told us before is actually happening and is what they really need – that it is not just a project in an office without listening to the people – we are also transforming people who normally only complain, who do not feel any relationship with the public space, (...) to realise that after all, it is worth talking to the Municipality because we will endeavour, whenever possible, to meet their needs.

Nuno Palhas (personal interview, October 26 2022) did not know the Ubuntu philosophy before the MG invited him to participate in the project. He states that he became a fan of this methodology, adding that this type of project should "be part of almost all social services because many times people have problems because they do not have the

same easy access and the same knowledge that we have to look for information". He adds that he believes it is very important "to create this approach to places and to take care of the public space again" (Palhas, personal interview, October 26 2022).

After learning what moves the Citizen Support Team with the project *Meu Bairro, Minha Rua*, we tried to understand why they decided to include mural paintings in their interventions in the public space. It was explained to us that the Municipality proposed the first mural to the community and was not a proposal from the community to the municipality. Cristiana Nóbrega explains that "the mural was not originally planned", adding that it was something proposed by the Mayor "because it creates a very impactful transformation in the spaces" and that "it was something that as we were making the interventions, we realised made sense" (Nóbrega, personal interview, October 27 2022).

Finally, we asked those responsible for the project whether they usually monitor the project after the interventions. It was explained to us that the work never ends and that they constantly revisit the intervened places to understand the impact of the actions and the possible improvements that may be introduced in future actions. For example, in the case of the Librarary neighbourhood, after the intervention in the public space was finished, the Citizen Support Team returned to the place and realised that the community was interested in having gymnastics equipment in the public space, and the municipality went ahead with its installation. Cristiana Nóbrega (personal interview, October 27 2022) stresses the importance of this constant contact with the local communities and adds: "we only keep people close to us if we are constantly [in] dialogue with them".

3.2. Library Neighbourhood — Butterfly Mural

Meu Bairro, Minha Rua included a public space intervention pilot project in 2019 in the municipal library block. The mural by the artist "Third" was only executed in the summer of 2021.

From February to May 2019, questionnaires were submitted to residents and shop-keepers, the school community and the block's users. In the same stage, a focus group was, as can be read on the project website, held "where participants highlighted the main difficulties" (Meu Bairro Minha Rua, n.d.). The Mayor of Vila Nova de Gaia, Eduardo Vítor Rodrigues, underlines that the strategy for this project stems from understanding the problems and needs of the community to undertake then "micro-interventions that often do not have the magnitude of major projects, but have the magnitude of major consequences in people's lives" (GaiaTV Municipality, 2020b, 00:12:01).

After collecting the surveys' results and liaising with municipal services (works, security, environment, among others), studies and proposals were made to improve the public zones, "building solutions that meet the needs heard and promote participation and experience in the public space" (Meu Bairro Minha Rua, n.d., para. 5). In this diagnosis, the community did not express interest in a mural painting or the need for the rehabilitation of that wall. Cristiana Nóbrega (personal interview, October 27, 2022) states that "basically, we offered the first [mural], and from the moment that the first one

existed, people started talking. And now we already have chairpersons of parish councils wanting it in other places". She said that even in questionnaires to other communities, the request for mural painting in those zones began to emerge in the feedback box.

The proposals for improvement were presented in a public discussion open to the whole community. One of the ideas presented (Figure 2) in that session was painting a mural on the stairs leading to Parque 1.º de Maio street, in front of Almeida Garrett Secondary School.

Figure 2. *Draft of the Library neighbourhood intervention*

Source. From "Presidência Aberta Meu Bairro, Minha Rua", by Vila Nova de Gaia Municipal, 2019, p. 19, (https://www.cm-gaia.pt/fotos/editor2/meu_bairro/biblioteca/anexo_5.pdf). Copyright 2019 by Francisco Saraiva.

In the interview with Nuno Palhas, we sought to understand how he was invited to this project, how the communities were introduced to him and what he thinks about the paintings and the overall project. The artist explained to us that, for this first mural, he was told what the project *Meu Bairro, Minha Rua* consisted of and how it was based on Ubuntu values. According to him, the Municipality was keen to properly explain to him everything that the project involves, "from the interaction with the population, and the institutions helping people, helping neighbours", and he states that "this connection was the outset to start thinking about each project individually, but also as a collective" (Palhas, personal interview, October 26, 2022). Cristiana Nóbrega (personal interview, October 27, 2022) also highlights the fact that they wanted the artist to create something unique for each space:

> we always want people to develop an identity with the spaces. It is not just
> any space. That space was made for those people. (...) Deep down, it is
> also a little of themselves because they realise it was made for them. It was

not the design of an architect who thought of doing some nice things and putting them there without integrating the people.

The pandemic has put the plans for this project on hold. It was resumed in the summer of 2021 when the idea for the mural on the stairs (Figure 3) across the Almeida Garrett Secondary School was launched. Whenever Nuno Palhas (personal interview, October 26, 2022) plans to paint in public space, he tries to research the space where he will intervene, stating that he always looks for a middle ground between "creating something that does not distort [his] work, but that at the same time is well understood by people".

Figure 3. *Mural by "Third" in the Library neighbourhood, 2021*

Credits. Ana Castro

According to the website *Meu Bairro, Minha Rua*, the artist justifies the choice of the painting's theme:

> sunflowers, which I often depict, are seen as a sign of fortune and knowledge. Since this is a painting in my city and across the High School, I could not fail to represent them as a sign of growth, maturity, and wisdom. I also represent the elements of metamorphosis, the caterpillar that turns into a butterfly, which is also a reference to the expected and desired evolution in every human being. Knowing oneself and aspiring to transformation makes us capable of wanting more for ourselves and for those we see reflected in our own existence. (Meu Bairro Minha Rua, n.d., para. 16)

3.3. Cedro Neighbourhood — Washerwomen Mural

The second urban art mural (Figure 4, Figure 5 and Figure 6) created for this project was also painted in 2021 by the same artist, this time in the Cedro neighbourhood. In the presentation of this project stage (Câmara Municipal de Vila Nova de Gaia, n.d.-b) in November 2021, the Mayor of Vila Nova de Gaia, Eduardo Vítor Rodrigues, explained that the Ubuntu methodology was adopted to listen to the citizens. They began by making the diagnosis which, according to him, is a "work of proximity", which began in August 2019, intended to listen to people. The Mayor adds, "this listening is much more than a mere issue. It is an interpersonal relationship built from fieldwork that is truly door-to-door work" (GaiaTV Município, 2020b, 00:11:20).

Figure 4. *Washerwomen Mural, Cedro neighbourhood, 2021*
Crédits. Nuno "Third" Palhas

Figure 5. *Two sides of the Washerwomen Mural, Cedro neighbourhood, 2021*
Credits. Nuno "Third" Palhas
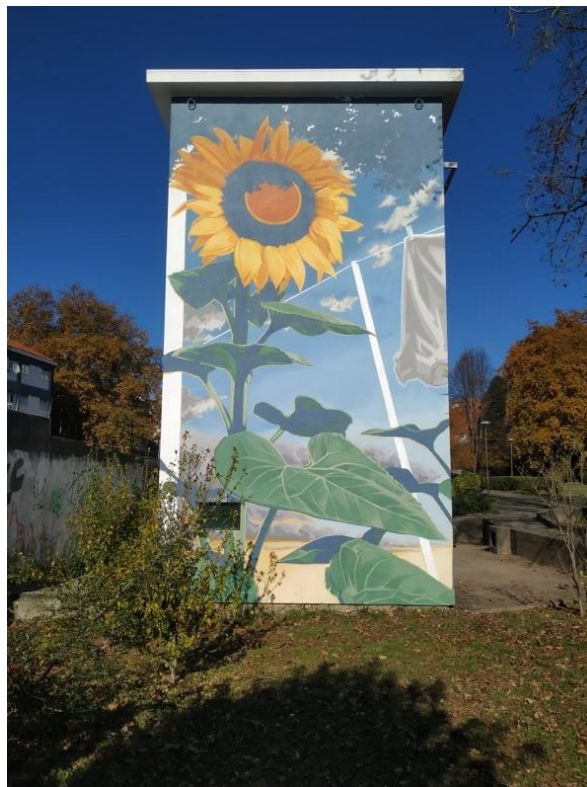
Figure 6. *Two sides of the Washerwomen Mural, Cedro neighbourhood, 2021*
Crédits. Nuno "Third" Palhas

The first step was to send out postal surveys to the residents, thus making it possible to compile the sample and understand their opinions about the surrounding area. The survey had participation of 27.3% of all residents. It was concluded that there was a need for improvements, such as the "construction of new public spaces and the maintenance (...) of the gardens and more" (GaiaTV Município, 2020b, 00:17:00). In this presentation of the project, the Mayor adds that "a paradigm shift is needed, and people deep down reflect that. We have a development model in the country (...) that is very much based on the moment of the inauguration" (GaiaTV Município, 2020b, 00:17:05). The project *Meu Bairro, Minha Rua* focuses, more than in the inauguration, on the pre and post interventions, involving communities in all these moments.

Regarding the urban art painting in this neighbourhood, Eduardo Vítor Rodrigues comments:

> we are talking about an experiment, an exploration, of strategies that we may have to fit some mandatory urban furniture, like the TS (electrical transformer station), (...) involving in interesting artistic dynamics, which can be, for example, resorting to some of our most extraordinary artists for urban design. (GaiaTV Município, 2020b, 00:41:48)

As mentioned above, the artist selected for this action was Nuno Palhas, better known as "Third", an illustrator and urban artist from Vila Nova de Gaia who has painted numerous murals nationwide. On the website of the project *Meu Bairro, Minha Rua*, the artist explains that he got inspiration from the popular neighbourhoods of the city, specifically in the Cedro neighbourhood:

> I sought to represent these memories of a simple daily life, which currently has other routines, but where the sense of community is kept alive. The dichotomy between past, present, and future is purposely diffused, expressed in the saturation of colour and the transition to faceted forms. I have again used the sunflower as a decorative element and symbol of fortune, as the strong neighbourly ties. (Meu Bairro Minha Rua, n.d.-b, para. 9)

In this case, being born and living in Gaia, apart from previous research, he also made connections to his own memories of those spaces. Nuno Palhas remembers when he studied at Almeida Garrett High School (in the Library neighbourhood) and climbed those stairs every day, and when he was young, he spent every day in the Cedro neighbourhood, where there were always clotheslines with clothes hanging. Based on this memory, he decided to depict a washerwoman hanging the sheets to dry while a dog jumped up to grab them.

> That idea inspired me to (...) try to recreate that garden from the past in the future. It is funny that sometime later a gentleman came up to me and said that he used to bleach his grandmother's clothes in that garden and that it was normal to have all the clotheslines in there (...) And so, that was also

funny because it was a coincidence that, from a memory that I had, also materialised in the connection of these people's collective memory. (Palhas, personal interview, October 26, 2022)

About the same mural, Cristiana Nóbrega (personal interview, October 27, 2022) also recalls conversations with the residents, stating that "people talk about what is on the wall" and that "it is immediately the motto for conversation and for sharing stories, memories and experiences, which the older people have a tremendous pleasure in passing on to the younger ones".

4. Conclusion

The expression "small interventions with a big impact on people's lives", used by Cristiana Nóbrega in her interview, encapsulates the mission of the project *Meu Bairro, Minha Rua* perfectly. By analysing the official speech of Vila Nova de Gaia Municipality about this project, we realise that the intention is to improve people's lives and increase the enjoyment of public places through micro-interventions. However, it is not possible to confirm that these actions have, in fact, the intended impact on the community's life. That would require further monitoring involving all stakeholders and an assessment by the resident communities.

In this article, we described the official perspective of the Municipality and the hired artist about their actions in the public space. Although we cannot assess the communities' real perceptions of these interventions, we believe that this case is an important reference for the research that may be developed on these topics. The project *Meu Bairro, Minha Rua* shows a predisposition of this municipality to develop a relationship with the communities, seeking, through mediation, to create an impact on their daily lives.

However, despite the municipality's good intentions and the commitment of the team involved, surveying the users of these murals is essential to understand what they think about these interventions in the public space. We could see, for example, that the first mural appeared not at the request of the communities but out of the Mayor's interest. Although Cristiana Nóbrega claims that the mural's impact was positive, it should be better evaluated to ensure unequivocal results. Considering the above, we believe it is important to survey those who use the intervened spaces, investing in external research on what local communities think about the work done. Only in this way will it be possible to understand the real perceptions of the people who use these places and thus measure the real impacts of the micro-interventions put in place by the MG.

As we have seen previously, there is a strong relationship between urban art and democracy. In the production processes of this art, it is important to create a constant dialogue between communities, political powers and artists. Art mediation has an added value in the public space, and the MG may develop community urban art projects that transform places at aesthetic and social levels. To this end, there should be community art projects that are socially committed and involve local communities in all stages of the project.

It was possible to conclude, according to the two interviewees' statements, that the community only participates in the initial surveys (in which they may or may not mention in the open-ended question that they want a mural painting) and in the open session, in which the Mayor presents the sketches of the whole project to be implemented in that zone. Regarding the murals, they had no say in who would be the artist or what would be the represented theme, nor did they see a sketch before the painting was done. As mentioned, the processes and the community's participation in producing community art should be more relevant than the final artistic result. Community participation, inspired by the cultures, identities, and histories of the place, should therefore be privileged to develop a truly public work of art, unique and with a strong meaning for that community.

Translation: Anabela Delgado

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Attachment, Participation and Territorial Co-production. The Mirada de Barrio Project in Santiago de Chile

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Abstract

The *Mirada de Barrio* (View From the Neighbourhood) project was developed by the Museo de la Solidaridad Salvador Allende between 2017 and 2019 to establish a new link between the museum and the neighbourhood where it is located: the República neighbourhood in Santiago de Chile. This paper addresses the territory's production modalities related to the actions implemented within this project's scope. In this way, we seek to contribute to a discussion that often overlooks the fact that territory is also a sensitive reality and that, consequently, it is important to include it among the focuses of observation of artistic mediation since it expresses one of its most powerful effects. Our methodology relies on the systematisation of experiences and self-ethnography tools, through which we analyse the direct participation of one of the authors in the process. The *Mirada de Barrio* project provided openness for the collective construction of territory, overcoming the sharing of what is sensitive, which prevails in forms of sociability characterised by mistrust, disregard for forms of appropriation other than private property, and affective disconnection with the inhabited territory. The new link between the neighbourhood and the museum, generated by effective participation, prompts practices of coexistence and cooperation through which a new form of territorial co-production emerges, one that considers sensitive and affective elements previously not consciously regarded by the residents in their daily life in the neighbourhood.

Keywords

attachment, territorial co-production, participatory curation, museum, territory

Afeção, Participação e Coprodução Territorial. O Projeto Mirada de Barrio, em Santiago do Chile

Resumo

O projeto *Mirada de Barrio* (Visão do Bairro) foi desenvolvido pelo Museo de la Solidaridad Salvador Allende entre os anos 2017 e 2019, com a finalidade de estabelecer um novo vínculo entre o museu e o bairro onde está localizado: o bairro República, da cidade de Santiago do

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Chile. Neste texto abordamos as modalidades de produção do território envolvidas no conjunto de ações implementadas no âmbito desse projeto. Com isso, buscamos contribuir para uma discussão na qual comumente se esquece que o território também é uma realidade sensível e que, consequentemente, importa incluí-lo entre os focos de observação da mediação artística dado que aí se expressa um de seus efeitos mais poderosos. Nossa metodologia é baseada na sistematização de experiências e em ferramentas provenientes da autoetnografia, através das quais analisamos a participação direta de um dos autores no processo. Afirmamos que o projeto *Mirada de Barrio* permitiu a abertura na construção coletiva do território, rompendo a partilha do sensível que se manifesta em formas de sociabilidade caracterizadas pela desconfiança, o descaso a outras formas de apropriação que não sejam a propriedade privada e a desconexão afetiva com o território que é habitado. Desta forma, o novo vínculo entre bairro e museu gerado por um processo de participação efetivo desencadeia práticas de convivência e cooperação através das quais se expressa uma nova forma de coprodução territorial que considera elementos sensíveis e afetivos, antes não conscientemente considerados pelos habitantes na sua vida cotidiana de bairro.

Palavras-chave

afeção, coprodução territorial, curadoria participativa, museu, território

1. Introduction

The *Mirada de Barrio* (View From the Neighbourhood) project was an intervention developed by the Museo de la Solidaridad Salvador Allende (MSSA) between 2017 and 2019. It aimed to establish a new link between the museum and the neighbourhood where it is located: the República neighbourhood in Santiago de Chile. Entitled *Curation and Participatory Enhancement Between the Barrio República and the Museo de la Solidaridad Salvador Allende*, the project's main goal was to develop a participatory process that would culminate in an exhibition of works from the museum's collection, and whose curation would be entrusted to the neighbourhood's residents. The project was funded by the Culture Funds of the National Council of Culture and the Arts.

The *Mirada de Barrio* project, and the sequence of actions stemming from it up to 2021, have just been the subject of an important publication by the MSSA. The book under the title Mirada de Barrio. *Arte y Participación Colectiva para Imaginar Territorios y Comunidades* (*Mirada de Barrio.* Art and Collective Participation to Imagine Territories and Communities; Martínez et al., 2022) includes a critical synthesis of the process and a detailed account of the activities developed during the period of action. This work provides essential background material for this article, complementing the experience of one of the authors, who was part of the project intervention team.

The intervention activated by the *Mirada de Barrio* project represents a novelty in contemporary Chile's artistic mediation landscape and museums (Peters, 2021). Although participation and interaction with audiences seem to be part of the agenda for cultural institutions developing artistic mediation practices (Morgado, 2018), it is somewhat unusual for Chile's national reality to prioritise interaction with territories. Hence the focus on its analysis and understanding.

Nevertheless, the interpretation proposed here does not focus on artistic mediation per se but rather on its territorial repercussions. In other words, we focus on the modalities of territory production inherent to all actions implemented within the scope of the *Mirada de Barrio* project. In this way, we seek to contribute to a discussion that often overlooks the fact that territory is also a sensitive reality and that, consequently, it is important to include it among the focuses of observation of artistic mediation since it expresses one of its most powerful effects. Our enquiry assumes that the project aimed to impact the neighbourhood (representing a territorial effect in itself). However, it could not identify all the dimensions or components of this territorial effect. That is why the analysis presented here may be relevant. Thus, it is worth noting that our analysis does not aim to encompass the entire intervention process but rather its territorial dimension in light of the particular conceptualisation we propose here.

The paper includes six sections. The first provides information about the República neighbourhood, the MSSA and the *Mirada de Barrio* project. The second section explains our methodology. The third and fourth sections address the theoretical elements underpinning our study, focusing on the intervention developed by the *Mirada de Barrio* project as a attachment device and on the analytical perspectives of territory. The fifth section analyses a selection of three project milestones: the research, the meetings and the exhibition, which will be addressed from the perspective of the territorial gestures involved in the intervention. Finally, the sixth section elaborates on the conclusions of our study, addressing the implications and learnings our work might provide for artistic mediation.

2. A Neighbourhood, a Museum, a Project

To begin our contextualisation, we must address the first territorial unit where the project under analysis will be implemented: the neighbourhood. In introducing this notion, it is important to explain that a neighbourhood is not an administrative category in Chile. Thus, although it is common in everyday and institutional language, the use of this designation stems from usage and convention, sometimes to become an organisational tool in municipalities. Such is the case of the municipality of Santiago, which has divided its territory based on neighbourhoods recognised in everyday use. One of these is the República neighbourhood, the location of the MSSA.

The República neighbourhood emerged in the late 19th century, when the then mayor of Santiago, Benjamín Vicuña Mackenna, decided to build a new neighbourhood for the wealthier families and built magnificent mansions and villas in different architectural styles. Vicuña Mackenna himself named the neighbourhood's streets after important foreign figures who contributed to Chile's development in politics, science and architecture. Closely related to this origin, in November 1992, the National Monuments Council declared three sectors of the neighbourhood as "zona tipica" (typical area): (a) the mansions of República avenue, located between Sazie and Gay streets; (b) Pasaje República, corner with General García; and (c) the Conjunto Virginia Opazo. This initiative was instrumental in creating the image of a historical neighbourhood for its inhabitants and the outside world (Zúñiga, 2017, p. 96).

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Regarding its demographic composition, the 2002 census reported that the República neighbourhood was home to approximately 6,048 inhabitants, 3,120 women and 2,928 men, with an age range between 20–44, which indicates that a large percentage of the sector's population are young people or young adults, a reality associated with its status as a university area, and also with the emergence of buildings for young families. Updating and detailing some of the characteristics of this demographic composition, the study *Evolución del Barrio Universitario de Santiago Como Campus Urbano Abierto: Desafíos y Oportunidades* (Evolution of the Santiago University Neighbourhood as an Open Urban Campus: Challenges and Opportunities) by Gustavo Munizaga (2008), states that in the approximately 400 hectares that make up the structure of the neighbourhood, a residential population of 25,640 people coexists with a population of 60,000 students. It should also be noted that the República neighbourhood is home to an important diversity of inhabitants (students, workers, immigrants, etc.) and social, economic and educational institutions (mostly higher education institutions, institutes and universities) that characterise life in the neighbourhood.

As for the museum, the MSSA's origins date back to the early 1970s. During the Unidad Popular government, the idea of creating a museum for the people of Chile emerged through the solidarity donation of works by artists from Europe and the Americas. As Zaldívar (2022) points out,

> the essence that its founders wanted to give it was different from the traditional conception of a museum. They sought to abandon the elitist position typical of hegemonic culture by bringing the plastic arts closer to the Latin American people, in a dynamic, lively manner, with cultural and educational purposes, of full democratic accessibility. (p. 9)

Soon after the coup of September 11, 1973, the MSSA suffered various forms of censorship and persecution and was forced to store the collection in private spaces, concealed and clandestine. In fact, the museum addresses the stages of "solidarity" (1971–1973) and "resistance" (1976–1990). With the return of democracy, the MSSA was reconfigured, settling in various places in Santiago until 2005, when it settled permanently in the Heiremans Palace in the República neighbourhood of Santiago.

The MSSA is located in this neighbourhood, although it is not a neighbourhood museum. Its collection includes works by internationally renowned artists such as Joan Miró, Alexander Calder, Frank Stella, Joaquín Torres-García, and Lygia Clark, among others. Its very name reflects a historical connection with a political project that persists. "Visitors to the museum usually believe that the space is dedicated to his (President Salvador Allende) memory, and are very surprised to see rooms filled with international works of modern and contemporary art" (García, 2022, p. 19).

This discrepancy between the museum and the territory where it is located, the neighbourhood, is one of the elements that triggered the origin of the *Mirada de Barrio* project. They sought to address this gap by revisiting one of the fundamental mottoes of the museum's initial stage: "to be at the service of its people". This purpose

> has recently resonated in the management and internal considerations of the museum team, prompting questions about how to unlock the museum's heritage (its collection), how to connect the experiences and insights of the works, and how to interact fluidly with its surroundings and be part of the lives of Santiago's inhabitants. (García, 2017, p. 26)

According to the form presented to the tender funds of the National Council of Culture and Arts of Chile, the *Mirada de Barrio* project was a research-action and a participatory curation seeking to rescue the accounts, experiences and stories of residents who form the intangible heritage of Barrio República. Moreover, how it relates to the artistic and symbolic heritage of the Museo de la Solidaridad Salvador Allende.

The perspective that inspired the proposal was a faithful reflection of the debates in contemporary museology: "the ideal expression of the new paradigm is a museum that genuinely opens its narrative to obtain a content co-created from the relationship with its users" (Meijer-van Mensch, 2009, as cited in Bastidas & Vargas, 2012, p. 13).

Participatory curation and the various modalities of research-action in the museological field (Arrieta, 2008; Bennett, 2005; Pinochet, 2016) are based on the assumption that the intervention of artistic programmes and local cultural spaces activates processes of neighbourhood revitalisation and generates new synergies between them and their community (Peters, 2021). Museums can transform how a neighbourhood or territory's cultural heritage and memories are produced and activated.

As Bastidas and Vargas (2012) point out,

> the true essence sought in contemporaneity, [is] the museum [that] lives for its publics, co-creates its scripts, is no longer the holder of a hegemonic truth, but rather that becomes a space of communication and relationships (...) the museum now cares about including its publics in all aspects (...) until it truly becomes an agent of inclusion and social change. (p. 14)

Furthermore, the work of these authors is a faithful reflection of the relevance that the search for methodologies enabling a virtuous articulation between museums and their communities has recently acquired, without underestimating the complexity involved in this relationship.

Essentially, the *Mirada de Barrio* project sought to generate a link between the museum, the community and the territory through research, action, participation and curation.

The project was planned in three stages. The first involved researching and systematising the historical and cultural value of the República neighbourhood and the Heiremans Palace (the building that houses the MSSA). At this stage, the mediation strategies for participatory curation were adjusted, and the work of dissemination with the neighbourhood's residents was initiated. A survey was also conducted in the neighbourhood to learn about local people's perceptions of the museum. During the second stage, talks with residents were held inside and outside the museum, aimed at recognising and identifying the neighbourhood's tangible and intangible heritage. This stage

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initiated the participatory valuation of these heritages and the MSSA's art collection. An audiovisual record was also made to systematise the research process and the participation of people living in the neighbourhood (presented in a documentary in the final exhibition). The third stage, funded with MSSA's resources and scheduled for April 2018, included a three-month exhibition on its premises where the research findings, the curatorial work among the neighbours and the MSSA Public Area team, and the mediation programmes planned specifically for the project were presented.

3. Methodology

As previously mentioned, one of researchers participated in the formulation of the *Mirada de Barrio* project and then joined as a methodological advisor during its two-year duration. We approached this author's experience collaboratively using the tools of systematisation of experiences and self-ethnography.

Regarding the first, we understand it as a process aimed to "understand the meaning and logic of the complex process an experience entails, to extract learning. It aims to understand why this process is developing or has developed in a certain way, critically interpreting what has been done and achieved" (Chávez-Tafur, 2006, p. 10). The relevance of this methodology makes it possible to visualise, from a critical point of view, and pointing the rights and wrongs, the significant experiences, even if they were small-scale and local (Ortega et al., 2009). Thus, systematisation is a tool that provides alternatives and original ways to respond to a problem rather than pursuing known strategies or the so-called "incrementalism" mentioned by Pelfini (2007).

Systematisation aims to document and systematise practices so that lessons can be learned. It involves using various materials and procedures, such as documentation, archives and participant interviews. In this case, we resorted to the documents that the participant author had available (work notebook, emails, administrative reports) and, as we said in the introduction, to the book Mirada de Barrio. *Arte y Participación Colectiva para Imaginar Territórios y Comunidades* (Martínez et al., 2022). Among other valuable elements, this book includes a complete record book of all the actions carried out within the project and beyond, from 2020 to 2021, and notes of all the weeks and months of development, which makes it precious material for our systematisation.

The material was examined from the experience of the author-participant and through a dialogue with this paper's co-authors. Accordingly, we drew on tools from both self-ethnography (Blanco, 2012a, 2012b) and collaborative ethnography (Herrera Bautista et al., 2021). Regarding self-ethnography, we recover some of its central elements: understanding that the researcher himself is part of the study and that it is a narrative way of generating knowledge. Concerning collaborative ethnography, our dialogue focused on addressing the "technical-practical dimension" (Herrera Bautista et al., 2021) of the experience developed by the author-participant as a triangulation strategy.

We believe that the methodological procedure developed enables us to assess the performance of the MSSA team, the behaviours of the neighbourhood residents and

the territorial effects of the project, with the virtues and defects of the tools mentioned, and with the awareness that our reference material does not represent an impact assessment of the project developed, as has been done in Chile on other interventions (Ossandón et al., 2019).

4. Attachment Device

To account for the intervention conducted within the *Mirada de Barrio* project, we consider it pertinent to resort the discussion proposed elsewhere (Campos & Dupré, 2021). There we propose to understand the intervention device as a heterogeneous and dynamic group of mediators who seek to generate a transformation in the dispositions of the subjects and populations on which they intervene, particularly about how they perceive, conceive, and emotionally attach to their neighbourhoods (Campos & Dupré, 2021, p. 286). According to Foucault (2001), the device refers to a heterogeneous network of elements intertwined in power relations and including a wide range of elements, such as "discourses, institutions, architectural arrangements, regulations, laws, administrative measures, scientifc statements, philosophic propositions, morality, philanthropy" (p. 299). For the sake of our argumentation, we attenuate the focus on disciplining and governmentality, typical of this author's notion of the device, and emphasise three characteristics, following García's proposal (Fanlo, 2011). Firstly, a device articulates discursive and non-discursive elements (normative, institutional, and practical); secondly, it seeks to guide the individuals' behaviours; and thirdly, it operates through the intervention of spaces, which has effects on territory and people.

Furthermore, we believe the emphasis on the attachment is relevant since the change intended to generate in the subjects refers, fundamentally, to their dispositions to perceive, conceive and emotionally connect with the neighbourhood: we seek to transform it into a territory of affections and not to linger on the idea of a Cartesian space but to move forward in a conception that is "far beyond the material and the tangible" (Aubán, 2017, p. 77).

It would be useful to evoke here the theory of attachment developed by Hennion (2005, 2013) and Gomart and Hennion (1999) for the study of taste in the cultural sphere since its focus is on the configuration of a "taste", a "love for", a "fondness" and an "attachment" (Berroeta et al., 2017). The French word *attachement* combines those meanings and is the cornerstone of Hennion's conceptualisation.

Within this author's perspective, the production of taste — and any attachment — involves multiple and diverse mediators, among which it is worth mentioning human beings, but also institutions, collectivities and objects, whose ability to act is recognised (Hennion, 2013, p. 7).

So, it seems appropriate to understand the intervention developed by *Mirada de Barrio* as a device of attachment insofar as it seeks to create a new link between the neighbourhood and the museum through a series of recursive actions on the neighbourhood's residents to generate a new territory progressively.

5. Sensitive Territory. Three Analytical Perspectives on the Notion of Territory

We say "a new territory" because, in line with Deleuze and Guattari (1980), we argue that it is established by the emergence (and through it) of forms of expression: "it is the emergence of materials of expression (qualities) that will define territory" (p. 387) and that its production is directly related to the emergence of sensitive indicators: the territory is essentially characterised by "indicators", and these indicators "are taken from components of all kinds of origins" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1980, pp. 386–387). From these authors' perspective, territory behaves as a bundle of sensitive qualities that can shape the inhabited environment and the occupants of that environment.

Besides the character and variety of the elements that influence the production of the territory, its complexity stands out. The dynamism of these elements highlights the historical condition of the territory. However, the above should not make us lose sight of the fact that territory is the product of "thousands and thousands of systems of relations that go on weaving a network of fragile balances that can be dissolved at any moment" (Aubán, 2017, p. 79).

This conceptualisation of territory suggests that its very essence is sensitive, emotional, and affecting. However, its behavioural dynamic is not perceived in it. At this point, it is worth using the synthesis proposed by Arzeno (2018), who states that the notion of territory has been approached in three main forms: as a force field, as an appropriated space and as a manifold experience.

As a force field, territory refers to the "space projections of certain social relations" (Arzeno, 2018, p. 7) that are directly related to power relations. Relations that define, delimit and qualify the space. As such, it should be noted that Simmel (1908/2014), in his analysis of the dialectics between space and society, had stated that "the boundary is not a spatial fact with sociological effects, but a sociological fact with a spatial form". However, "when it became a spatial and sensitive product, into something that we draw in nature irrespective of its sociological and practical significance, this exerts a retroactive influence on the consciousness of the relationship between the parties" (Simmel, 1908/2014, p. 552).

As appropriated space, the conceptualisation of territory "emphasises the appropriation of space by a particular group and the identity constructed in this appropriation and towards an 'other', usually through conflict" (Arzeno, 2018, p. 8).

Finally, for the conceptualisation of territory as a manifold experience, Arzeno (2018) draws fundamentally on Haesbaert and states that

> unlike the previous conception, which emphasises the dimension of a group's appropriation of space, [what is worth highlighting here is that] every territory is, at the same time and to a different extent, the object of appropriation and/or domination to a different degree by different groups. (p. 9)

This means that multiple territories and powers usually coexist in the same space; this is how multi-territoriality is expressed. Thus, it is important to highlight that

territoriality refers to "an individual or group's attempt to affect, influence or control people, phenomena and relations by delimiting and asserting control over a geographical area. This area will be called territory" (Haesbaert, 2011, p. 74).

Following the above, it is possible to resume the focus of our text, namely, to measure the territorial effects of the *Mirada de Barrio* project's intervention. Based on the previous statements about the attachment device and the conceptualisation of the territory we reviewed, it is possible to identify the territorial consequences involved in the project's operations. The next section addresses this topic.

6. Analysis: Recursive and Multiform Intervention

Our analysis will focus on the period during which the project was set to be executed, 2017–2019, particularly how the stages outlined in the original proposal materialised. As previously mentioned, the project was planned in three stages: the first, for researching and systematising information about the neighbourhood, featuring a survey within the neighbourhood; the second, for developing meetings with the neighbourhood residents, inside and outside the museum, to recognise and identify the neighbourhood's tangible and intangible heritage; and the third, for the participatory exhibition. In order to simplify our account, we will refer to these three stages as "research", "meetings" and "exhibition". We will analyse each one through the lenses offered by the attachment device. Following the above, the approach to these three stages aims to identify their territorial effects.

6.1. Research in the Neighbourhood: Territorial Openness and Confidence Building

The underlying motivation for applying a survey was identifying how residents felt about their neighbourhood and the MSSA. The aim was to obtain relevant information to establish general guidelines for the museum team's actions. The survey was applied between April 22 and 29, 2017, by part of the project team and volunteers until 318 responses were obtained.

The survey questionnaire is frequently used to address the understanding of a cultural institution's audience and support loyalty strategies (Morgado, 2018). Its use as a neighbourhood diagnosis and as an instrument of insertion in the territory is less frequent among cultural organisations.

The survey implementation involved coordinating the research team, organising them into groups under the responsibility of a leader and participating in a training workshop. It should be noted that the people who conducted the survey were more than just receivers of the information provided by the respondents. They also became transmitters and translators of information about the existence and profile of the museum in the reverse direction: from the museum to the respondents. In fact, among the most striking data (although expected) was the evidence that most residents knew of the museum (61.5%), but most of them thought it was a historical museum and related to politics.

However, the survey does not report how many of these people knew about the museum through the research process, how many said it was a museum with an important art collection, or how many knew where it was located and what its opening hours were.

Therefore, the action of the research team can be considered an opening of the museum in the territory, which increases the availability of information about the museum in the neighbourhood and not only the information about the neighbourhood the museum has, as was its goal.

This territorial gesture of openness is coherent with a conceptualisation of territory as a force field insofar as the research seeks to measure and understand the distribution of certain territorial magnitudes. As we have recently remarked, the museum is inscribed in the territory as an operating force that signals its presence. Hence, the museum: (a) recognises the territorial developments with which it coexists and, in a certain way, appropriates them; (b) seeks to understand the field of forces where it is inscribed and, in doing so, introduces itself to the neighbourhood's inhabitants; and (c) makes them prone to be affected, while (d) the MSSA team builds confidence in its knowledge of the territory and outlines its strategy for action according to how forces are inscribed in the neighbourhood's territory.

6.2. Meetings With the Neighbourhood: Opennesses and Withdrawal; Appropriation and Disappropriation

The information from the survey made it possible to outline a diagnosis of the residents' perceptions of the museum and their neighbourhood. This material became an instrumental platform for activating the dialogue in the cycle of meetings planned as the next step. For clarity, we will refer only to the first six meetings.

The first meeting with the neighbourhood residents was held on May 13, 2017, over breakfast at the MSSA premises. The research findings were presented, and the project's goal to generate a collective exhibition was explained. A map of the neighbourhood was placed on a large table, and everyone chatted and enjoyed breakfast together around it in a kind of informal collective mapping. The residents had the chance to narrate personal stories about the neighbourhood, cite personal landmarks and share their perceptions of the neighbourhood and the villa that houses the museum.

Between the first and second meetings, the MSSA team set up in Manuel Rodríguez Square, the neighbourhood's main green area, with a portable table and a large-format map of the neighbourhood to engage with the residents. This initiative was held over two days in three-hour sessions on June 6 and 8, 2017. Pencils and paper cards were among the materials used, and people were invited to intervene on the map. That allowed for friendly, interesting conversations that were highly valuable for the project. Each participant received information about the museum, an invitation to visit it, and a personal invitation to participate in the next meeting.

The second meeting was held on June 15, 2017, at the Divinas Tentaciones coffee shop, at 1924 Domeyko street, at 7:00 pm. A welcoming space was chosen to build trust

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and thus share stories about the neighbourhood, as each participant was asked to bring an object with emotional value that expressed their connection with the neighbourhood. We engaged in group talks and ate together. Also, some participants gave a dance performance. The talks provided a valuable contribution to the participatory curation narrative.

The third meeting with residents was held on August 3, 2017, at the MSSA premises, at 7:00 pm. The progress of the research on the neighbourhood was presented in four thematic axes: "memory", "silences/sounds", "conflicts and disputes", and "meeting places". Around these axes, co-creation workshops were developed with the participants, according to a mediation dynamic planned by the MSSA team.

The work in the "memory" axis addressed the history of the República neighbourhood through the participants' memories. The goal was to ponder on the heritage value of the neighbourhood and highlight the stories relating to their biographical trajectories.

The second axis was called "silences/sounds". Here, the highlight was the story of a group of neighbours who addressed how the military dictatorship produced silences or, directly, logics of fear in the neighbourhood. Some of them recalled that in some houses, one was not allowed to take pictures or to stop for a long time due to the presence of the dictatorial regime's secret police. In fact, the property where the MSSA is located was the headquarters of this secret police. On the other hand, the dimension of the sounds addressed more contemporary issues: residents identified specific corners and streets as abandoned and characterised by constant noise and disturbance.

The "conflicts and disputes" axis allowed for the free and fluid expression of many of the residents' impressions about the problems afflicting the neighbourhood, such as garbage, the behaviour of university students who move around in numbers, the significant growth in immigration and overcrowding in risky conditions and the growth of the real estate, among other issues.

Finally, the axis "meeting places" was used to identify places of emotional value for the participants. The accounts revolved mainly around moments of sociability that make up a common neighbourhood history.

The fourth meeting with residents was held on August 28, 2017, on the premises of the MSSA. It aimed to discuss the exhibition planned for the closure of the project and was entitled "De la idea al clavo" (from idea to brick and mortar). The aim was to show, on-site, the different elements that a real exhibition involves; therefore, we took the opportunity to observe the process of setting up an exhibition ready to open. They then worked in groups to address the question of what would be shown in an exhibition. At the end of the meeting, the project team wondered if the residents really wanted to make an exhibition of the museum's collection.

The fifth meeting, held throughout November 2017, materialised in an audiovisual record of emblematic places and buildings in the neighbourhood. "The records were made from the residents' accounts, their memories of the past and the meanings these places provide a neighbourhood life today" (Martínez et al., 2022, p. 181).

Several territorial gestures are involved in this sequence of meetings between the MSSA team and the neighbourhood residents. We observe territorial openness and withdrawal moments as the museum team meets the neighbourhood and allows

neighbourhood residents to enter the museum. From the perspective of territory as an appropriated space, it is possible to conceive that this series of territorial gestures challenges the neighbourhood territory's "appropriated space" condition. That is because the invitations to access the museum and the development of activities inside the building that houses it, and the excursions outside the museum to places meaningful to the life of the neighbourhood, bringing the museum's own materials, imply a tacit challenge to the social topology of the neighbourhood and its logic of delimitation and planning.

Using objects as biographical connectors of meaning with the neighbourhood is another relevant territorial gesture. It is about showing that the territory's signature does not just stem from large processes, such as the construction of towers and buildings, but also from microscopic actions in which each of its inhabitants plays a relevant role. This highlights that the neighbourhood is not only an expression of the logic of power or force but also a sensory and affective record that speaks to us in a personal, and sometimes intimate, language, but this does not mean it cannot build bridges to others. Quite the opposite, the biographical imprint on the territory is a source of collective recognition.

On the other hand, acknowledging common issues affecting the neighbourhood dynamics is another important territorial gesture. That is because it assumes that each inhabitant shows himself/herself as a person affected by something that is his/her own (rubbish problem, memory of the dictatorship, emotional value attached to the square where he/she had the first kiss, etc.). Showing this way allows others also to be affected by the same issues, giving rise to a kind of "community of attachment". The territory emerges, thus, as a collection of common sensitive indicators.

A particularly relevant aspect refers to the doubt felt by the MSSA team at the end of the fourth meeting. The question that resonates is whether an exhibition using the museum's collection is the right thing to do. What finally happens is that the team decides to change this aspect and decides to work with materials produced by the neighbourhood's residents themselves. A significant change from the original idea but very consistent with the principles that guided the project. This territorial gesture can be understood as an entry of the neighbourhood into the museum, a clear expression of the dialogic modelling involved in a participatory curation that takes the value of its stakeholders seriously.

Finally, the territorial gesture of starting a photographic record of the most emblematic places in the neighbourhood from the homes of neighbours is very important to highlight the relevance of personal and unique experiences and biographies in territory production. A powerful way to show this microscopic production of the territory and very educational to highlight the diversity of events that make up this territory. It also illustrates the diversity of forms of appropriation in the neighbourhood, leading to greater awareness of the multiplicity of experiences it holds.

6.3. Exhibition *Haciendo Barrio*. Attachment, Participation and Territorial Co-Production

The exhibition was open from September 1, 2018, to February 3, 2019. The exhibition catalogue, available at Vilches (2018), highlights in its opening text, written by and for the residents of the neighbourhood:

> *Haciendo Barrio* is an opportunity to explore, acknowledge and recognise ourselves in the experiences, emotions, knowledge, affections, oral and written stories that inhabit the República neighbourhood. The title was collectively chosen because it represents the feeling and the desire of the community that has participated in these two years of meetings and workshops. From the works produced in collaboration and dialogue with the República neighbourhood residents, the participants in the workshops of creative writing, photographic intervention, community textile, experimental publication, postcard art with children, the artists and the staff of the Museo de la Solidaridad Salvador Allende (MSSA), we sought to share and contribute to the common life of our neighbourhood. (p. 4)

In fact, the exhibition assembled and displayed a huge variety of materials, all of which stemmed from the work developed in the various workshops held as part of the project and not from the MSSA's collection, as originally planned in the project formulation. Photographs, textiles, postcards, bookbindings, drawings, collages, and a video documentary, among others, were displayed in different rooms of the MSSA along with sections of the survey used in the research, the maps the residents created in the workshops with *iconoclasts*, and a wall-sized diagram of the museum's transformation process over the two years of the project: *MSSA En Transformación*. As such, the exhibition sought to respect the diversity of processes and the plurality of voices involved in participatory curation, exhibiting almost all the products created by the residents without establishing distinctions or hierarchies but showing them according to their singularities, varieties and differences.

Furthermore, true to the values that encouraged participatory curation, the exhibition sought to account for the entirety of subjects involved in the creative and productive processes. Again, it refers to their singularities and roles in such processes without establishing hierarchies. In this sense, it is worth highlighting that the exhibition catalogue closes with a kind of word cloud with the participants' names in the project's different activities, giving an account of the collectivity involved.

In this summary of the *Haciendo Barrio* (Making Neighbourhood) exhibition's characteristics, we again identify a series of territorial gestures. First of all, it is worth mentioning the name of the exhibition itself, which is interesting for several reasons, including the use of the verb "to make" to underline that the neighbourhood and neighbourhoods are productions, results of doing and not pre-defined entities alien to intentional transformation. Also relevant is the use of the gerund, emphasising the ongoing and permanent condition of this doing and not anchoring it in a specific moment. The absence of an explicit grammatical subject, a "we" or "the residents", is also interesting. We believe this suggests that a plurality of agents — agencies or stakeholders — beyond the group of residents mobilised by the project is involved in the "making of the neighbourhood". A collectivity that can expand or shrink but which, like the making, is ongoing.

Secondly, we should highlight the last words of the previously mentioned text, stating that, with the exhibition, the residents seek to "share and contribute to the common life of our neighbourhood" (Vilches, 2018, p. 4). At least two issues stand out here:

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(a) that an exhibition in a museum is conceived as a tool to participate in the production of the neighbourhood and that, (b) this tool contributes to the life in common. The acknowledgement of this "common" is not trivial. Going back to the conceptualisation developed by Rancière (2009), we can see that the production of the exhibition, and the whole process involved, subvert the distribution of the sensible, the established roles and hierarchies to participate in the definition and production of the common. In territorial terms, we can say that a process of common re-appropriation of the neighbourhood is generated.

Thirdly, the magnitude and diversity of the exhibition itself, with such a large amount of materials on display and such a large number of rooms and exhibition spaces, represents a real recognition of territory as a manifold experience. The exhibition thus becomes a space to experience the variety of territories and their intersections.

Finally, it is worth considering that the exhibition is, in itself, an active force in the territory. A force that erupts in the fabric of the neighbourhood, modulated by a plurality of artistic expressions. A force that does not even aspire to eternity since it has a beginning and an end date, which also demonstrates the dynamism of the forces that give shape and life to a neighbourhood.

7. Conclusions

The *Mirada de Barrio* project questioned how the MSSA related to its community and territory and did so in line with the debates in contemporary museology, which aspire to open museum narratives to the co-construction with their users (Bastidas & Vargas, 2012). By implementing this particular participatory curation, the MSSA introduced to the neighbourhood a conception of culture much closer to everyday life and practical experimentation of the territory much closer to the subjective experience of the residents.

Through the direct link with the territory, the community, and the neighbourhood, *Mirada de Barrio* unveils the co-productive and creative processes of cultural practice, incorporating the historical processes that have been part of the creation of both the neighbourhood and the MSSA.

This paper addressed the territory's production modalities in the actions implemented within the *Mirada de Barrio* project. Our goal was to contribute to an element generally forgotten in the considerations about artistic mediation, such as the fact that territory is a sensitive reality whose production takes multiple forms.

In our analysis, we resorted to the figure of the "territorial gesture" recovering approaches made elsewhere (Silva et al., 2020). We stated that gestures are usually associated with non-verbal communication materialised through corporeality or movement. However, it is auspicious to consider them beyond human corporeality, a practical orientation towards an objective or goal:

> gestures connect bodies and also objects, and can affect us by encountering and transmitting this meaning and symbolism [but can] go beyond the gesture contained in the human agent (…) gestures are not limited to their

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humanity, they can exist in the flow between human and non-human components. (Silva et al., 2020, pp. 130–131)

The concept of "territorial gesture" proved fruitful from an analytical point of view to highlight the territory's action capacity and the need to actively and consciously consider its role in the processes activated in the *Mirada de Barrio* project. It also allowed us to highlight the capacity to produce territory that any action has, however microscopic it may be. The denomination "territorial gesture" effectively accounts for the affective and affecting dynamics inherent in the conceptualisation of territory that we have outlined here.

In fact, the gestures of openness and withdrawal are useful to account for the recursive character of any mediation dynamics and to show how the territories enter and, in a certain way, are "embodied" by the intervention teams. This stands out in the MSSA team's feeling of confidence after the survey application. It is also apparent in the changes to the exhibition's initial proposal included in the project when the MSSA team, after the fourth meeting, decides to work with materials produced by the neighbourhood residents. We believe this is a lesson worth considering in contemporary debates on artistic mediation.

The gestures of openness and withdrawal are also relevant to understanding the forces and magnitudes operating in the territory and the multiple dynamics of appropriation involved in shaping the neighbourhood experience. Appropriation is always a process (Campos & Soto, 2016) and is never fully resolved. There are always processes of de-appropriation and re-appropriation activated by sometimes very subtle forms of affecting (like visiting a house or retrieving a forgotten object), which trigger a new way of connecting ourselves to the territory. The participatory curation of *Mirada de Barrio* reminds us that the social topology of the neighbourhood and its logic of delimitation and planning are based on affective dynamics, sometimes in a state of latency.

Moreover, it seems that this delimitation and planning reflect forms of collective recognition that can be shaken (modified) by an exercise of memory and dialogue, allowing the acquaintance of others and their experiences also inscribed in the neighbourhood. In their reiteration, these dialogues and memory exercises may become powerful producers of community: a community of affections and affects.

Therefore, it is plausible to consider territorial gestures as useful tools for understanding how a collectivity — such as that formed by the neighbourhood residents during the *Mirada de Barrio* project — can be extended or downsized, expanded or shrunk. That involves recognising the territory's manifold experiences, legitimacy, value and ability to participate in the production of the common.

The *Mirada de Barrio* project provides an example of much of the contemporary debates in the field of museology and artistic mediation. The lessons we have systematised and reflected upon here allow us to consider the relevance and usefulness of these disciplinary fields to understand that their practices are always territorially situated, which means that they intervene on sensitive, affective, relational and memorial coordinates (to mention only some of those addressed here).

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Territorial gestures addressed at the neighbourhood scale can contribute to discussions on museology and artistic mediation on at least three levels: first, regarding the centrality exerted by the trust built upon in establishing an affective regime favourable to cooperation and the positive valuation of the neighbourhood territory; second, that the forms of appropriation are multiform and that, in this type of interventions, they take on microscopic forms with strong subjective involvement; third, that by redefining the modes of cooperation, new practices of territorial appropriation are also triggered; fourth, that the affective involvement and the activation of cooperation entail the establishment of a high expectation of participation, which stands against the forms of manipulation and is set very close to the citizen control that defines what is valuable and what is common.

Translation: Anabela Delgado

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The Mediating Possibilities of Art: A Case Study on Artistic Experience and Theatre Participation of People with Visual Impairment

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Abstract

This article draws on the experience of implementing a project of inclusion through art — *A Meu Ver* (In My View) — by a professional artistic structure in theatre in the city of Coimbra: O Teatrão. It is a three-year theatre training and practice project for people with blindness or low vision, funded by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation and La Caixa Foundation under the *Partis & Art for Change* programme. The project combines training and intervention in the cultural space of Coimbra. The aim was to analyse and rethink the possible roles of artistic education in cultural mediation, as an intervention model, between the entity O Teatrão and a group of disabled people, traditionally out of the artistic circuits. This research privileged a qualitative approach, conducting a case study of exploratory nature, which took place between October 2021 and August 2022. The data reported here were collected through four data collection techniques: participant observation, questionnaire survey, semi-structured interviews and focus group. By demonstrating the importance of the artistic creation experience in recomposing disabled people's identities, the project stimulates the deconstruction of disability conceptions based on the individual model and promotes a social concept of disability. In bringing together visually impaired people and Teatrão professionals, *A Meu Ver* demonstrates that the problems of disabled people do not derive from their impairments but from the dominant forms of social organisation and culture. This deconstruction made it possible to analyse the individual impacts of the project for its direct participants and to highlight possible cultural mediation formats for developing projects with this approach in the cultural sector.

Keywords

cultural mediation, artistic practice, disability, cultural participation

As Possibilidades Mediadoras da Arte: Um Estudo de Caso Sobre Experiência Artística e Participação Teatral de Pessoas com Deficiência Visual

Resumo

Este artigo tem por base a experiência de implementação de um projeto de inclusão pela arte — *A Meu Ver* — por uma estrutura artística profissional da área do teatro da cidade de Coimbra: O Teatrão. Trata-se de um projeto de formação e prática teatral de pessoas cegas ou com baixa visão, com uma duração de três anos, financiado pela Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian e pela Fundação La Caixa, no âmbito do programa *Partis & Art for Change*. Este projeto agrega uma vertente de formação a uma vertente de intervenção no espaço cultural da cidade de Coimbra. O objetivo foi analisar e reequacionar os possíveis papéis da educação artística na mediação cultural, entendida como modelo de intervenção, entre a entidade O Teatrão e um grupo de pessoas com deficiência, tradicionalmente mais afastadas dos circuitos artísticos. A presente investigação privilegiou uma abordagem qualitativa, realizando um estudo de caso, de carácter exploratório, que decorreu entre outubro de 2021 e agosto de 2022. Os dados aqui reportados foram coletados através de quatro técnicas de recolha de dados: observação participante, inquérito por questionário, entrevistas semiestruturadas e grupo focal. Ao visibilizar a importância da experiência de criação artística na recomposição identitária das pessoas com deficiência, o projeto estimula a desconstrução de conceções da deficiência alicerçadas no modelo individual e fomenta uma conceção social da deficiência. O *A Meu Ver*, ao juntar pessoas com deficiência visual e profissionais do Teatrão, demonstra que os problemas das pessoas com deficiência não derivam das suas incapacidades, mas sim das formas de organização social e da cultura dominantes. Esta desconstrução permitiu-nos analisar os impactos individuais do projeto para os seus participantes diretos e evidenciar formatos de mediação cultural possíveis para o desenvolvimento de projetos com esta abordagem no setor cultural.

Palavras-chave

mediação cultural, prática artística, deficiência, participação cultural

1. Introduction

Our understanding of disability stems from the social and cultural dynamics established in each historical and geographical context. However, the different experiences of disability and the condition of being identified as a disabled person in each historical and geographical moment have a common feature: the oppression suffered by those identified as such in the societies where they live (Fontes, 2019). This oppression extends to the different spheres of their lives and is seen in multiple, manifold and interwoven ways where social, cultural, economic and environmental factors intertwine. One example is disabled people's exclusion from artistic experience and practice. Based on conceptions that belittle the abilities and rights of disabled people, the "world" of arts and culture has been closed to them by replicating cultural barriers or keeping physical barriers preventing their effective participation (Vlachou & Acesso Cultura, 2020). Until very recently, the artistic and cultural experience and practice of disabled people have been permeated by a medical understanding of disability that defines it not as a cultural right but as therapy.

The experience and practice of dance, music, theatre, and painting, among other art forms, emerge as a rehabilitating activity for the minds and bodies of the people thus considered.

As Howard Becker (1982) argues, regarding the need for opening up the "art worlds", the principles of accessibility, participation, collaboration and art education take on particular relevance, to which we would add its openness to different types of groups and communities, including disabled people. The approval of the Convenção sobre os Direitos das Pessoas com Deficiência (Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; 2006), ratified by Portugal in 2009, is a turning point, not only in how disability and the rights of disabled people are understood but also in the role assigned to disabled people in the world of arts and culture. Thus, Article 30 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) recognises the right of disabled people to participate in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport. Supporting the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the European *Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030* reaffirms the need for the different member states to ensure the full participation of disabled people in cultural activities, urging them to define integrating and inclusive national policies in other areas, including in the area of culture, and to develop inclusive services and promote access to culture. In Portugal, this aspiration is echoed in the Estratégia Nacional para a Inclusão das Pessoas com Deficiência 2021-2025 (National Strategy for the Inclusion of People with Disabilities 2021-2025; Resolução do Conselho de Ministros n.º 119/2021, 2021 [Resolution of the Council of Ministers no. 119/2021, 2021]) which defines the culture, sport, tourism and leisure as one of its eight strategic axes, and in the Estratégia de Promoção da Acessibilidade e da Inclusão dos Museus, Monumentos e Palácios na dependência da Direção-Geral do Património Cultural e das Direções Regionais de Cultura 2021-2025 (Strategy for the Promotion of Accessibility and Inclusion of Museums, Monuments and Palaces under the General Directorate of Cultural Heritage and the Regional Directorates of Culture 2021-2025; República Portuguesa, 2022 [Portuguese Republic, 2022]). Following these guiding documents, institutions and services are starting to rethink their spaces, their accessibility conditions and means of inclusion, their practices, their collections and their programming to include all people regardless of their situation or specific needs.

This article[1] draws on the experience of implementing a project for inclusion through artistic activity and promoting inclusive art — *A Meu Ver* — by a professional artistic structure in theatre in the city of Coimbra — O Teatrão. It is a three-year theatre training and practice project for people with blindness or low vision, funded by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation and La Caixa Foundation under the *Partis & Art for Change* programme. This project combines artistic training with intervention in the cultural space of the city and region of Coimbra. Another component of *A Meu Ver* is related to the scientific monitoring of the project. It includes an evaluation of its impacts on the participants,

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[1] The data presented here stemmed from monitoring work and impact assessment of the first year of the project's implementation. They were the basis for Susete Margarido's Master's thesis: "Disability and Artistic Practices: The Role of Theatre in the Identity of People with a Visual Impairment", submitted to the Faculty of Economics of the University of Coimbra.

their families and wider communities. On the other hand, it is also expected to impact the municipality of Coimbra venues' policies of cultural accessibility. The coordination between artistic training and creation and the social sciences and humanities reinforces the multidisciplinary aspect of the project. The data provided here are the result of a follow-up work and impact assessment of the first year of implementation of the project *A Meu Ver*, which aimed to analyse and rethink the possible roles of artistic training in the mediation between the entity O Teatrão and a group of disabled people, traditionally excluded from the cultural circuits. At this point, it is worth presenting a possible definition of cultural mediation as an action which consists in making segments of public access to works and knowledge, aiming to generate an appropriation of the artistic and cultural universe by the people who make contact with it (Davallon, 2010).

Based on this experience, it will seek to provide an answer to the following questions:

- What is the role of art in the mediation between artistic entities and different types of communities?
- How to mediate new understandings, perceptions and interpretations that can connect artistic creation with communities at the fringes of artistic circuits?

This article intends to reflect on the mediating role of artistic activity in creating spaces of communication between artists, artistic and cultural institutions, researchers and communities that are usually far from the contexts of cultural offers and experiences using the specific case of the training and theatre practice of people with blindness or low vision. It divides into five parts. The first part provides the theoretical framework of the article. It aims to explore the link between artistic activity and disabled people in the context of the "Disability Arts" movement. The second part outlines the context of the case study and its empirical specificity. The third part shares the project's methodological approach; the fourth part discusses the relationship between art, mediation and the *A Meu Ver* project; finally, the final reflections aim to point out future paths based on the project's current development for a second phase.

2. Culture, Art and Disability

As we have seen, despite the diffusion of new perspectives on disability stemming from the Disabled People's movement and from the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006), which present disability as a form of social oppression or as a human rights issue, the hegemony of oppressive, fatalistic and individualising perspectives remains unshakable in many societies. This reality means that phenomena of poverty and social exclusion still constrain the lives of the vast majority of disabled people, and their rights and opportunities often remain a mirage. The prevalence in the dominant culture of diminishing and oppressive conceptions of disabled people translates in their representation as inferior, passive, useless and almost non-human (Barnes & Mercer, 2010). On the other hand, their exclusion in the production and consumption of this same culture, oppressive of their identity and needs, made disabled people in geographical contexts such as England and the United States of America (Barnes & Mercer,

2010; S. Brown, 1997; Davis, 1995) to develop an alternative culture, able to express, positively, their identities and experiences.

The development, affirmation and celebration of this positive identity of disabled people and of the pride in being who and how they are, what Swain and French (2000) call the "affirmation model", was also translated at the level of the arts with the development of what we may generically call "disability arts". "Disability arts" is thus an artistic and political movement developed by disabled people in different fields and cultural expressions — theatre, cinema, music, dance, sculpture, painting, performance, comedy, poetry, novels, and photography... — and their artistic creations, exploring and presenting the history, culture and experiences of disability and impairment from an individual and political standpoint, as well as the visions, perspectives and experiences of the world of disabled people. Barnes and Mercer (2010) emphasise this political dimension in defining the "disability arts" movement as the

> development of shared cultural meanings and collective expression of the experience of disability and struggle. This entails using artistic activity to expose discrimination and prejudice disabled people face and to generate group consciousness. (p. 207)

These authors argue that the disability arts movement encompasses at least three interrelated dimensions: it argues for disabled people to have access to the mainstream of artistic consumption and production; explores the experience of living with an impairment; and offers a critical response to the experience of social exclusion and marginalisation (Barnes & Mercer, 2010, pp. 207–208). The existence of one or several alternative cultures of disability is, however, far from being agreed upon within the disabled people's movement or even in the field of disability studies (Wendell, 1996). Nevertheless, this "disability arts" movement is undeniable with the emergence of different voices, initiatives and forms of expression of disabled people, which, in many cases, effectively produce a culture of resistance and celebration (Oliver & Barnes, 1998). The notion of culture emerges here in its double meaning, as a set of values, beliefs and norms shared by a given social group (Giddens, 1989) and as artistic creation produced, in this case, by disabled people.

As the history of disability and disabled people clearly shows, their participation in the arts and culture is seldom part of this artistic movement to produce an alternative, celebratory political culture for disabled people. It is, therefore, important to distinguish this movement from what we can only call "artists with disabilities". That is, artists who, despite having an impairment, are not solely influenced by that circumstance (Austin & Brophy, 2015). Some names of disabled people who have stood out in the art world in the past, such as Van Gogh or Beethoven, are good examples. Nowadays, a new generation of artists in the field of "disability arts" is outlining new paths and new readings, where disability is no longer the focus of the political message they want to convey but where it emerges among others who form the diversity of disabled people. A recent project developed by the Australian organisation of disabled people dedicated to promoting the

accessibility of arts and culture — Arts Access Victoria — identifies some of the most prominent names today while emphasising this aspect of their creations. This organisation thus highlights the work of artists such as Yinka Shonibare from the United Kingdom, Chuck Close from the United States of America and Jane Trengove from Australia (Austin & Brophy, 2015). For this organisation, these names represent an example of professional disabled artists working in contemporary visual arts. Notwithstanding the clear Western reading of the field presented by this organisation, if we focus on the work of these artists, one of the unifying characteristics of their production is exactly such a widening of readings and messages, exploring issues such as cultural representation, gender, sexuality and political power, and not focusing solely on the topic of disability. As emphasised, although their work is not solely committed to and/or focused on disability, it can be directly influenced by the artist's experience, which sheds some light on their work's creative process and content. Therefore, these new artists' work should be analysed within a broader contemporary artistic context and not only within the scope of "disability arts". This need is based on the fact that their work does not reflect a direct relationship with disability, which is only visible in the nuanced connections between the artists' lived experience and their critical observations of the cultural and social place they occupy (Reeves, 1999, as cited in Austin & Brophy, 2015). Safeguarding the essence of "disability arts" now seems to have shifted to the freedom of cultural creation of disabled artists in self-controlled environments independent of dominant assessment models (Barnes & Mercer, 2010).

In Portugal, this "disability arts" movement has also flourished. It is visible in the emergence of artists and groups of disabled artists in different fields and expressions, ranging from theatre, dance, and plastic arts, to music and acting. One example is 5.ª Punkada, a musical band made up of Associação de Paralisia Cerebral de Coimbra (Coimbra Cerebral Palsy Association) users, created in 1994, which has already recorded an album — *Somos Punks ou Não?* (Are we Punks or Not?) — and has performed dozens of shows all over the country. In dance, individual names, such as Diana Niepce, and collectives, such as the group Dançando com a Diferença, are becoming popular. The first is a Portuguese dancer and choreographer who, due to her quadriplegia, has been experimenting and developing a new dance language based on her body, explored as a political element. The second, however, is a professional dance company based on a group with the same name created in the autonomous region of Madeira in 2001 and which explores the concept of inclusive dance, pairing disabled and non-disabled dancers. In theatre, there are numerous examples of initiatives all over the country. The Grupo Crinabel Teatro stands out for its longevity and dynamics. Created in 1986, this group has already trained dozens of artistic productions and artists. It has promoted several special theatre meetings and the diffusion of using theatre practice and language in similar national and foreign institutions.

The progress made regarding the participation of disabled people in the art world in Portugal is thus undeniable. However, their participation as professional artists and cultural production and programming agents remains scarce compared to non-disabled

people. Furthermore, art in and of disability in Portugal is almost always seen in its educational, therapeutic and, in specific cases, recreational aspects, being very rarely understood and appreciated in its cultural and artistic aspects. The affirmation of a "disability arts" movement thus remains embryonic, and the consolidation of one alternative culture of resistance and celebration of difference, as Oliver and Barnes (1998) advocated, remains a promise.

3. Context and Methodology

3.1. *A Meu Ver* and the Teatrão Pedagogical Project

In Portugal, in addition to having obstacles in access to arts and culture, in its strict sense, disabled people also face a lack of opportunities to participate in the professional artistic world (Vlachou & Acesso Cultura, 2020). Based on the new vision of disabled people and their rights emanating from the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006), we have been witnessing the emergence of a growing number of projects and programmes to support the creation and development of inclusive contexts and opportunities in the world of culture and arts. One example is the *PARTIS & Art for Change* programme, funded by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation and La Caixa Foundation, which aims to fund artistic projects for social inclusion in Portugal. This programme, created in 2020, supports, through training and funding actions, organisations that develop and implement artistic practices that promote social inclusion. The project *A Meu Ver*, under analysis in this article, developed by Teatrão, is one of the projects funded by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation and La Caixa Foundation under the *PARTIS & Art for Change* programme. Running for three years, *A Meu Ver* (2021-2024)[2] provides theatre training for a group of people with blindness and low-vision and creates and presents three theatre performances. The project is developed through a partnership between the professional theatre company Teatrão and the Coimbra Delegation of the Associação dos Cegos e Amblíopes de Portugal (Association of the Blind and Visually Impaired of Portugal - ACAPO), aimed at creating a hub of work dedicated to the practice of theatre. Therefore, a regular theatre workshop was designed, the Sala de Ensaios (Rehearsal Room), which, with the support of a professional and multidisciplinary artistic team, is responsible for the development of the project and from which emerged a first play, entitled *O Que É Invisível* (What is Invisible), premiered in March 2022. This article is based on the monitoring work of the first year of the *A Meu Ver* implementation, which sought to understand how the theatre practice contributes to the identity construction of people with visual impairment participating in the project.

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[2] The *A Meu Ver* project officially started its activities in January 2021 and was due to end in January 2024. Due to the pandemic, the beginning of the project's trials was rescheduled for May 2021, so the project has already requested an extension until May 2024.

The *A Meu Ver* project is especially relevant to Teatrão's mission, given the extensive work that this professional theatre company has been developing, particularly since 2010, in implementing mediation projects with the community, which involve an aspect of social inclusion through artistic practices. As the company states, Teatrão (2023) takes on

> the mission of bringing theatre art closer to the communities and territories, promoting equal access to its activities for all audiences, through inclusive practices, as a result of its political position on the role of art and culture in the development of individuals and communities. (para. 1)

Therefore, the company seeks to be part of the daily life of the communities where it operates and help make art recognised as an essential practice in society. Teatrão offers a wide range of activities, including plays for various types of audiences (offering audio description and translation services for Portuguese sign language), programming shows by other creators, training for all ages and community intervention. Since its creation, Teatrão has worked to make artistic activities more accessible to all, bringing it closer to the communities and the territory. After taking over the spaces of the Oficina Municipal de Teatro (Municipal Theatre Workshop) in 2008, the company has worked to make it a place of proximity, but also investing in a work of circulation of artistic productions in national and international circuits and continuing to invest in the pedagogical and artistic dimension (Baltazar, 2021). Several projects were created to accomplish the company's objectives, among them the pedagogical and intervention projects, which seek to make access to culture a right of citizens.

The pedagogical project is the link between the different dimensions of the company's activities, materialising the belief that access to culture is a right built through a regular practice of cultural habits (Baltazar, 2021). The pedagogical project includes six programs: "Links", "Turmas" (Classes), "Pastas" (Portfolios), "Explorações" (Explorations), "Prós Grandes" (For the Great) and "Prós Stôres" (For the Teachers). The "Links" program is where the public participates directly in the creative process, interacting with the artists through talks, workshops and guided tours. The "Turmas" programme runs throughout the year. It offers continuous training in theatre practices, led by guest artists, educators or residents, offering a training ground for future actors and actresses of the company. The "Pastas" programme includes a compilation of supporting materials produced by the educational service and research conducted in the company's projects. The "Explorações" programme operates through workshops, routes or guided tours, allowing the public to contemplate and experience other forms of occupation and coexistence in everyday urban life and to combine these experiences with the exploration of the language of theatre and performance. The "Prós Grandes" programme is developed in partnership with local support networks (day care centres and nursing homes) and is a theatre project aimed at the senior population. Finally, the "Pros Stôres" programme is aimed at teachers and educators and offers short and medium-length courses with the possibility of co-production.

The project *A Meu Ver* is part of the "Turmas" programme from Teatrão's pedagogical project and follows other training and artistic creation programmes with different types of communities (young people from low-income neighbourhoods — 2010/2011; young children of emigrants — 2011/2012; young people in a situation or risk of dropping out of school — 2012/2013), which the company has been developing over the last decade. The experience shared in this article is set within this mediation element, opening new channels to think about artistic activity regarding its possibilities of mediation between different types of publics, exploring simultaneously the different levels that its formats of cultural participation can adopt. In the particular case of *A Meu Ver*, the development of this place for creation, training, and artistic expression opens new possibilities for thinking about the social inclusion of communities often made invisible by society at large, rethinking and reformulating the formats of cultural participation. This project involved a group of 11 people with visual impairment, five men and six women, between 32 and 72 years old, living in different civil parishes of the district of Coimbra and with a very heterogeneous level of education (two people with primary education; two people with lower secondary education; four people with secondary education and three people with higher education). This group is also quite heterogeneous regarding life circumstances. Of the 11 participants, six are married or living in a non-marital partnership, three are single, and two are divorced. Regarding employment status: five people retired for disability due to permanent inability to work, four were unemployed and looking for a job, one was employed, and one was doing social work required under the "Contrato Emprego - Inserção+" measure.

3.2. Methodology

This research privileged a qualitative approach, conducting a case study, exploratory in nature, between October 2021 and August 2022. The data reported here were collected through four data collection techniques: participant observation, questionnaire survey, semi-structured interviews and focus groups. Participant observation was conducted in 24 rehearsals in the Sala de Ensaios of the Oficina Municipal de Teatro group of project *A Meu Ver* participants. Twenty-two interviews were conducted over two separate time frames. In the first moment, between December 2021 and January 2022, 11 semi-structured project interviews were conducted. Given the pandemic context of COVID-19, the interviews were conducted face-to-face or by telephone, according to the interviewee's preference. These interviews aimed to get to know the participants; survey their expectations; identify the changes produced by the theatre practice in their daily lives; and describe their relationship with cultural and artistic practices. At this first moment and the beginning of the interview, a questionnaire was applied to collect the participants' socio-demographic data. In the second moment, 11 interviews were conducted with the same target group in a face-to-face or telephone format, as before. This second moment of interviews was dynamised in April 2022, immediately after the presentation of the theatre play produced by the project — *O Que É Invisível* — and aimed to collect

the concerns, difficulties and challenges faced by project participants, identify and collect the overcoming strategies mobilised, assess their degree of satisfaction with the project and identify possible impacts of their participation. By the end of the first year, two focus groups were held: one with ACAPO professionals involved in the project and one with Teatrão professionals. In the first case, analysing the participation of ACAPO in the implementation of the project and the process of artistic creation, and in the second case, analysing the project's impact on Teatrão and its professionals. The focus group with ACAPO included three technicians from the institution (two orientation and mobility technicians and a social worker). The focus group with Teatrão had four people (two members of the management structure and directors of the company, the two trainers of the group, and the directors of the annual presentation). The interviews were audio recorded, later transcribed, and explored through thematic analysis (Attride-Stirling, 2001; Braun & Clarke, 2006), allowing us to identify and analyse the dominant themes.

All interviewees were previously informed of the objectives of the interviews. The interviews were scheduled and conducted after the interviewee accepted the informed consent protocol. The interviewer verbally told and provided the written information contained in it and subsequently checked the acceptance of those involved in the study.

4. Presentation and Discussion of Results

The arts are an important tool for deconstructing, questioning and social criticism and for reconstructing and presenting new narratives of reality. In the case of disabled people, access to and participation in artistic and cultural practice and the construction of a language of their own to express their experiences have been gaining a prominent place and becoming a claim and a right. Among the different arts, the theatre has become a significant cultural practice within the processes of resistance to the extent that it highlights the capacities and potential of individuals (Muñoz-Bellerín & Cordero-Ramos, 2020). As a space that allows interactions and interpretations, as well as the use of the imaginary, theatre presents a high potential for the expression of new worlds and experiences and the affirmation of new languages and conceptions of reality (Muñoz-Bellerín & Cordero-Ramos, 2021). Thus, we may say that artistic activity may be seen as a space of mediation, that is, as a border space that allows communication and connection between different conceptions and experiences of reality, in this case, between a dominant culture and a new alternative culture, but also as a space for the affirmation of rights. These rights are embodied not only in access and participation in cultural activity and practice but also in the possibility of reconfiguring and presenting new citizenship rights through artistic training, access to culture as consumers, and developing a more critical and reflective view of society.

In *A Meu Ver* project, as we can see, enabling training, practice and consumption of theatre created spaces of mediation that allowed reaching audiences traditionally distant from this art, as is the case of disabled people, and creating a space for the "agency" of these same audiences, making them more active in constructing and reconstructing this

practice and, consequently, of their rights as citizens. As observed during the project implementation and later verified during the interviews, the artistic practice and experience also allowed for the incorporation, or greater emphasis, of theatre and the arts in the self-identification of disabled people participating in the project. On the other hand, making the experience of disability more collective has facilitated a greater awareness that most of the problems faced by disabled people do not stem directly from their impairments but from the barriers in the surrounding community.

4.1. Artistic Experience and Cultural Participation

These impacts of the project *A Meu Ver* are aligned with the objectives defined by Teatrão in its application, to make visible that the problems of disability are related to the forms of social organisation and not the body's functional capabilities. Making the experience of disability collective through artistic practice and identity embodiment allowed the project to contribute to the deconstruction of a medical concept of disability and the dissemination of a social understanding of disability. As we could witness through the different moments of observation, the fictional construction of other realities provided by the practice of artistic experience created, in this first phase of the project, a group consciousness in the people participating and in their primary support networks. On the other hand, the public presentation of a performance, which stemmed from a joint effort between all participants, brought into the public sphere a statement about the role artistic activity can play in the mediation between the Teatrão and a group of disabled people, traditionally excluded from the cultural circuits, seen as potential active and participatory audiences of cultural activity. The data from the participant observation and the interviews showed, precisely, the concern of the work's coordination team in preserving the different types of participation and contributions of the people involved, both in the writing process and in the construction of the play *O Que É Invisível*. During the play's writing and construction process, the participants actively contributed to this process by formulating opinions, suggestions and specific ideas, expressing their interests and their availability to take on certain roles in the show, and, in a later stage of the show's preparation, by making suggestions for changing parts of the text and adapting the scenic device to the specific individual needs of movement and spatial orientation. This active participation of disabled people in the construction of the script, in the definition, arrangement and even construction of the scenic elements is quite evident in the following testimonies taken from the interviews: "yes, yes. That first initial text, the one that was recorded, I made the first draft" (Interviewee 6, interview, April 14, 2022)

> I did. I did. Before the first scene, before that scene was written, it was discussed with X [director] at the time, and he wrote that first scene according to what we had previously discussed. After the text, there was one or another thing that I also talked about with X [director] - even over the phone - that we made these small changes to the text. That was regarding the first scene. The second scene, (...) in the matter of the stage and costumes, yes.

The suggestion that we should dress, for example, in white or be dressed in white or a very light colour, was a suggestion that I made. The suggestion of the things on stage, except for one thing, was also made by me: the bathtub, things that were already old, reminiscent of ... things that were put aside and are no longer used because they're broken. (...) So, these suggestions were given, they were made, and that was the participation I had. Then the connection, the whole narration, was also presented, it was discussed — I always spoke with X [the director], who wrote it, to get my perception from there and also to understand what X's [director] perception was, and the perception was undoubtedly identical, and then that whole narration was built: allowing it to be that link, that connection between the various scenes. People being, eventually, not totally unsupported or disconnected in that sense. I participated. And the mask, including that plaster mask that was in the first scene, that mask was actually made — I was there at the Teatrão for about an hour and a half with plaster on my face to make the mould of that mask. Then it was worked on and put on. So, I was involved in several things. (Interviewee 10, interview, April 21, 2022)

During the second moment of interviews, which took place after the public presentation of the play, it was possible to observe that participation in the project enabled the participants to access the theatrical artistic practice as audience members. For some of these people, this experience meant opening doors to a new reality and cultural dynamics to which they had little or no access. For such, it is worth noting the investment of this theatre company in the acquisition of an audio description booth, as well as the availability of audio description and translation services into Portuguese sign language in all shows performed since the beginning of this project. This greater participation in shows is mentioned by several of our interviewees: "yes, maybe I've been to more shows at the Teatrão than I have in a long time. In the past, I was single and went to the cinema. I think I had never been to the theatre" (Interviewee, interview, April 19, 2022)", "it changed a little because we were offered other events as well" (Interviewee 7, interview, April 14, 2022) and "the theatre thing allowed me, for example, to go to plays more often. I was already doing it before, but it was just very occasionally. Now, it has become a little more consistent" (Interviewee 10, interview, April 21, 2022).

It was also interesting to see how the activation of this cultural participation process of people with visual impairment, started by the project, enhanced their greater participation in the community and, consequently, contributed to their process of social inclusion. This process seems to have stemmed from a confluence of factors, among which we highlight: the interaction of the project's coordination with the municipality of Coimbra in the implementation and facilitation of mobility and transport options to and from the location of the project's rehearsals, the Oficina Municipal de Teatro; the investment, previously described, of Teatrão in removing barriers to access and experience of theatre practice; and, very important in the interviewees' accounts, the recognition and

valuing of their voices, opinions, experiences and readings. The importance given by the participants to the access to and participation in cultural practices was underlined by one of the ACAPO technicians responsible for this group whom we interviewed in a focus group:

> it is mainly about the possibility of enjoying a right like any other citizen; access to culture has to be a right, not only for people with visual impairment but for any other person. And the fact of being able to access culture easily in the same way as another person with no disability, I think that turns out to be an added value, and these people feel it (…). Or I want to be part of it (…). In this case, it is to be part of it. (Technician from the Associação dos Cegos e Amblíopes de Portugal — Focus Group 1, July 18, 2022)

Our data thus demonstrate that the process of cultural mediation, in this specific case promoted by *A Meu Ver*, transforms the participants on an individual and social level, to which the artistic component included in the training dimension of the project must be added. Among the changes on an individual level, noticeable in some of the voices below, are increased concentration and motivation daily, greater self-esteem and sense of personal achievement, and greater decision-making ability, besides aspects of voice placement and body posture.

> The change I feel is that I feel more motivated. Nothing else has changed significantly, but at least I feel more motivated, more fulfilled. It's still while I'm busy, when I fall into the void, things are not so simple. At least in that part, I have moments of feeling really good. Longer. (…) Yes, it brought me advantages. To make my decision easier, in the participations that may happen, I decide with more determination. (Interviewee 3, interview, April 13, 2022)

[Interviewer] Do you mean that this has brought you some changes, although few, that have benefited your life? [Interviewee] And I also notice, at this moment, more concentrated at work and in my daily life (Interviewee 5, interview, April 27, 2022).

"It has changed! Besides me being already positive in my life, in my problems, in my situation, it changed because I am sure (and I really am) that my energy, my self-esteem became much more, much higher" (Interviewee 9, interview, April 18, 2022).

> Yes, more at ease. More at ease with people, more playful perhaps. More at ease in certain situations; in others, the theatre and not only - but now it is the theatre that we are talking about - worked the part of concentration, the part of memory, the part of the postural correction. It worked on various aspects. These aspects are then integrated into daily life, into everyday life; at various moments, they are integrated in a very normal and dynamic way, as things are supposed to be. So, there wasn't a radical

> change, something... I was like that up to this point, and from then on,
> I was totally different - no, there was no such change; but there were
> small changes that were integrated over time and keep being integrated.
> (Interviewee 10, interview, April 21, 2022)

However, this process of individual and social transformation enhanced by the artistic and cultural practice lacks support from artistic and cultural entities. Although it is not possible to state that the project *A Meu Ver* produced a deep and lasting impact on the structure and professionals of this theatre company, the words of one of the directors of Teatrão, interviewed in a focus group context, show that there is an awareness of this need and right of disabled people. As well as some permeability to the emergence of new narratives and new theatre languages:

> this notion of starting to promote more and more activities with the participation of people with disabilities will make the current aesthetics of art contemplate these people in the milieu as well. And also, sometimes, it is an exercise of our humility, of realising that, perhaps, there doesn't have to be a previous need among people with disabilities. That is, here it is about doing one thing at the same time. It is about making this symbiosis of presenting and doing, letting things contaminate. (Director and professional of Teatrão — Focus Group 2, August 8, 2022)

4.2. Cultural Participation and Social Inclusion

Access to culture and artistic practice becomes essential to the realisation of the right to culture, to the affirmation of disability culture and to the construction of a culture where all people feel represented. The cultural practice provided to disabled people participating in the project *A Meu Ver* provided several impacts on their daily lives beyond this cultural dimension. As it was possible to verify during the first moment of interviews, the initial motivation for most participants to participate in the project was the need for an activity outside their daily life, as exemplified by the testimony of this participant: "it's more to get out of the house for a while, I'm always here during the day. On Thursdays when I go, I'm ready by this time. I catch the bus at two-thirty, at that bus stop there" (Interviewee 4, interview, December 18, 2021).

Considering this motivation, it is not surprising that the main changes reported by the participants at this stage are of a social and spatial nature. They are changes arising from the greater mobility of participants out of their family context and private sphere, produced by their participation in rehearsals and project activities. This change was facilitated by the orientation training given by ACAPO Coimbra to the project participants to increase their familiarity with the route to and from the Oficina Municipal de Teatro and the encouragement and diligence developed by Teatrão to promote the use of public

transport. Some of the testimonies collected show this transformation: "now in terms of transport, I started to use a bus which was not even familiar to me, I didn't use it, which is the 24T. I had never used it before and I started using it in a more usual way" (Interviewee 10, April 21, 2022).

> Knowing the routes to come autonomously. Because none of them knew how to come to the Teatrão, none. (…) Neither had ever come. (…). The recognition of routes, listing available transportation, all this training was done, and people are coming and going autonomously. (Technician from the Associação dos Cegos e Amblíopes de Portugal — Focus Group 1, July 18, 2022)

This impact is especially relevant since, as it has been reported, most disabled people still live in contexts of great social isolation arising from the lack of accessibility in the surrounding physical environment. It prevents them from leaving home and moving around in their area of residence, as well as of their remaining in residential structures far away from the community and the labour market, with clear prejudice for their involvement in networks of sociability and social participation. As the data from the last Portuguese population censuses revealed, the percentage of people aged five years or more with an impairment living in collective-type accommodation is much higher than that of people without any impairment (8% versus 1.5% respectively) and of the total number of people with motor impairment, 68.1% live in accommodations without accessibility for people in wheelchairs (Instituto Nacional de Estatística, I.P., 2022). Added to these physical barriers are the economic barriers to social participation. As the 2021 census also shows, of the total number of people with any impairment aged 15 or over, only 15.6% were active in the labour market, compared to 58.5% of people in the same age group without any impairment. In addition, 71.9% of people with impairments had a retirement or pension as a source of income (Instituto Nacional de Estatística, I.P., 2022). The relevance of the project to combat this social isolation is clear in the words of another ACAPO technician from Coimbra, also interviewed within the same focus group:

> some people with (…) visual impairment would like to go and do not go due to the constraints they feel and the difficulties they experience before getting there. In terms of mobility, transport, even in terms of the show (…), not to mention the other challenges. (…) Many end up isolated. There are one or two that don't live here in the city and are more isolated and in villages, small places... they don't socialise as much. So, I think that this, for the isolation (…), I think it is very important. (Technician from the Associação dos Cegos e Amblíopes de Portugal — Focus Group 1, July 18, 2022)

In addition to the increased opportunities for social interaction provided by the project, there is also an opportunity to raise community awareness about disability issues

and systematic integration into the space and practice of theatre for everyone, regardless of whether they have or not some impairment. The same technician also highlights this normalisation and systematic integration of the difference:

> because many people, besides suffering from the stigma of being blind or having low vision, also do not identify as such. Therefore, in everything they do in their daily life, they try to avoid anything unrelated to an Associação de Cegos e Amblíopes de Portugal. In other words, participating in Teatrão and being here at Teatrão makes things normal. Those who like to do theatre go to Teatrão, and anyone can go. (Technician from the Associação dos Cegos e Amblíopes de Portugal — Focus Group 1, July 18, 2022)

The awareness of and for theatre culture is, however, the most evident impact of this project. The facilitation and promotion of this artistic practice's consumption by the project and the company management allowed greater access to theatre performances, in some cases even initiation into the consumption of this practice, considering that some of these people had never had the opportunity to attend a theatre performance. Because of their specific needs to experience a play where visual and audio elements are often combined, people with any visual impairment have been excluded from the existing theatre productions available in most Portuguese cities. The project *A Meu Ver* has, thus, mediated the first contact and regular and frequent contact with theatre shows, contributing to the realisation of the right to culture and cultural consumption by this group specific group of disabled people who, for the reasons mentioned above, have been particularly distanced. This project is, however, an isolated embryo of what can and should be done to promote the right to culture in its different dimensions and levels of participation. The work is mostly still to be done, as one of Teatrão's directors points out:

> We know how difficult it is. That's why mediation is so important for Teatrão because it is closely linked to the genesis of the company, to issues such as arts education and the advocacy that artistic activity should be part of public education, that schools should have access to and artistic practice in their curricula, I mean... this is part of our work philosophy. (...) There is also a need for cultural agents and teams, and the municipality itself or those who think the cultural policies should have specific training in this area. (Director and professional of Teatrão — Focus Group 2, August 8, 2022)

Nevertheless, social inclusion in and through culture is an open-ended process requiring constant investment, awareness, and monitoring by the parties involved.

5. Final Considerations

The analysis presented above highlights the importance of *A Meu Ver* as a cultural mediation project between an arts organisation and a social group traditionally distanced

from this artistic and cultural expression — people with blindness or low vision — developed by a professional theatre company. This project is part of a path developed by this company over the last 12 years, liaising with different types of communities through training and artistic intervention projects. This work has allowed a deeper understanding of artistic creation methodologies and methodological approaches from social sciences for developing cultural and artistic intervention projects in different communities. As these projects occur in multidisciplinary contexts, they enable new understandings, perceptions, and interpretations of artistic creation processes and point new paths to and formats of cultural participation as a strategy of cultural mediation. The cultural mediation processes are seen here as directly connected to cultural access and participation processes in multiple layers and formats. Cultural participation has undergone profound transformations in recent decades, in line with the change in cultural institutions and their artistic practices and productions (Ateca-Amestoy & Villarroya, 2017). Authors such as Novak-Leonard and Brown (2011) take multiple approaches to understanding arts participation considering different types of participation, such as attending performances and cultural activities, artistic engagement through media and artistic creation or performance. The extent of involvement and creative control of the individual in his/her/their cultural practice is the benchmark used by A. Brown (2004), thus classifying cultural participation into different layers and formats: inventive, participatory, interpretive, observational and artistic curation. In short, cultural participation has evolved towards more active formats, assuming dimensions of engaging different types of audiences (Tomka, 2013). The mediation process in this project's scope is based on the context and history of this theatre company, which believes that artistic-cultural activity should be accessible to different types of communities and groups and adopt different formats. Thus, artistic creation is less the prerogative of a small group of artists and becomes part of the identity construction processes of people and groups normally distanced from artistic universes, therefore being a process of artistic appropriation of the artistic and cultural universe by these groups.

The results, necessarily exploratory, presented here show the need for further studies on the impact of this type of artistic practice on groups distanced and/or excluded from cultural practices and experiences. In this particular project, it is also important to understand and analyse the changes in the family circle of the participants in the project A *Meu Ver* in how disability and impairment, or more specifically visual impairment, are perceived. Moreover, to examine, in the medium and long term, the impacts of the project activities on the individual and social level of the participants. On the other hand, it is also pertinent to collect testimonies from the audience of the performances held within the scope of this project, to assess possible changes in their conceptions of disability and of the abilities of disabled people, as well as in their evaluation of the theatre language and aesthetics developed.

The data collected and reported here demonstrate, on the one hand, the importance of the accessibility of spaces and performances and cultural creations to different

audiences to enforce the rights of disabled people and their participation and social inclusion. On the other hand, they highlight the importance of culture for the personal and collective development of the *A Meu Ver* project participants. The range of participatory artistic and cultural practices implemented by the project allowed us to identify and rethink the different levels of cultural participation and democratisation of culture. This democratisation requires, as we have seen, at least the consideration of four factors: the inclusion in culture and the community, the accessibility of the spaces and shows, rethinking them for different types of audiences and opening them up to the participation of different groups of people with specific characteristics and needs. In short, the *A Meu Ver* project has highlighted the new possibilities of cultural mediation and social inclusion that artistic activity offers.

Translation: Anabela Delgado

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The Mediating Possibilities of Art: A Case Study on Artistic Experience · Fernando Fontes, Cláudia Pato de Carvalho & Susete Margarido

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Audience-Foyer: Dialogue and Public Formation with Dramatic Reading in Performing Arts

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Abstract

The object of this article, whose research adopts a qualitative approach, takes an interdisciplinary path and has an applied nature, is the potential formation of theatre audiences seeking to turn them into virtually lasting public through artistic and communication practices in the field of performing arts called "audience-foyer" and "dramatic reading". At the theoretical and methodological levels, with descriptive and interpretative purposes, it draws from the model of studies of communication as dialogue, typical of the Latin American thinking in communication, from a public relations perspective, in which the practice of conversation and commentary, between the logic of organisational communication and the affection of art, emerges for the production of the social bond between artists and audience/public. This case study is about Teatro Mosaico (Brazil), in the staging of two dramatic texts: *o Prólogo* (Prologue)*,* by director Sandro Lucose (2005), and *A Caravana da Ilusão* (The Illusion's Caravan), by director Alcione Araújo (2000), where comedy and drama, in the same play, made the paths of a theatre company bifurcate.

Keywords

communication, theatre, *audience-foyer*, dramatic reading, public formation

Plateia-Foyer: Diálogo e Formação de Público na Leitura Dramatizada em Artes Cênicas

Resumo

O objeto deste artigo, em pesquisa de abordagem qualitativa, trajeto interdisciplinar e de natureza aplicada, é a formação de plateia de teatro, em sua eventualidade, e a busca pela sua transformação em público, virtualmente duradouro, através de práticas artísticas e comunicacionais designadas no campo das artes cênicas de "plateia-foyer" e "leitura dramatizada". No plano teórico-metodológico, com objetivo descritivo e interpretativo, parte do modelo de estudos da comunicação como diálogo, característica do pensamento latinoamericano em comunicação, numa perspectiva de relações públicas, em que a prática da conversação e do comentário, entre a racionalidade da comunicação organizacional e o afeto da arte, emerge para a produção da vinculação social entre artistas e plateia/público. Opta-se por um estudo de caso sobre o Teatro Mosaico (Brasil), na montagem de dois textos dramatúrgicos: o *Prólogo*, do diretor Sandro Lucose (2005), e *A Caravana da Ilusão*, do diretor Alcione Araújo (2000), em que comédia e drama, no mesmo espetáculo, fazem bifurcar os caminhos de uma companhia teatral.

Palavras-chave

comunicação, teatro, plateia-foyer, leitura dramatizada, formação de público

1. Introduction: The Audience, Between Talk and Commentary

The use and dissemination of the neologism "audience-foyer" was recurrent in the Brazilian contemporary dance scene in the 1990s. The term was used in the performing arts during the 1990s at events such as "Dança Brasil" and "Panorama RioArte de Dança Contemporânea", both held in Rio de Janeiro. In line with the model developed at the two events in Rio de Janeiro, though used at other artistic and cultural events and under different names, the *audience-foyer* activity aimed to promote the dialogue between dance spectators and creators. In the emerging dance community (artists and public), the researcher and producer Roberto Pereira (2000) credits the creation of the neologism to the researcher and professor Helena Katz, then dance critic for the newspaper *O Estado de S. Paulo* and professor/researcher at the Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo.

In the most common and recurrent practice in *audience-foyer* sessions, the dialogue takes place right after the presentation of a play, with the directors and actors/dancers on stage, mediated by people directly or indirectly connected to the field of performing arts. Usually, to begin the dialogue between artists and the audience, the mediator briefly comments about the play on stage or briefly introduces the director. Then, the floor is given to the theatre company director, who makes general comments about the play on stage. During the talk, actors and/or dancers also take the floor and comment on the work from the standpoint of those who actualise the artistic work in their bodies.

The *audience-foyer* practice updates a communication context which reflects, through dialogue, another discursive operator, the artistic, which is primarily expressive, poetic and aesthetic. Communication, in this case, "translates", or at least tries to translate art, mainly to meet the audience's expectations, who insist on the search for a "sense" and even a "common sense" by presupposing affinities between art and communication. After the director and the actors or dancers' intervention, following some basic protocol but with no major formalities, the public can ask the artists questions and comment on the scenic work.

The *audience-foyer*, a dialogical and epistemic practice in the artistic field, an idea in progress, emerged in the decade of the studied context as a kind of rehearsal or creative communication lab. The neologism emerges and circulates as a native category, a communication and artistic practice developed by the researched artistic community rather than a consolidated concept in the communication sciences and the arts. However, the experiences of the performing arts events are enough to see in this cultural activity a way to promote bonds with the audience so that occasional and intermittent audiences may become an established public of performing arts.

The procedures of this communication circuit in the field of performing arts introduce propositions of public relations, especially from authors with a psychosocial perspective, according to which one of the basic functions of this discipline, as applied social sciences, is to "form a public". Moreover, this public formation is based on the exchange of information, deliberately and autonomously, by the participants of a given community in its circuits of cultural practices and dynamics of information exchange.

The public, in the modern tradition of public relations, is defined as a social category formed in the dialogical game of consciences that stand for the proposition of not necessarily converging ideas and perhaps is comparable to the ideal of the modernising process where dialogue is seen as one of the best images of educational practice and citizen formation.

2. Methodology: Communication as dialogue

This article, with a qualitative approach (Minayo, 2009), pursues a theoretical-methodological construction in the hermeneutic process (Demo, 2014), focusing on the modes of social representation in the conversational practice of the *audience-foyer*, focusing on the collective search of the involved subjects (artists and audience), through dialogue, in the process of societal bond (Sodré, 2001), actualised in the public formation in theatre. In the theoretical sphere, by considering theatre and communication as "fields" (Bourdieu, 2004), we adopt the model of communication studies as a dialogue from the Latin American thinking in communication (Alfaro, 1998; Gushiken, 2006), the native concepts (developed in the researched environment itself) of *audience-foyer* (Pereira, 2000) and dramatic reading (Vieira, 2014), both in performing arts, and the psychosocial concept of "public", as a social formation stemming from audience formation and public debates in public relations (Andrade, 1989; Blumer, 1946/1978; França, 2004).

In this interdisciplinary and applied research, based on a case study on the Teatro Mosaico (Brazil), we draw from the model of communication studies as dialogue in the methodological proposition of the Brazilian epistemologist Venício Artur de Lima (2001). In this model, communication is defined as "dialogue, insofar as it is not a transfer of knowledge, but an encounter of interlocutors who seek the signification of meanings" (Lima, 2001, p. 36).

Dialogism was a hallmark of communication thought in Latin America (Gushiken, 2006) in the second half of the 20th century, a historical moment when the power relations in the communication field were related to social class contradictions and the difference between developed and developing countries, especially in the context of adult education and rural extension projects (Bordenave & Carvalho, 1987).

In the Brazilian context, it was about thinking of communication from another approach, not in the communication paradigm as the diffusion of information, but in a dialogical conception, where the centralised and unidirectional nature of the communication process is altered. Dialogical communication bears the ethical responsibility to consider the figure of the receiver not as a repository of messages but as an active subject and co-participant, able to reproduce and recreate the responsibility for producing meaning in the communication process.

A political issue emerges in the dialogical perspective of communication: the processes of subjectifying and emancipating a receiver, now considering his ability to think and act, in becoming aware of his participation as a subject in the social process. Thus, in communication as dialogue, it is worth considering the developing dialectical

relationship, in which each subject has conditions (physical, intellectual, emotional) to give signification to the meanings already given in the structure of symbolic systems.

The conception of communication as dialogue, notably Latin American, as we see it, also shaped communication thinking in the emergence of public relations as a discipline in the communication field (Gushiken, 2008). Unlike propaganda, a diffusionist practice still based on notions of persuasion and function, public relations chose to conceptually present a conception of communication where the category "public" was formed in dialogical and self-critical practices (Gushiken, 2006).

Symbolically, this relationship levelling suggested a more conscious approach of the organisations to the interests of their current and potential publics at a time when a question, then neglected in the communication thinking of the 20th century, was brought to the agenda: at the general level, the broad cultural field, and, at the concrete level, the cultural difference, as a diffusionist disruptor of linear communication processes.

As this article seeks to demonstrate, the arts field is also pressured by the attraction or indifference that artistic processes can cause in their audiences. However, at the same time, given the different modern experiences of production, circulation and fruition of arts in a country of unequal access to education and cultural products like Brazil, considering the expectations that are actualised or frustrated in the strenuous search for the formation of theatre audience that, possibly, can be transformed into public.

We consider the category "public" in the psychosocial conception of public relations (Andrade, 1989; Blumer, 1946/1978; França, 2004) as that social segment that ponders a given question or problem, seeking to reach a collective conclusion, although not necessarily by majority or consensus. Thus, we circumscribe the methodological instances and methodical processes of this article.

As a general goal:

- to understand the practice of *audience-foyer* as mediating dramatic reading between theatre and communication.

As specific goals:

- to identify in the practice of dialogue the transformation of the category "audience" into the category "public";
- theoretically characterise dialogical communication as a condition of public formation in theatre;
- to analyse public formation as a social bond and as a communication matter in the field of theatre in Teatro Mosaico.

In the methodical procedures, as an instance directly linked to the theoretical and epistemological levels (Lopes, 2003), we adopted the following tools: (a) use of document-based sources (particularly the script of the *Prólogo* (*Prologue*), written by the director Sandro Lucose) and (b) field observation of three sessions of dramatic reading and *audience-foyer*. Initially, we adopted only simple observation. However, after the first session, the company director invited us to join the dramatic reading as interlocutors and take part in the *audience-foyer* activity in the second session. Thus, the initial simple observation procedure was changed with the intervention of the researched theatre group itself, which was not exactly anticipated in the field research's plan, but demonstrates

the communication and cultural context of the cultural practices. In the unexpected situation, although the researcher has been activated as an interlocutor by the researched company in one of the dramatic reading and *audience-foyer* sessions, leading to a participant observation context, we kept the option for simple observation in the succession of activities both of dramatic reading and *audience-foyer* primarily. In unexpected situations, when considering the interference of the research in the studied field, it is important to contemplate the influence the studied field, in this case, an artistic field, has in the research process itself.

Experiencing this situation intensified our relations with the company. In a context changed by considering the communication model as dialogue, it was possible to experience a stronger pressure induced by the theatre company by inviting someone from the audience for a conversation and exchange of views. The dialogical participation highlighted: the transformation of the researcher from an element of the audience into a participant of a public, the dialogue urged by the company as a condition for this category transformation and, subsequently, the societal bond as an educating process of the audience and the theatre public.

3. Theatre: Between Art and Communication

These brief excerpts from studies in communication as applied social studies are meant to address the observation of three sessions of dramatic reading and *audience-foyer* activities as artistic and communication practices in the production of a theatre play. Specially to approach the audience formation and transformation, in the long run, of the audience into public for the performing arts, an activity that involves establishing a relationship, not rarely confrontational, between the arts environment and its social surroundings. It is worth noting that the *audience-foyer* activity, in this case as a supplement to dramatic reading sessions, enables contact between social segments for whom the theatre may have different interests and meanings, and even disinterests and non-meanings.

The object of this research is the formation of a public in the activities of dramatic reading and *audience-foyer* in the staging of the text *A Caravana da Ilusão* (*The Illusion's Caravan*) by the Brazilian playwright Alcione Araújo (2000) and the text *Prólogo* (*Prologue*) by the also Brazilian playwright Sandro Lucose (2005), by Teatro Mosaico, a company created in Rio de Janeiro and currently based in Cuiabá, capital of the state of Mato Grosso, in the Midwest region of Brazil.

The staging of *A Caravana da Ilusão* (*The Illusion's Caravan*) and *Prólogo* (*Prologue*) by Teatro Mosaico, which premiered by the end of the first semester of 2005, began its season one semester earlier when rehearsals were opened to the public. Sandro Lucose, the company's director, chose to prepare the actors in closed rehearsals and through dramatic reading, an activity open to the public and, in the early 2000s, still an emerging practice in the Brazilian theatre circuit.

The *audience-foyer* and dramatic reading sessions emerged in that period as supplementary activities in the field of theatre. However, they demonstrated the communication

need to promote theatre as an artistic field in a state capital that, at the beginning of the 21st century, the case of Cuiabá, had few active theatre companies and scarcely any with a professional structure or regular artistic activities.

The creation of theatre groups and their movement around class entities showed an incipient political organisation of the subjects involved. The professionalisation of Teatro Mosaico, the company's invented name in activity since 1995, with formal registration in the Cadastro Nacional de Pessoas Jurídicas (National Register of Legal Entities) since that year, was more an exception to the rule than a recurrent and consolidated practice in the theatre field in the capital of Mato Grosso. In this context, forming the audience and public around performing arts became challenging in developing the theatre field.

In the studied context, we use the notions of *audience-foyer* and dramatic reading both as artistic-communication phenomena and analytical categories. Based on Melvina Araújo's (2011) epistemology about syncretic cultural processes, we consider their ability to move from one context to the other in the fluidity of the categories. That is, from empirical data to a potential concept, which suggests, in the studied interface between the theatre and communication fields, the emergence of the so-called "native categories" to the extent that a particular field is now thought by the subjects involved in its production themselves.

The production of the dramatic reading and *audience-foyer* sessions, which included the work of organisational communication due to the need for forming the audience and the public in 2005, was the responsibility of the actor Celso Francisco Gayoso, then a journalism student at the Federal University of Mato Grosso, who played the character Roto, in *A Caravana da Ilusão* (*The Illusion's Caravan*). Having an actor and communicator, roles that are unfolded in the local theatre scene, given the lack of specific training in scenic arts in Mato Grosso, contributed to establishing, in an interdisciplinary and laboratory fashion, a communication thinking in Teatro Mosaico, which included the practice of press office and the development of institutional relations of the company with its publics, then, developing. The sessions of open rehearsals as dramatic reading and *audience-foyer* were intended to develop institutional relations. They were used to prepare the tour in the second half of that year under the coordination of the Fundação Nacional de Arte, an agency of the Ministry of Culture.

The *Caravana da Ilusão* (*The Illusion's Caravan*), a one-act play, is the ninth work by Alcione Araújo (2000), completed in 1981. Based on the contemplation of Pablo Picasso's paintings from the Rose Period, the play is about the paradoxical optimistic sadness of the members of the Medrano Circus, in Paris, given the material precariousness of the members of its troupe and the melancholy of the scenes backstage. Alcione Araújo's play features Bufo, Lorde, Bela, Roto and Ziga. All of them are members of a small circus troupe that, in the middle of a desert landscape, needs to decide what direction to take when, after the leader's death, "the road bifurcates".

Prólogo (*Prologue*), written by Sandro Lucose (2005), director of Teatro Mosaico, is a metalinguistic text, an explicit reference to the theatre itself, by recreating characters from renowned texts of comic theatre, among them *O Mambembe,* by Artur Azevedo,

and *The Imaginary Invalid*, by Molière. In *Prólogo* (*Prologue*), the director tries to scenically combine classical national and international theatre repertoires with elements of popular Brazilian culture. That approach has produced a comedy in which the traces of theatre are deconstructed in the popular discourse, moving closer to the imagination that can produce laughter when confronted with the solemnity of the theatrical environment as high art.

Comedic resources are evident in the dramatic reading of *Prólogo* (*Prologue*), which includes excerpts and suggestions of mannerisms recurrent in the comedy genre. It is no coincidence that one of the direct references recreated by the director Sandro Lucose is *O Mambembe*, described as burlesque, a reference to joking and mocking, with mischievous enunciations and spicy puns, a parody of the solemnity of the dramatic theatre and satire that makes social criticism (Celestino & Martins, 2018). Thus, *Prólogo* (*Prologue*), early in the show's staging, sets a fast and hallucinatory pace in causing laughter, which would later impact, through contrast, the rhythmic deceleration in the excerpt from *A Caravana da Ilusão* (*The Illusion's Caravan*).

In the staging of *A Caravana da Ilusão* (*The Illusion's Caravan*), the characters face the following doubt: to head towards the sea or the mountain? In *Prólogo* (*Prologue*), the director has another doubt during the play's staging: to head towards comedy or drama? While staging the two works, one after the other, in the same show, Teatro Mosaico asks its different publics about the intersection between art and communication: occasional audience or participating public? The dramatic reading and the *audience-foyer* become a circuit of production, circulation and consumption of information in which the doubts about the course of the show do not fade away. However, the context eventually structures the conditions for creating another narrative through which it seeks to form an audience and transform the (invariably occasional) audience into a (possibly permanent) public.

Dramatic reading, an educational resource in arts and education, and more recently in performing arts, has become a halfway between reading and theatre, thus optimising two fundamental educational tools: reading and dramatic expression (Vieira, 2014, p. 233). A rehearsal includes work with actors and may be interrupted by the director for corrections of pace, voice intonation, and marking of the scenic space, among other aspects of the theatre production. In the dramatic reading, with miscues or not, the rehearsal usually proceeds before a possible audience that might attend the venue. The possibility of an audience assumes there is a reduced and occasional public in the performing arts. They are generally members of other theatre groups, art students or friends who spontaneously come to the rehearsal venue. Regarding societal bond production, the possibility of the audience determines the investment of theatre companies in organisational communication and the formation of the audience and the permanent public.

The three dramatic readings of *Prólogo* (*Prologue*) and *A Caravana da Ilusão* (*The Illusion's Caravan*) produced two artistic experiences, which we seek to analyse from the perspective of communication: (a) dramatic readings open to the general public, occasions in which the company specifically invites speakers, experts or not on theatre, to

exchange views and comments, advertising these sessions through the press, mainly in the culture sections; and (b) the *audience-foyer* exercise conducted, after the readings, with the invited speakers and with the general audience, which, through advertising and invitations, attended the readings.

The season had three series of dramatic readings, followed by debates in the *audience-foyer* practice. In the first session at the Centro Cultural Casa Cuiabana, two philosophy teachers were invited: Professor Maurilia Valderez do Amaral (MA) and Professor José Carlos Leite (PhD), they were both then linked to the Institute of Human and Social Sciences of Federal University of Mato Grosso). In the second session, the guest was from the area of communication: Professor Yuji Gushiken (PhD), whom that year was linked to the Institute of Languages of Federal University of Mato Grosso and participated as a guest and commentator (on this occasion, there was also a dramatic reading of *A Menina e o Vento* [*The Girl and the Wind*], by the Brazilian playwright Maria Clara Machado). At the third dramatic reading, followed by the *audience-foyer*, two renowned theatre artists joined the debates: João Brites, Portuguese, director of the theatre group O Bando, from Portugal, and Amauri Tangará, Brazilian, director of the Company D'Artes do Brasil.

The first two sessions, held with non-experts in theatre, had, each one, around 20 people in the audience, with a heterogeneous profile, suggesting a repressed and still diffuse demand but a potential demand for consumption of plays and debates about performing arts. The third session, probably because it was directed to theatre experts, especially as they were two relevant names in the Portuguese and Brazilian theatre, had a more limited attendance, which is not a problem, as the expert public, as a legitimating element of a field, has a strong influence among artistic groups in the exchange of views and experiences.

The discussions between artists and the various segments of the public followed one after the other, questions were asked, doubts were addressed to the director, songs were hummed, questions were formulated among peers, and even suggestions were given for staging the scenic work at issue. In the first session, contemporary philosophy professors promoted reflections on the distinction between aesthetics and poetics, producing their perceptions of the dramatised text based on their own academic studies. In the second session, the relations between space and time, given the experience produced in the backyard of an old historical mansion, had as its main interest the production of the scenic space directly related to the places of memory in the city. In the third session, given the significance of the two invited theatre directors in the artistic field in Portugal and Brazil, the emphasis of the talk on expert observation fell on the pace that the company was imprinting between the comedy and drama sections.

The dialogical character of the process was established, and it made a difference in the conception of the show, which, in an interactive and participatory process, started right there in the dramatic reading and *audience-foyer* debates. The show's production began virtually in the exchange of information, which at the very least, confuses the idea of the beginning and end of artistic work and the very notion of the premiere. While the

aesthetic object is the impact of the artefact (dramatic text, in this case) on the reader (Kothe, 1981), the dramatic reading and the *audience-foyer* highlight the short-circuit that the work promotes between author and receiver, insofar as the author, director and actors start a dialogue with different audience profiles, in the process of becoming a company's public.

Although the classical texts were known by the specific public (actors and theatre directors), they were still novelties for other professional profiles that started to become "public" in the dialogue about the arts. In the circuit of exchange of views, philosophy professors produced comments and gave interpretations to the dramatic texts, opening new lines of research and possibilities in the staging in progress. The communication researcher expanded his own repertory on arts as he outlined impressions on the rehearsed play and, in that context, participated more as mediator than a qualified interlocutor in the theatrical field. Experts in theatre made comments that sounded like a very specific code proper to the theatrical scene. Overall, theatre experts and laypeople became familiar with the text of the *Prólogo* (*Prologue*), by the director Sandro Lucose, and the text of *A Caravana da Ilusão* (*The Illusion's Caravan*), by Alcione Araújo.

The *Prólogo* (*Porlogue*) sets the tone of the comedy, in an exercise of reading and dramatic expression to the actors, with the text spoken at a fast pace, a technique that the theatre community regards as questionable assimilation for the actor's exercise but of easy access for non-expert audiences. The script, distributed to the guests for preliminary reading, informs them that the *Prólogo* (*Prologue*) will be staged outside the theatre building. At the end of this part, the troupe, like a caravan, invites the audience to enter the venue with an Italian stage. End of the *Prólogo* (*Prologue*), end of the comedy. Beginning, for the company, of the drama, in a broader sense. In this second part of the work, the staging continues with *A Caravana da Ilusão* (*The Illusion's Caravan*), a one-act play by Alcione Araújo. The dramatic density of the text abruptly slows down the frenetic pace of the *Prólogo* (*Prologue*). From comedy to drama, the image of possible reactions from the audience circulates, still in the virtual potential.

The lay public's overall preference, at least in the universe of mass culture, for comedy is well known, as well as the difficult attraction that dramas exert on them, meaning that there would be an estrangement of the public by the variety of genres in the composition of the same work.

In this tension between comedy and drama, the dramatic reading and the *audience-foyer* are outlined as demands of cultural consumption, as audience mediating instruments in the construction and directions of the work. These two activities are certainly not conducted as "opinion research" or "market research", as if art would necessarily invest in this kind of technology for predicting preferences and the company's need to turn the play into a commodity of the entertainment industry. However, these activities provide the play and the company's director with insights into the countless interpretations actualised in the dialogue with the audience because of the diversity that forms it.

In the three reading and *audience-foyer* sessions, one of the aspects that apparently most affected the audience, especially the expert public of actors and directors,

was exactly the pace deceleration from the *Prólogo*'s (*Prologue*'s) comedy genre to the *A Caravana da Ilusão*'s (*The Illusion's Caravan*'s) dramatic. The theatre provokes the audience, which, in the wake of becoming public, questions the theatre company, forming an ethos around a certain artistic and cultural field in these dialogues. In this case, the exchange of information takes place no longer in a linear fashion but rather in a multidirectional way, in its bivalence and vagueness, as analysed from the Latin American communication thinking perspective and its re-readings in the area of public relations and organisational communication. In this process, not always perceptible, the modes of societal bond between the theatre company and its various publics are updated.

4. Communication: Information and Knowledge as Gifts

By incorporating the general public's perspective into the work, which comes back to the public as a show, the open dramatic reading and the *audience-foyer* actualise a kind of contemporary communication and cultural system of *gift* and *counter-gift*. Social science studies describe such a phenomenon in non-Western cultures as a kind of total prestations system, through which Marcel Mauss (2003) tried to understand better the nature of human transactions in societies around us. The *audience-foyer,* complementing the dramatic reading, is actualised as a system of informational gifts and counter-gifts. Rather than flowing from one point to another unidirectionally, information circulates, modulating societal bonds and the production of knowledge about theatre. The information sent out returns, forming a proper communication and epistemic circuit. The communication process modulates, in this case, the formation of the theatre audience and public.

From the occasional public to the artificially induced and historically produced public, controversial theme in organisational communication, there is at least one feature to be noticed in the *audience-foyer* activities: this activity becomes an effort not only for the simple audience formation. Attracting an audience to a play's presentation is equivalent to simply "setting a relationship" between an organisation — in this case, a theatre company — and its social environment without producing permanent relationships.

The special feature of the *audience-foyer* is that, in the communication dimension of this cultural activity, it goes beyond simply attracting the audience as a promotion of social relations because the effort of public formation happens at a higher level, that is, in the production of societal bonds as socially established structures, therefore, more lasting. In other words, more than just attending performances in the scenic space, the debate with the audience makes it shift from being a sporadic and occasional group of people to becoming one public, which, at least hypothetically, produces more consistent, intellectual and emotional bonds with the organisation, in this case, the theatre company.

The company offers the art of theatre as a *gift*. The audience offers the gaze through which the work is actualised as a *counter-gift*. The public — the audience that discusses the work and gives artistic and historical consistency to the trajectory of the company — actualises that "spirit of the given thing" which, circulating in the audience that is

formed, will, at least hypothetically, lay the foundations for the formation of a theatre public. It is when the knowledge and secrets exchanged between the theatre company and the public take on the guise of horizontal, participatory communication practices, in which the theatre company (organisation) gets entangled in the social environment of its surroundings and reinvents an idea of cultural practice, beyond the artistic practice.

However, there is a certain dubiousness in such an event. Initially, there is the need to make the artistic environment accessible, especially the theatre, as a place sacralised by the rituals of the so-called "high culture" to a larger segment of society, the non-experts and even the theatre non-public, to disseminate the secrets of the arts and form new audiences and publics, until then only in the virtual potential. Then, or simultaneously, it becomes evident the company needs to turn to the peers of the artistic environment, that is, other artists, considered as "public of interest" (Giacomo, 1993), to have a specialised reading in the debates about the work and to produce a symbolic safety margin to the staging process and the result of the work then staged.

This dubiousness is explained by the fact that, from the organisational point of view, the company considers and invests in the demand of the expert public, which would be the *public of interest*, showing interest in developing the processes and artistic thinking. Concurrently, more than engaging with expert peers, the company diagnoses the need to expand the audience and, consequently, to form a public. The development of relationships with its various publics are challenges that define the trajectory of the theatre company, which activates, from an artistic field, communication as dialogue, a communication model as a tool for managing the demands, and virtual crises, that arise with the interpellation (intellectual, sensitive, marketing) of its different publics.

In other words, these dramatic reading and *audience-foyer* activities highlight the expansion of the audience, the creation of an audience that simultaneously becomes one public, with the participation of experts, but creating a social bond as a communication affair and, specifically, an emotional bond between the theatre company and the social environment of the hosting city and other places where it takes its scenic repertoire. Therefore, it is not only about meeting the demand of the so-called "public of interest", which in the case of the theatre would be composed of the expert critics and the expert audience but also, and not less importantly, the demand of a wider audience and public, which would actualise the image of social critique in the processes of artistic fruition and consumption.

The *audience-foyer* activity actualises giving visibility to precepts of public relations studies and Latin American thinking in communication in its dialogical aspect. It challenges the idea that communication techniques would be "secrets" and knowledge restricted to academic and professional circles. However, popular wisdom, a public domain, makes such knowledge an already applied common good, a kind of critical fortune, which, in our view, designates the paradigmatic power of communication in shaping contemporary culture.

These aspects of the theatrical scene are relevant to the field of communication insofar as they show the deliberate practice of a dialogue between artists and audience,

in which the work at issue already has a virtually powerful existence. This case study outlines a process: the Spanish artist Pablo Picasso borrows the images of his well-known Rose Period from the barnstormer life of a circus in France; the Brazilian playwright Alcione Araújo reacts to a certain optimistic sadness of Pablo Picasso's paintings by writing *A Caravana da Ilusão* (*The Illusion's Caravan*); the Brazilian playwright Sandro Lucose produces a staging of Alcione Araújo's text and writes *Prólogo* (*Prologue*), directing scenically both in dramatic readings and *audience-foyer*.

In this inter-semiotic translation process (from visual arts to literature and theatre and from arts to communication issues), the theatrical work is not restricted to the script's text or the staging experience. In the dramatic reading and *audience-foyer* exercises, the director, in starting a dialogue with the audience, makes the staging process more than the staging of a text. The theatre company, through the director and the actors, goes beyond: in that work, the group highlights the condition of a hypertext, open, susceptible to the eyes of the audience that, through a specialised or non-specialised social critique, to a certain extent, interferes in the work that will be seen on the stage months later. Before you knew it, the work was already in progress, before the eyes and with the public's participation, well before the so-called official premiere.

5. Institutional Image: Between Comedy and Drama

The Mosaico Theatre defined itself, in that period, as a "repertoire company" that included in its professional history, until the studied period, the staging of *A Menina e o Vento* (*The Girl and the Wind;* Maria Clara Machado), *Auto da Estrela Guia* (Sandro Lucose), *Muito Barulho por Nada* (*Much Ado About Nothing*; William Shakespeare) and *Sambalelê* (an adaptation of Brazilian folklore into a musical). According to the management's diagnosis, the company's institutional image suggests that, with such a repertoire, Teatro Mosaico has established itself before its publics as a comedy company[1].

Such repertoire has brought invitations to participate in scenic arts festivals throughout Brazil: "Londrina International Festival" (Paraná State), "São José do Rio Preto Theatre Festival" (São Paulo State), "Curitiba Theatre Festival" (Paraná State) and "Goiânia em Cena" (Goiás State), as well as tours through cities in several other states of the country. With the recognition of such a repertoire by the peers of the national artistic community, the simultaneous staging in the same work of a comedy, *Prólogo* (*Prologue*), and a drama, *A Caravana da Ilusão* (*The Illusion's Caravan*), emerges, therefore, as a challenge for demanding new exercises in direction, staging and production. Between comedy and drama, paraphrasing an excerpt from the script of Alcione Araújo's text, in the company's trajectory, "the path bifurcates".

Based on this challenge, dramatised reading and *audience-foyer* practice is understood as an "invention" of a cultural activity that produces differences regarding the play's staging. The reading and the debate are inscribed as another moment of cultural

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[1] Later on, the company would make stagings of dramatic plays with characters from the popular imaginary, such as *Anjo Negro* (Black Angel; Nélson Rodrigues) and *Peer Gynt* (Henrik Ibsen), among others.

goods' production, circulation and consumption. It is certainly not up to art to "communicate" a work's virtual "sense" to the public. However, it is up to the company to exercise, in the dialogue experience, the ability of the slightest prediction to inform the new activities and proper cultural cartographies, which also change the institutional image of the company.

In other words, it is not only the transition from comedy to the drama that modulates the institutional image of Teatro Mosaico. The readings and the *audience-foyer* activities entail a modulation of the concept of the company sought to be built. Initially, the dramatic reading and the *audience-foyer* would be devices that would capture the audience's sensations for the staging of the work. However, these two activities tend to win the statute of cultural events themselves, as they are invented as other ways of affecting an audience that, arduously and slowly, is transformed into a public.

Theatre production in Cuiabá, in the first half of the first decade of the 21st century, was revitalised amid a simultaneous profusion of musical, literary, audiovisual and plastic arts production, among other arts, including theatre. The condition of the so-called "cultural"[2] consumption in the city, not different in other regions of the country, encompasses the doubt as to whether there would be an audience for theatre shows other than those of commercial productions, with media appeal of famous television actors and a strong campaign of massive advertising. This facet of the cultural backdrop emerges as the basis for thinking about the performing arts to the extent that it also becomes part of the condition of production and consumption of other artistic genres and formats.

In Cuiabá, a city located in a multi-ethnic urban agglomeration of close to a million inhabitants in the geodesic centre of South America, theatre companies work as amateurs or professionals, with the support of small and medium-sized companies, cultural marketing sponsorship from large companies within the framework of a State Law of Cultural Incentive (transformed into a State Fund of Cultural Incentive in 2006), of a Municipal Law of Cultural Incentive and events organised[3] by the Ministry of Culture to meet so-called regional demands. When there is stimulus, it comes from public policies that are not always consistent and corporate marketing that is not always constant. When they exist, long-term sponsorships become support for short- and medium-term projects.

In these social-economic and political conditions, the *audience-foyer* stands out as an instrument of audience and public formation. This way, it is possible to see the dynamics this activity brings to the theatrical circuit and its sociocultural environment more broadly. Firstly, the activity forms an audience that goes to the theatre to enjoy a show. Simultaneously, it forms a public that, more than enjoying a show, hypothetically has the theatre as a mediating instance of new sociability. Theatre becomes more than a text, a staging or a staging venue. It becomes a kind of open work in which the public-audience

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[2] Along with Teatro Mosaico, some companies have been producing steadily in Mato Grosso, such as Teatro Fúria, Pessoal do Ânima, Companhia Khatarsis, Grupo Téspis and Cena Onze.

[3] Such is the case of the Caravana Funarte, a project through which theatre groups and companies circulate through their geographical regions.

participation gives the dimension of the virtuality of the scenic work and its implications in the sociocultural environment. Opening to the participation of the public-audience in Teatro Mosaico's staging of texts by Alcione Araújo and Sandro Lucose evokes the dialogue as a modulating principle, a cultural reinvention in itself immersing the imaginary already given and transforming it into a new map of reality.

6. Latin American Thinking in Communication: Between One Use and Another

In the dialogical perspective of Latin American thinking in communication, the *audience-foyer* activity, when complementing the dramatic reading, does not mean that the figure of the theatre director and the company promote only an extension of knowledge, as in a trans-cultural diffusion as a transmission of specialised theatre information to a lay public.

The *audience-foyer* provides a setting for interactivity between the company and its public, a virtual public until then, in formation-actualisation in the audience watching the play. In these conditions, through the information exchange and the reflection on the themes the play proposes, the audience produces differences towards itself as a subject of knowledge and the work being composed in this mutual interventions system (the work in the audience and the audience in work).

The practice of *audience-foyer* ultimately provides, with the theatre and the debate about the theatre itself, a certain awareness of being in the world, reacting sensorially and intellectually to art and with the theatrical art. This might be called a game between citizenship, as the demand for the consumption of cultural goods and subjectivity and the production of an existential and sensitive territory. In the case of theatre, the dynamics of cultural consumption may be directly related to the plane of desire, therefore, to an unconscious dynamic. However, it is not about the unconscious as absence but about a productive dynamic, which presupposes, in the practice of dialogue, the rational bond of what the Italian-Venezuelan communication scholar Antonio Pasquali (1973) calls "with-knowledge".

Between the fruition of art and the dialogue about art, there is a transition in public formation from the merely informational to the communicational level, where language operates on the sensory and intellectual levels. As the Brazilian educator Paulo Freire (1977) said, in dialogue, knowledge is not only conveyed; knowledge is created through dialogue. It is when art becomes — it may be minor and not necessarily massive — a constituent element of the public interest.

From the communication perspective, more specifically from the communication thinking developed in Latin America, the creation of audience and public in the scope of the dramatic reading and the *audience-foyer* does not require the theatre to impose itself to society as a cultural model to be followed or copied, as a late modernising process in a country still little accustomed to the consumption of scenic productions and to attending theatres. It is not a process of cultural coercion but a relationship of exchange, in which there is certainly mutual distrust, some vacillation in the game of invention of

the societal bond, and some uneasiness in consuming a cultural product that may seem meaningless and superfluous in daily life. Hence the evident apprehension for those outside the theatrical environment in making an emotional investment in art because it binds people by causing discomfort or it bothers them by producing bonds. Here, the art of theatre is the strange element that, in a barnstormer fashion, like a nomad in the desert, wanders through a territory and questions people with the laughter of comedy and the conflicts of other dramas.

In these intercultural contacts, there may be an initial estrangement in which the language presented, in this case, theatre, is the cause of discomfort. The relationship created, however, is bivalent. The theatre company acts as a giver of art and a producer of information. However, it plays a game in which the audience becomes a dynamic element in the artistic process. In this case, there is no donation of information as a premise for a certain cultural, specifically artistic, development, where the prevalence of an instance endowed with knowledge establishes it to those not endowed with it.

Rather, the concept of cultural production is developed to consider, through the dialogical process, the cultural environment of the company and the bivalent relationship itself, whereby the subjects involved are both producers and consumers of information. This proves that the theme treated here has parallels with what is called Latin American thinking in communication and its applications in the theoretical field of public relations and organisational communication.

Initially, one could think of theatrical production and diffusion as a way to leverage a certain society to higher levels from a cultural point of view. This issue, already worn out, has translated into cultural and communicational diffusion models with a supposedly modernising character. As old as it may be, this diffusionist modulation often re-emerges as a panacea of socioeconomic and cultural development. The field of communication in Latin America has historically presented enough studies and case reports to show the sociocultural complications of the diffusionist model. When the issue is cultural, it is important — simultaneously as a communication issue — to understand how the field of performing arts is formed in a Latin American country like Brazil. To the same extent that so many other areas wonder, for example, how an artistic field is produced, not only by production but also by public policies, educational activities and business marketing processes that currently condition the circulation and consumption of cultural goods.

The case of the theatre shows these gaps between the production and consumption of cultural goods against a backdrop of socioeconomic inequalities and cultural differences. Any diagnosis based on the cultural programming published in cultural sections of the printed media indicates, in Brazil, a strong concentration of production and consequent theatrical consumption in two cities: Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, the two largest and most important Brazilian metropolises. Forming theatre audiences in places where the performing arts are not a regular and consistent practice is also a matter of regional inequality.

The artistic field, whatever it may be, is certainly made with the intervention of other social instances. In the case of the scenic arts, these include training courses for actors

and theatrical direction, availability of scenic spaces, qualified producers, technical services for lighting and sound, training of specialised press and marketing professionals, educational policies directed to the artistic field and, not less important, formulation of public policies at all levels — municipal, state and federal — directed to the cultural field. This reality is not easily found outside the Rio-São Paulo axis, which means that theatre in Brazil is equivalent to modernism without modernisation. Far from being tradition, it presents itself as the element of the cult universe in search of social legitimacy in the mediation with other cultural production and consumption instances.

7. Final Considerations

In Brazil, cultural traditions, like literature and memories, are more thoroughly developed than the performing arts. Theatre, despite its tradition in European and Asian countries, in the Brazilian cultural circuit is more of a young tradition, which would have, nowadays, the dramatic reading and the *audience-foyer* as mediating and legitimising devices amidst the historical formation and consolidation of national traditions. These activities are thus cultural innovations from a dramaturgical and communication point of view. More appropriately, it was up to the local conditions of production and consumption of cultural goods to reinvent their own operating mode. Innovations are cartographies produced, inventors of new maps, which change and produce an ever-fluid cultural imaginary. They are traditions of the future.

Therefore, this tradition of the theatre that reinvents itself involves the literary mediation of the dramatic reading and the communication mediation of the *audience-foyer*. This demonstrates that, nowadays, the cultivation of art involves the field of communication. This mediation is essential, while institutions of the educational and cultural field do not earn the condition of inducers of this cultivation. Communication is a field of knowledge in which theoretical uses invent language modes of operation. More specifically, the *uses* of Latin American thinking in communication invented dialogical processes of societal bonds construction.

Thus, due to its heterogeneous, even diversified activities, one can think of communication as a field that claims its hegemony through which other forms of expression, such as the performing arts, tend to connect in this contemporary world. A mode of connection is not necessarily its massive diffusion as a cultural imperative. Rather, it is about mediations invented amid the theatrical circuit, itself mediator and manager of communication processes, markedly dialogic, as once thought in Latin American geographies.

Throughout the decades, Teatro Mosaico has embarked on new experiences and with different scenic languages, staging texts of various authors, such as the English William Shakespeare, the Brazilian Nelson Rodrigues and the Norwegian Henrik Ibsen, and the most recent production of artistic intervention developed by the director Sandro Lucose in his doctoral studies in the Federal University of Mato Grosso and the University of Porto, in Portugal. From memories that actualise themselves, in a thick present that does not elapse and a future yet to come, the dialogical and participatory character of the

dramatic readings and *audience-foyer* sessions is conceived as a mix of artistic-communication phenomena and analytical categories established in the many fields that seek to study the performing arts and their most productive interfaces.

So, it is possible to identify, observing the sessions of dramatic reading and *audience-foyer*, with Teatro Mosaico as a cutout, the dialogism as a horizontal communication model that allows the participation of the audience and its virtual and arduous transformation into public. Then, dialogical communication, and not the mere mechanical diffusion of information, is presented as a condition for forming the public as that segment that emotionally and rationally debates a certain question of public interest. Finally, the production of the societal bond between different publics and the theatre company indicates the strength of an interface between communication and arts always in a reinvention process.

From the communication perspective, notably communication as dialogue, Teatro Mosaico has been developing in the last decades, through the director Sandro Lucose, an organisational approach of collaboration with other artists from the fields of contemporary dance, visual arts, concert music, and partners from the theatrical field itself, in Brazil and abroad. The development of these relationships between peers, which at times are also inter-institutional relationships, demonstrates that the communication and artistic experience of dramatic reading and *audience-foyer* allowed the company, created in Rio de Janeiro and based in Cuiabá, to create a path in the theatrical field of Mato Grosso and Brazil.

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Interactions Between the Gramado Film Festival Museum, the Film Festival and the Local Cultural Tourism

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Abstract

This study is part of the theoretical field of cultural studies and chooses as its object of analysis the Gramado Film Festival Museum and its links with the Film Festival and local cultural tourism. The main goal is to reflect on the museum as a hybrid cultural producer, which triggers, through interactivity, representations of the Film Festival and the city of Gramado itself, producing multiple meanings among its visitors and boosting local cultural tourism. In this sense, some questions are pivotal to this study: what representational strategies are used in the permanent exhibition at the Gramado Film Festival Museum? What cultural representations does the museum communicate about the Film Festival and the city of Gramado? As a methodology, we used the ethnographic observation of the museum's permanent exhibition with records in a field diary. Among the contingent and provisional findings, under the aegis of postmodern cultural convergence, the modulation of culture and art in the museum's permanent exhibition stands out, producing multiple connections between the Film Festival, the museum and cultural tourism in the city from Gramado.

Keywords

Gramado Film Festival Museum, Film Festival, cultural tourism

Articulações Entre o Museu do Festival do Cinema de Gramado, o Festival do Cinema e o Turismo Cultural Local

Resumo

Este estudo se inscreve no campo teórico dos estudos culturais e elege como objeto de análise o Museu do Festival de Cinema de Gramado e suas articulações com o Festival do Cinema e o turismo cultural local. O objetivo central é refletir sobre o museu como um produtor cultural híbrido que, através da interatividade, aciona representações sobre o Festival do Cinema e acerca da própria cidade de Gramado, produzindo múltiplos significados entre os seus visitantes e dinamizando o turismo cultural local. Nesse sentido, algumas questões são centrais neste estudo: quais as estratégias representacionais acionadas na exposição permanente do Museu do Cinema de Gramado? Que representações culturais o museu comunica sobre o Festival de Cinema e a cidade de Gramado? Em termos metodológicos, utilizou-se a observação etnográfica da exposição permanente do museu com registros em um diário de campo. Dentre os achados contingentes e provisórios, destaca-se, sob a égide da convergência cultural pós-moderna, a

modulação da cultura e da arte na exposição permanente do museu produzindo múltiplas articulações entre o Festival do Cinema, o museu e o turismo cultural na cidade de Gramado.

Palavras-chave

Museu do Cinema de Gramado, Festival do Cinema, turismo cultural

1. Introduction and Methodological Assumptions

The choice of the theoretical contribution of cultural studies to mobilise the analysis of the object of study at issue, the Gramado Film Festival Museum (http://www.museufestivaldecinema.com.br), is related to the fact that it is a field of interdisciplinary studies. According to Wortmann et al. (2015), it has enabled the proposition of considerations about the productivity of culture in educational processes underway in contemporary society. In that way, the concept of cultural pedagogies stands out. For Steinberg (2016), it is related to the educational dimension, considering that currently, learning has been moving to other sociocultural and political spaces beyond the school. "Education takes place in a variety of social sites including but not limited to schooling. Pedagogical sites are those places where power is organised and deployed including libraries, TV, movies, newspapers, magazines, toys, advertisements, video games, books, sports, etc." (Steinberg & Kincheloe, 2004, pp. 101–102).

Assuming that the Gramado Film Festival Museum has an educational dimension, this study aims to explore what cultural meanings are produced and disseminated by the permanent museographic exhibition of this museum to its visitors.

As for methodology, visits to the museum were made within an ethnographic perspective of participant observation and records that intended to understand, according to Souza and Lopes (2002), the materiality of this exhibition, giving the observer an insight into the most recurrent representations produced in its various materials. Each of the on-site tours, and the notes and photographs taken in each opportunity, are part of the ethnographic research effort that sought to produce the empirical material of the research. It is worth noting that authors such as Coffey (1999) recognise that this methodology is often associated with the researcher's "self", thus becoming autoethnography. Hence, this study was made possible through an autoethnographic practice that required, as already mentioned, visits to this museum space, whose observations were recorded in a field diary composed of the researchers' notes and photographs they took. The analyses were developed from the cultural analysis' contribution, which, according to Silva (2010), seeks to question naturalised views about the cultural spaces of the museum and the meanings produced and shared by visitors of these spaces. In light of these contributions, the choice for autoethnography is established by its potential for evaluating and re-evaluating the researcher's observations and results. That is, therefore, the methodological premise adopted in this research.

Regarding the theoretical interpretation of museums in contemporary society, we share Hudson's (1999) notion that museums have been steadily evolving from mere warehouses, independent units of preservation of national symbols, to cultural centres and powerful educational forums. This concept will be discussed in the section 3.

Firstly, we will make a brief historical introduction about the Gramado Film Festival to understand this festival museum as a cultural artefact, which in its permanent exhibition, produces representations of this film event and the city of Gramado, thus contributing to increasing the local cultural tourism. According to Lasanski (2004), this museum is simultaneously a cultural product and a producer of culture which promotes cultural tourism when it identifies and attributes particular interpretations to the cultural heritage of the city of Gramado. In this sense, we seek to analyse the hybrid potential of the Gramado Film Festival Museum as an interactive cultural forum that builds representational strategies about the Film Festival and this city. Thus, some questions are essential in this study: which representational strategies are used in the exhibition design of this museum? What cultural representations does the museum communicate about the Film Festival and the city of Gramado? What possible cultural pedagogies does the museum convey to its visitors? These are some of the questions we intend to address in this article.

2. The Gramado Film Festival

The genesis of the Film Festival is associated with the first tourism event in Gramado, four years after the emancipation of the city: the Hydrangea Festival in 1958, which, according to the Municipal Education Secretary of Gramado (Secretaria Municipal de Educação de Gramado, 1987), was a simple festival alluding to the flower that symbolises the city.

However, the Festa das Hortênsias had an unexpected repercussion, promoting the city as the first milestone in the history of organised tourism in Rio Grande do Sul. At the time, the then secretary of the Municipal Council of Tourism, Romeu Dutra, thought of giving a cultural imprint to the event by including film screenings. According to Daros (2008), the first cinema in the city, called 3 de Outubro, opened in 1929 and was located in a wooden house in the Major Nicoletti Square. Quintans (2008) states that this building was also used for other community activities because often, the seats were removed to clear the centre of the hall for dancing or skating. With the advent of sound film in 1936, this cinema got new seats and a more modern screen, changing its name to Cine Splendid, which played a fundamental role for the community and was considered the "city's hot spot". However, in the early 1960s, due to the precariousness of the building, Cine Splendid ceased its activities.

It was only in 1964, during the administration of the Mayor José Francisco Perine, that the construction of a new cinema began. In 1967, Cine Embaixador was inaugurated, and on the occasion of the "VI Hydrangea Festival", from January 6 to 8, 1969, the "I National Film Festival of Gramado" was held. According to Quintans (2008), it was

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attended by prominent artists of the national cinema of that time, such as Eva Wilma and John Herbert. Given the event's success, a second edition was held in 1971, still an amateur event with no awards.

According to Quintans (2008), after the administration of Mayor Horst Volk, with the creation of the Secretariat of Tourism, the film screenings became a nationally prominent film festival. The author explains that the public administration of that time, based on contacts with film producers from Rio de Janeiro, offered sponsorship for the city to be the scenery of film productions, which was essential for the creation of the Gramado Film Festival. According to the statements of the Secretary of Tourism at the time, Romeu Dutra:

> we then helped and sponsored all the artists' expenses during the filming. Meanwhile, we took the opportunity to discuss with important names, such as Paulo José and Lewgoy, the creation of a festival in Gramado. Lewgoy arranged for the first audience to talk to the president of the National Film Institute, Ricardo Cravo Albin. (Quintans, 2008, p. 40)

Thus, the first edition of the Gramado Film Festival was held from January 11 to 14, 1973, causing some controversy in the city. Quintans (2008) states that at that time, Gramado did not have hotels with swimming pools, so the artists used to go to the Gramado Tennis Club, a recreational space for the residents in the summer. In this place, the film stars were topless, a practice that impacted the citizens of Gramado, as described by the author: "in fact, it was a scandal! The priest made a speech in church about the threat the festival represented to the Gramado family, raising doubts about the continuity of the event that had been so arduously accomplished" (Quintans, 2008, p. 45). However, Quintans (2008) emphasises that the event took place anyway because Horst Volk, back to the presidency of his company, the Calçados Ortopé, sponsored the Festival, so in this edition, the city that at the time had 24,000 inhabitants received approximately 16,000 visitors.

Since the Film Festival's first edition, the event's closing evening was dedicated to the awards ceremony. Quintans (2008) recalls that Horst Volk wished the trophy would be a hydrangea sculpture. However, "Kikito", the *Brazilian Oscar*, was created by Elisabeth Rosenfeldt, at the headquarters of Artesanato Gramadense, in 1966 before the Film Festival was created. It was a small lead statuette that, according to Daros (2008), this artist created to give to her closest friends as a symbol of friendship and respect. It was affectionately known as the "God of good humour". In 1972, the Kikito was the trophy of the National Handicrafts Fair, hosted in Gramado. Then, in 1973, it became the Film Festival's highest award for the best artists and directors.

With the event's expansion, every edition, the Cine Embaixador, with its 600 seats, became small to house the festival. In 1987, according to Daros (2008), with resources provided by the community and a loan from the City Hall, about 55,000,000 cruzados were invested in renovations and technical improvements to ensure the highest standard for the headquarters of one of the biggest national film events. It is worth mentioning

that during this refurbishment, the cinema grew to house 1,100 people. Moreover, its architectural style, mostly Bavarian, was already predominant in the city since the early 1960s, aiming to give Gramado an architectural identity, as can be perceived in Romeu Dutra's words:

> the Bavarian style was established at that time for the constructions in Gramado. We thought of many things, and the person who gave us many ideas about the Gramado style was Frantz Habeler, who owned the Hotel das Hortênsias. He was a German who had sold his property in Porto Alegre and decided to build that hotel, unlike the square style that prevailed at the time, those square houses. (Quintans, 2008, p. 38)

Daros (2008) points out that with this renovation, mainly by incorporating the Bavarian style into the building, the cinema headquarters were given a new name: Palácio dos Festivais. Five years after its inauguration, the continuity of the Film Festival was threatened by a lack of government support. However, according to Sebrae (2022), filmmakers launched an Iberoamerican edition in 1992, awarding films and international stars, such as actor Javier Bardem and filmmaker Pedro Almodóvar.

In 2006, before its 33rd edition, the Gramado Film Festival was acknowledged as a historical and cultural heritage of Rio Grande do Sul, under Law no. 12.529, of June 6, 2006. Zeca Brito, director of Lecine, and Beatriz Araújo, State Secretary of Culture, in an editorial section of the Festival's 50th edition catalogue prepared by Gramadotur, highlighted:

> as a fundamental part of the gaucho cultural heritage. In the last 50 years, Gramado has been promoting Rio Grande do Sul in Brazil and abroad, making the municipality a cultural and tourism reference. Gramado is a creative economy ecosystem that evolved from a calendar of cinematographic actions (Brito & Araújo, 2022, p. 17)

Thus, the event represented the consolidation of the tourism activity in Gramado. According to Brito and Araújo (2022), the acknowledgement of the municipality as a tourism success case happened mainly because of the Film Festival. Gramado was soon referred to as the "Brazilian capital of cinema" (Secretaria Municipal de Educação, 1987, p. 87).

Following the coronavirus pandemic, in 2020 and 2021, the festival was held online. In 2022, the event resumed on-site, and its 50th edition was celebrated with two major milestones: the Municipal Legislative Assembly approved Bill no. 028/2022 (Projeto de Lei do Legislativo n.º 028/2022, 2022), establishing the Kikito as cultural heritage of the city of Gramado ("Cerimônia Oficializa Kikito Como Patrimônio Cultural de Gramado", 2022); and the reopening of the Gramado Film Festival Museum, whose origins date back to the year 2000. However, the installation of the museum was only made possible in 2015 through a bill from the municipal executive power.

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3. The Film Festival Museum Under the Theoretical Lenses of Cultural Studies

According to Urry (2001), in contemporary times, with the decline of the national historical narrative hegemony, "there has been a remarkable increase in the scope of histories worth being represented" (p.175) in museums. Thus, the theorist claims that postmodern museums are now exhibiting alternative histories with social, economical, popular, feminist, ethnic and industrial biases. Moreover, the author (Urry, 2001) draws attention to the change in the interaction of the visiting public with museums:

> visitors are no longer expected to stand awestruck at exhibitions. More emphasis is now placed on their degree of involvement. "Living" museums replace "dead" museums, open air museums replace enclosed museums, sound replaces murmurs imposed by silence, and visitors are no longer apart from what is on display by glass partitions. (Urry, 2001, p. 176)

Such interactivity, and the increased visitors' participation in exhibitions, according to Hudson (1999), stem from the change in the scope of museums, which started to pose questions to the public, instead of providing them with answers, encouraging them to interact and build their understandings through what they observe, listen to and manipulate. According to Lumley (1988), hybrid museums, in their exhibitions, activate interactive styles, which lead to the production of a media environment. Following this approach, Anico (2005) states that contemporary museums no longer focus on the unbridled acquisition of objects but on communication with the public. According to the author, there has been a change in the "museological ethos". Where formerly objects were valued, the visitor has become the central focus. The public becomes "both agent and product of political, social and cultural change" (Anico, 2005, p. 83). Moreover, the exhibition design project establishes an active participation of the visiting public with the digital collections, particularly in interactive museums, as is the case of the Gramado Film Festival Museum.

Thus, by adopting these theoretical assumptions, this study seeks to examine the Gramado Film Festival Museum not only as an informational repository of this event, but mainly as a producer of culture that disseminates and communicates representations about the Film Festival and the city of Gramado, promoting the local cultural tourism. The museum's implementation process and the analyses made possible through the visits are discussed below.

4. The Gramado Film Festival Museum

The roots of this museum's implementation date back two decades ago, as from Municipal Law no. 1738/00 (Lei 1738/00, 2000), of June 15, 2000, which authorised the institution of the Gramado Festivals Archive and Museum. At that time, the museum was under the tutelage of the historian from Gramado, Iraci Koppe, and located next to the Municipal Culture Centre, which still houses the Municipal Historical Archive.

In 2015, through Bill 042.15 (Projeto de Lei do Executivo - PLE 042.15, 2015), the Gramado administration granted the use of public property next to the Palácio dos Festivais to be used for the implementation and operation of the Film Festival Museum. This concession was granted through a bidding project, announced through a public bid notice, which could also include the installation of a cafeteria and a souvenir shop. According to this regulation, this museum's creation is founded on the following grounds:

> since 2006, through Law 12.529, the Gramado Film Festival became part of the Cultural and Historical Heritage of Rio Grande do Sul, which has been held uninterruptedly for 43 years as a national and international reference. Through this project, we propose the Implantation of the Gramado Film Festival Museum upon the approval of this Law. (Projeto de Lei do Executivo - PLE 042.15, 2015, p. 2).

It also highlights that it should have the following goals:

> provide visibility for the Museum among its target audiences, presenting it as an attraction of interest among the many options Gramado offers. Stimulate a high flow of visitors to the Museum facilities. To associate the name of the Museum with the prestigious image and consecrated brand, the Gramado Film Festival, promoting positive synergies between the communication efforts of one and the other. (Projeto de Lei do Executivo - PLE 042.15, 2015, p. 2).

The Gramado Film Museum is associated with the Film Festival as a cultural attraction that seeks to consolidate tourism in the city of Gramado. Thus, on October 26, 2016, the Film Festival Museum was inaugurated. Its collection includes the Film Festival posters, journalistic reports, photographs, and panels with audiovisual resources to present both information about the event's history and its editions and the history of the development of the silver screen in the world and Brazil.

The Museum was closed during the coronavirus pandemic, between 2020 and 2021. It reopened in 2022 on the anniversary of the 50th edition of the Film Festival, focusing on the interactivity of the public with the collection, which earned it the title of the first contemporary interactive film museum in Latin America.

To analyse the meanings and the most recurrent cultural pedagogies that the Film Festival Museum produces and conveys to its visitors in its exhibition design, we produced observations recorded in a field diary from the 10 visits to this museum space over four weeks. For the analyses, we selected four thematic axes, as follows.

4.1. The Building and Architecture of the Film Festival Museum

The building of the Film Festival Museum is adjacent to the Palácio dos Festivais, and the entrance is the same hall that hosts the Film Festival. It has a shared floor plan with the Palácio dos Festivais, which strengthens the bonds between them for one or the

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other's visitors. On the other hand, the Bavarian architectural style reinforces the tourist image of Gramado as a European city, as shown in the Figure 1.

Figure 1. *Palácio dos Festivais Building*
Credits. Manoela Barbacovi and Maria Angélica Zubaran

The Bavarian architectural style, with German origins, alludes to the city's colonisers and is featured in many other buildings, such as the Banco do Brasil and the Post Office buildings. From Urry's (2001) theoretical perspective, this alternative may explain the "apparent aspiration, among people living in certain places, to preserve or implement buildings, at least in their public spaces, that embody that particular place where they live" (p. 170). The theorist adds the effect of this alternative to attract the tourist's eye because, according to him, when people visit inland cities, the buildings that set this place apart from other locations draw their attention. In this interrelation between architecture and tourism, architecture is simultaneously a place, an event, and a sign. It is planned as a representation, reception, use, entertainment and commodification process.

Entering the Museum, one can immediately observe a large concrete statue of Kikito (Figure 2), produced by Elisabeth Rosenfeldt in her studio in 1967 and, later, bought by the Berg couple, who donated it to the Gramado City Hall. It was transferred to the entrance hall of the Palácio dos Festivais during the 23rd edition of the event in 1996. The Kikito is the Film Festival's highest award for each edition's best artists and directors. Elisabeth Rosenfeldt, its creator, chose the name. It is also known as the "God of good humour". According to Daros (2008), its smile represents an invitation to learn a lesson from its creator: "smile with it and learn the lesson of its mother Elisabeth: when you have good humour, joy, and do what you need to do with pleasure, then life has the beauty and happiness that we all seek" (p. 265).

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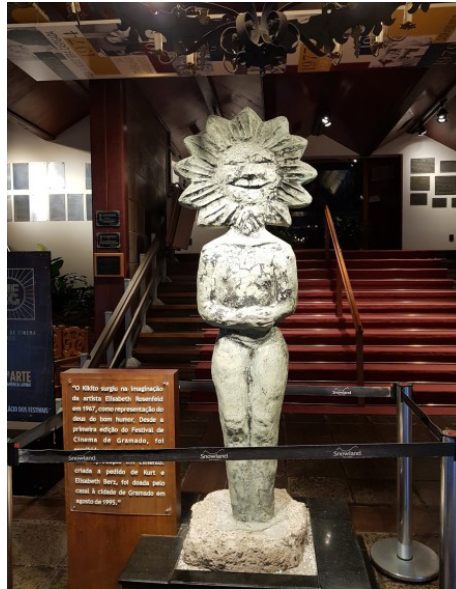
Figure 2. *The concrete sculpture of Kikito at the entrance of the Palácio dos Festivais*
Credits. Manoela Barbacovi and Maria Angélica Zubaran

Walking past the great Kikito, towards the stairs that connect the Palácio dos Festivais to the Museum building, one can see several digital screens with rotating images, displaying banners and posters promoting each of the 50 editions of the Film Festival, as shown in Figure 3.
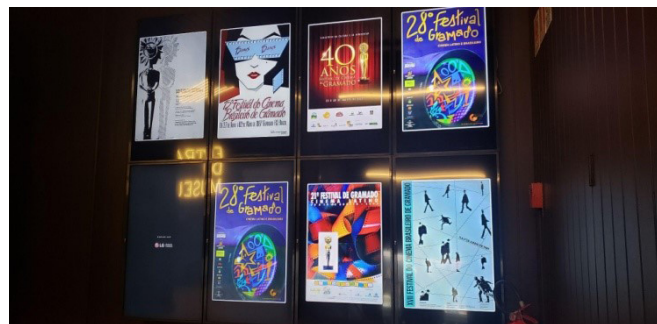
Figure 3. *Digital screens displaying the posters advertising the Film Festival's editions*

Interestingly many of the Film Festival posters promoting the event feature images of hydrangeas, the tourist landmark of the city, associating the Museum to this tourism icon of Gramado, as seen in Figure 4.

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Figure 4. *Banners advertising the event with hydrangeas*

Credits. Manoela Barbacovi and Maria Angélica Zubaran

According to Daros (2008), the hydrangea was brought to Gramado by Leopoldo Lied, one of its first residents, when it was still part of the city of Taquara in the early 1930s. It was planted mainly on the slopes to prevent erosion. However, the historian points out that the flower went from being an ecological agent to becoming a tourist attraction in the region.

> The press gradually showed us the value of our work planting and caring for the hydrangeas. They called it an "admirable spectacle", which seemed to be "in a piece of heaven". And we woke up for something bigger, which was TOURISM. The tourism germinating in our land, next to the roots of the hydrangeas, was planted and planned. (Daros, 2008, p. 229)

From this excerpt, one can infer that the tourist activity in Gramado was driven by hydrangeas, the flower that symbolises the city. There is even a day in the municipal calendar dedicated to its celebration. Rojek and Urry (1997) point out that tourist practices involve not only the purchase of specific goods and services, but also the consumption of signs. In that way, the authors consider tourists as semioticians who seek landmarks that confer uniqueness to the place. The theoretical constructs of these authors suggest that hydrangeas were associated with the city of Gramado as representational practices of tourist interest. Moreover, their inclusion in the Film Festival's promotional posters demonstrates the reach of these representational systems in the Film Museum. These digital screens surrounding the museum entrance illustrate some of the numerous technological resources available in this space, which will be discussed in the next topic.

4.2. Museographic Strategies and Interactivity at the Film Festival Museum

Before introducing the features of this museum space, especially regarding the massive technological resources, it is essential to address their impacts on the exhibition. Among them, the concept of interactivity stands out. According to Lupo (2021), it

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has been widely used as a premise for the institutional structure of museums, often introduced in the museum space in recent decades. Interactive museography often emerges as an alternative approach for displaying collections built from digital databases, actively participating in the constitution of museums seen as reference centres and creating museum narratives. (p. 401)

Thus, it is possible to anticipate that interactive museography is established as an alternative to the upsurge of the so-called "museums without collection" due to the constant challenge of conforming the assets for the exhibition, as in the Museu do Futebol, in Rio de Janeiro, according to Lupo (2021). It also emerges as an opportunity to display the increasing diversity of themes regarded as museological and heritage objects.

According to this author, the digital collections that have become many of today's museums yield a greater public engagement with the exhibition content because "interactivity emerges as a key mediator to ensure the relationship between the museum and its public, suggesting and encouraging the active participation of visitors in the processes of signification undertaken by the museum institution" (Lupo, 2021, p. 405).

Regarding the Film Festival Museum, among its digital museographic strategies, there is a timeline complemented by explanatory panels for the respective highlighted dates (Figure 5) and sound reception systems made available to visitors for introducing both the history of the Festival and the emergence and development of the seventh art in the country and the world.

Figure 5. *Panel with the timeline of the history of national cinema indicating 1973 as the year of the 1st edition of the Film Festival Credits.* Manoela Barbacovi and Maria Angélica Zubaran

The panel "Festival in Decades" has audiovisual resources which, through five screens, show the awards and relevant facts of the Film Festival in each of its five decades of history (Figure 6).

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Figure 6. *Interactive exhibition of the Gramado Film Festival by decades*
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As another communicational strategy, digital screens present media highlights for each of the Festival's editions, displaying the posters of the films awarded throughout half a century of the event (Figure 7).

Figure 7. *National repercussions of the event's editions (left) and the announcement of the films awarded in the event (right)*
Credits. Manoela Barbacovi and Maria Angélica Zubaran

Besides the interactive strategies mentioned above, it is worth mentioning an interactive quiz (Figure 8), with questions about the national cinema and artists, where the audience participates by turning the piece where the question is written.

Figure 8. *Interactive quiz on cinema*
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Such changes in the format of exhibitions enhancing public participation through technological interactivity are also related to the dynamics occurring in the social environment, which emphasise the oral culture, encouraging museums, according to Lumley (1988), to stop being "silent". For this author, many of these spaces have become hybrid museums, combining screens with interactive tables and devices to establish hyper-realism so that participation prevails over observation, making them more attractive to a wide audience, especially young people.

It is also worth mentioning that these changes taking place in museums towards hybridisation — which according to Canclini (1990/2006), can be defined as sociocultural processes where isolated or separated structures, such as, in this case, the media and the Museum, combine to generate new practices — are driven in contemporary times by the so-called "culture of participation". According to Jenkins (2015), this culture promotes engagement and audience participation in the relations between content producers and consumers.

4.3. If Only the Cine Embaixador Could Talk...

The museographic project also highlights the history of the cinema's establishment in the city of Gramado, from its inception, with the Cine Splendid, through the Cine Embaixador (Figure 9), and the building of the Palácio dos Festivais.

Figure 9. *Introduction to the history of Cine Embaixador*

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Posters and articles from the local press are also used, showing the appeals of the public authorities of that time, summoning the Gramado community to ensure the event's continuity (Figure 10).

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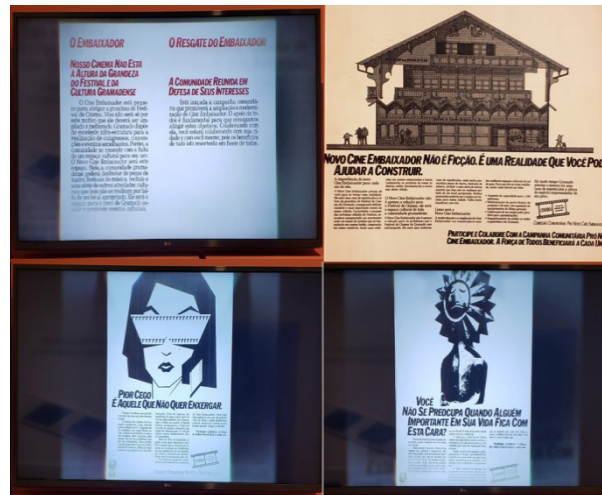
Figure 10. *Gramado's public authorities summoning residents to contribute to the renovations of the building where the Film Festival is held*

Credits. Manoela Barbacovi and Maria Angélica Zubaran

When assessing the narratives written on these posters, under the theoretical lenses of cultural studies, it is possible to infer that through representation strategies — which, according to Hall (2013/2016), involve the use of signs and images to produce and share meanings in culture — the local administration portrays the people of Gramado as supporters of the Festival, described as crucial to the economy of the city of Gramado. Drawing upon Hall (2013), when the author argues that identities are constructed within language through representational strategies, it is possible to conclude that the Museum invites locals to develop a sense of belonging to the film culture in Gramado.

However, the initiatives of the public authorities towards the participation of the local community in the Film Festival are recent. It was only in 1997, during the event's 34th edition, that an attempt was made to establish a link between the Festival and the community with the project *Cinema in the Neighbourhoods*, promoting film screenings in the city's neighbourhoods (Figure 11).
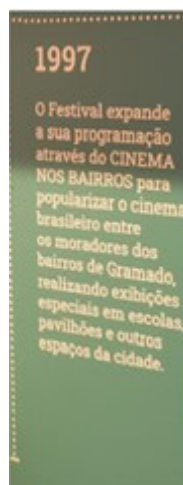
Figure 11. *The year 1997 on the panel about the history of the film festival*

Credits. Manoela Barbacovi and Maria Angélica Zubaran

It is worth mentioning that the museum's exhibition design does not include photos or more detailed information to illustrate the moment of the community's integration into the event. Therefore, upon considering the educational dimensions of this museum, it is possible to conclude that one of its main pedagogical effects is to mobilise the community to support and commit to keeping the Film Festival, which through the residents' contributions and loans from the City Hall, converted the Cine Embaixador into the Palácio dos Festivais. These messages about the Film Festival, the city of Gramado and its residents that the Museum strives to convey to its visitors are built under the aegis of nostalgic collective memory, which according to Hewison (1999), often subverts negative aspects of the facts to harmonise crises and strengthen a unified identity for the place.

Thus, according to Chagas (2006), museums are political spaces of memories and silences and cannot be considered "innocent" artistic-cultural instances, given that, besides communicating facts of the past, they also "naturalise ways of seeing the world, which legitimate, hierarchize and arrange cultures and identities" (Machado & Zubaran, 2013, p. 137). Hence, the Gramado Film Festival Museum creates narratives that privilege some facts over others, as is the case of the silences about the community's involvement in constructing the memories of cinema in the city of Gramado.

4.4. The Kikito and Its Imprint on the City of Gramado

It is also important to examine one last exhibition design strategy of this museum, concerning Kikito, the highest award of the Film Festival. To introduce the history of the *Brazilian Oscar* statuette, the Museum screens a video starring the Municipal Secretary of Tourism at the time, Romeu Dutra, and Orival da Silva Marques, who worked in the Artesanato Gramadense with Elisabeth Rosenfeldt. Besides the video, on the wall adjacent to the screen, there is a panel with the biography of the well-known "God of good humour" (Figure 12).

Figure 12. *Video about Kikito and the panel "Kikito on stage"*
Credits. Manoela Barbacovi and Maria Angélica Zubaran

The video narrative highlights the meaning of this sculpture to the Film Festival and the city of Gramado, as illustrated by Figure 13, Figure 14 and Figure 15.
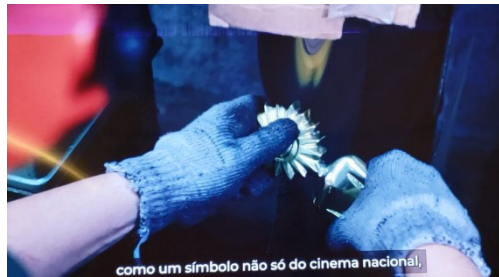
Figure 13. *Image taken from the video about the Kikito on display at the Gramado Film Festival Museum*

Credits. Manoela Barbacovi and Maria Angélica Zubaran

Figure 14. *Image taken from the video about the Kikito on display at the Gramado Film Festival Museum, which highlights the importance of this award beyond the scope of cinema*

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Figura 15. *Image taken from the video about the Kikito on display at the Gramado Film Festival Museum, which presents the Kikito as the representative image of the city of Gramado*

Credits. Manoela Barbacovi and Maria Angélica Zubaran

The video images highlight that the city of Gramado, with the advent of the Film Festival, has built another identity icon, the Kikito. The relevance of the statuette for the municipality is also reinforced by the replicas produced in the traditional factories and chocolate shops that tourists take home. Besides, several of them are around the city, reiterating the idea that Gramado is the city of Kikito, as seen in the following sequence of images (Figure 16, Figure 17 and Figure 18) taken from this video shown at the museum.

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Figura 16. *Image taken from the video about the Kikito on display at the Gramado Film Festival Museum, which shows the map of this city*

Credits. Manoela Barbacovi and Maria Angélica Zubaran
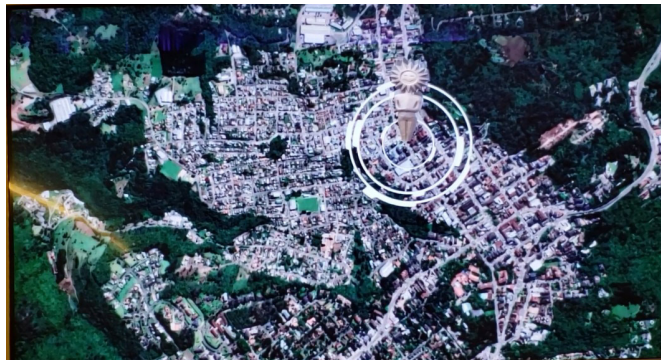
Figura 17. *Image taken from the video about the Kikito on display at the Gramado Film Festival Museum, which features statues alluding to the awarding of this festival, located at various tourist spots in the city of Gramado*

Credits. Manoela Barbacovi and Maria Angélica Zubaran
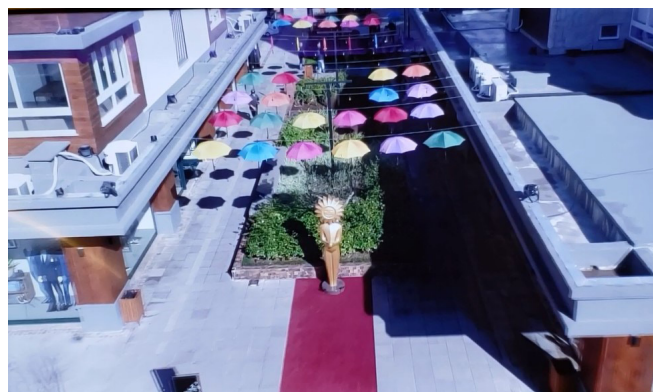
Figura 18. *Image taken from the video about the Kikito on display at the Gramado Film Festival Museum, which shows a statue of Kikito in a shopping centre in Gramado*

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Resuming Lumley's theory (1988) that the museum can be considered a means of communication and, borrowing Jenkins' (2006/2009) about the contemporary convergence culture, characterised by the content flow among multiple media, it is possible to observe that the Gramado Film Festival Museum stands out as a media communication vehicle that combines Gramado's tourist appeal to the Film Festival and, especially, to Kikito. Within this context, it is worth mentioning that the Museum's logo is represented by a stylised Kikito (Figure 19).

Figure 19. *Gramado Film Festival Museum's logo*

Fonte. Website do Museu do Fetsival de Cinema de Gramado (https://museufestivaldecinema.com.br)

Therefore, in the exhibition narrative created in the Gramado Film Festival Museum, the Kikito is represented as an icon of Gramado and its Film Festival. As such, it also makes it a tourism product, which maximises the city's tourism potential.

Moreover, it is worth mentioning that in the area of the museum intended to show the artists and directors awarded throughout the event's five decades, there are other awards besides the Kikito (Figure 20 and Figure 21).

Figura 20. *Gramado Film Festival Awards: Gramado City Trophy*

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Figura 21. *Other Gramado Film Festival Awards*
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Among the trophies presented, the highlight is given to the Gramado City Trophy, which honours people related to the Festival who somehow contributed to the city's promotion. So, the Festival is linked to local tourism, reiterating the connection between the city, the Film Festival and the Festival Museum, in a kind of synergetic movement, also highlighted in the Bill of Law 057/2015 (Projeto de Lei do Executivo - PLE 042.15), establishing the legal framework for the implementation of this Museum.

Certain representations, such as "the national capital of cinema", "the city of lights", and "the city of Kikito", produced and disseminated by the Film Festival and the Film Museum, are also tourist attractions. They stimulate desires and meet the concept of cultural consumption, proposed by Canclini (1993), seen as "the series of processes of appropriation and use of products in which the symbolic value prevails over the values of use and exchange, or at least the latter are subordinated to the symbolic dimension" (p. 34). So, for the public attending the Festival and visiting the Museum, these cultural and symbolic representations drive many people to visit the city of Gramado.

5. Final Considerations

This analysis, which elected as the object of study the Gramado Film Festival Museum and which aimed at reflecting on the representational strategies used by this Museum to communicate with its visitors, showed that this cultural, artistic instance, besides activating the memories of the Gramado Film Festival, also plays an educational and media role.

Among the representational strategies used by this Museum, it is worth highlighting interactivity and the extensive use of technological resources that make the visitor an active explorer of the museum collection, according to the perspective of the participation culture, where the public is increasingly interacting with content producers.

Moreover, this analysis showed a great cultural connection between the Museum, the Festival and local cultural tourism, producing icons and symbols that interact with and reinforce the vision of the city of Gramado as a tourism destination.

Finally, it is important to highlight that for being part of the theoretical field of cultural studies, this study did not seek to produce comprehensive and unidimensional explanations about the Gramado Film Festival Museum but aimed to draw attention to the importance of its exhibition narratives to the visiting public to enhance the Film Festival and cultural tourism in the city of Gramado.

Translation: Anabela Delgado

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INTERVIEWS | *ENTREVISTAS*

THE PLACE OF TEXTUALITY IN ART: INTERVIEW WITH BERNARDO PINTO DE ALMEIDA

O LUGAR DA TEXTUALIDADE NA ARTE: ENTREVISTA A BERNARDO PINTO DE ALMEIDA

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Centro de Estudos de Comunicação e Sociedade, Universidade do Minho, Braga, Portugal

Bernardo (Alberto Frey) Pinto de Almeida (Peso da Régua, 1954) is a poet and essayist with work published in Portugal and internationally. He has been engaged in poetic, theoretical, historiographical and critical activity since 1974. He is a researcher and full professor of art history and theory. From a close relationship with some of the main Portuguese artists of the second half of the twentieth century, he has developed critical approaches to their respective works in creative collaboration, thus setting his own apart from other critical discourses[1].

As I walk down the stairs towards the Serralves café-bar, next to the library, a prearranged meeting place with Bernardo Pinto de Almeida, I am surprised by the quiet, unlike the memory of my last visit when many students filled all the tables in the vicinity. It is May 11, 2022, and the afternoon, stretching from the outside, which Siza's windows allow me to enjoy, is not very bright. Being early, I start by having a slow coffee and spread the books, and my notes, over the table — besides mine, only one other is taken — to review my script. Communication and artistic mediation, the subject of the conversation I intend to promote, unfolds in multiple dimensions. I think beforehand that perhaps the discussion is not expected to be exhaustive. As my guiding principle, I take the interview as an event. A random walk for two through the meanderings of a thought unveiled by both, driven by the reference to an object which is a shared anchor that also pushes the interlocutors adrift. Anticipating Baudelaire (2006) as a mediator and common reference, drawing closer to the discourse of the interviewee, I think of the prospective conversation ahead in modern terms as a "fleeting pleasure of circumstances", a practice of extracting the "eternal from the transitory", an exercise in sharing knowledge and experience updated in the unfolding of a contingency.

Meanwhile, I suddenly see Bernardo Pinto de Almeida arriving. After a prelude made of memories of his time at the University of Minho, in the bygone days of the Institute of Social Sciences, we begin sewing ideas that unfold slowly, unhurriedly, and ultimately heading for a new stop, which will be the starting point for the transcription published in this context.

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[1] For more information, refer to "Bernardo Pinto de Almeida" (2022).

Helena Pires (HP): In last weekend's *Expresso* magazine, I stumbled upon an article (Martins, 2022) about Warhol's painting depicting Marilyn on a blue background. It addressed the astronomical valuation the work has attained, considering the history of art, since it has exceeded even Picasso on the market. The translation of an excerpt from the article reads: "Arthur Danto saw in the Brillo boxes facsimiles of the soap boxes any American citizen could find in the supermarket that which could only be defined as art by mediation or curation" (Martins, 2022, pp. 53–55). My question — mindful of the classical notions of the loss of "aura" and the effects of "technical reproducibility" — is whether, since modern art, defined by its closeness to mundane life and the adoption of the mechanisms of that "technical reproducibility", art has yet to make room for an increased relevance of criticism or other forms of mediation to legitimise the work and the artist.

Bernardo Pinto de Almeida (BPA): Firstly, I advocate a certain historical conception of art. That is, I believe art needs a landscape, a background of *historicity* to be thought of in its successive regimes. Even contemporaneity, which in my view is a *post-historical period*, in the sense that art itself is not conceived historically — or has not been conceived historically in the last 20 or 30 years — even there art is *historically post-historical*. It does not cease to have a historical component, even in its post-historical negation.

Why do I start here? Because I argue that there is a very violent rupture between modernity and what we might call the classical period. Let us call the classical period the one that precedes Romanticism. All the art produced up to Romanticism. The matrix that cuts across the model of art production and perception of art up to Romanticism establishes continuity. From modernity onwards, this typology changes and this matrix also changes.

What changes? First of all, the regime of the discourse changes. All classical art is made on a conception in which discourse precedes doing. For example, let us look at Renaissance art and even that which precedes Renaissance art. There is a conception of art and culture that pervades the domains of philosophy, of thought. It is not structured thought like we have today. Since Vasari himself, there has been a thought of art that defines the terms by which art should be made. Hence, we might say, even if hastily, that there is a discourse that precedes the making. When Leonardo, Michelangelo, Raphael... the greatest names in the history of art from that period, moved towards the artistic act, they were not only anchored on technical training and a mastery of all that was known about execution, drawing and the conception of the space, among other things. They started with a perfectly structured and profound philosophy, which came from Greece, and partly through Rome. To give two or three examples: Raphael's *School of Athens* is a treatise on geometry, but also on theory and philosophical thought; we have Plato and Aristotle and several great thinkers represented, which shows the extent to which everything is a deeply structured conceptual process, ontological and theological processes, as in the Sistine Chapel, where there is a very strong ontological and theological key.

God hands the world to Adam... all of Michelangelo's work has a very strong theological dimension and a profound knowledge of the time's theology and medieval and ancient theology. The artist had an extraordinary command of all the knowledge and wisdom available up to that time. In like manner, Boticelli's *Primavera* contains 500 species of plants that have already been identified (there may even be more). In other words, Boticelli's *Primavera* is a treatise on botany, almost encyclopaedic. Classical art is an encyclopaedic art that conveys all the knowledge available in its time...

HP: That somehow synthesises...

BPA: ...and synthesises. Because there was a pedagogical dimension, particularly in the Middle Ages, in the education of the faithful... I am talking about the West.

Modernity introduced an enormous disruption into this process. Instead of relying on what has been, the notion of art can build on what is or will be. When Baudelaire, one of the greatest art thinkers ever, wrote that extraordinary text, which is the bible of all modernity, *The Painter of Modern Life*, he established that we do not all have to keep doing what the classics did. Nor do we have to keep dressing our characters, the characters that inhabit our painting, as the classics did, because we are different now. So, we must create our own model of thought and transport it to the figures that one day will make our own posterity, that is, those that one day will look at us as we look at the classics, making us examples of another time...

HP: Is it an invitation to create new references?

BPA: New references, absolutely. Take two or three examples. Manet is an extraordinary painter who introduces unprecedented violence: the whole system of modern life within space, the theatres, cabarets, the streets, the races at Longchamp, what we now call *public space*, the Tuileries Garden... in Manet, we find the painting of his own time. And here, an absolute rupture with the classical model is introduced. Consider Rodin. When he creates *The Bourgeois of Calais*, when he creates *Balzac*, he introduces a modern configuration. We no longer see classical beauty. We see a man worn out by life, deformed... that consistency of the classical and exemplary space disappears in favour of a profound tension of the real.

From then on, art will move in that direction.

HP: Towards ordinary life?

BPA: Yes, towards ordinary life. That means stepping down from the yardstick of ideal models. The biopolitics, already...

HP: Disengaging from its connection with the classical paradigms of its history and connecting with the contemporary?

BPA: All modernity is an eminently historical process and, more than classical art that engaged well with Greece and Rome, modern art wants history. History is its horizon and its desire.

HP: Should it be committed?

BPA: It should be committed. To a certain extent, modernity looks to the present as its horizon. If the "text" of classical art is the whole of one's knowledge, the text of modernity is the newspaper. It is the knowledge of the day.

HP: The topicality.

BPA: It is the topicality, yes. However, on top of this process that modernity introduces, another one will be generated that is absolutely unexpected and that, in my opinion, is the offspring of the chain of events, especially the Industrial Revolution and World War I, which gave an enormous acceleration to time and historical time. Modernism, in my view, was born at the beginning of the 20th century, between 1905 and 1910.

On the one hand, it attends to this new *episteme* introduced by industrialisation and seeks to integrate the mechanical processes that industry has brought. The real is no longer simply that of what is lived but is also that of the machine, that of the acceleration of time and space. It is the real of mechanics. Modernism teaches us a lesson, profound attention to the new reality. Marinetti will write, in *Le Figaro*, in the "Manifesto of Futurism", "a racing car is as beautiful as the Venus de Milo"... That means a lot. It means that, from now on, the classic has to give way to something else. Those first 20 years of modern art, from 1905 to 1925, roughly, which even follow World War I, are of an absolutely portentous acceleration never seen before.

HP: In just a few decades...

BPA: Not even two. It is a very short period. Plus it is in a very small Europe, because it is in the centre of Europe, France, England, Germany... and then it radiates, and at the same time, it has a very strong absorptive power... there is a melting pot there...

HP: ... mobility between capitals...

BPA: Even in Moscow... there is an irradiation which is simultaneously an absorption. That signals a new possibility that is no longer that of the present but that of the future. There is an inversion of the temporal paradigm.

HP: An interpretation of reality anticipating the changes that already show signs?

BPA: Exactly. That, for me, is the main point of our discussion. That is, we went from a cultural and conceptual structure that is classical art, based on what is known to what was already known — as a matter of fact, there is a very famous phrase by Saint Thomas Aquinas: "we are like dwarfs on the shoulders of giants", referring to all the knowledge of the Classical Age... —, we went from a situation based on a deep knowledge of everything that existed to a new model of knowledge, based on the present and alert to the signs of the present... because modernity lasted 40 years, from 1860 to 1900.

Very quickly, modernism changed the perception of the world, which is no longer the present or what was before but what is to come. And then, the whole horizon of the legitimacy of art becomes the destination that the future will bring forward. That is a new conception of time. Ultimately, this has very profound consequences, namely in the lack of a *text*, a pre-existing text, in the sense that we were discussing. Modernism has no text. It projects itself into a time to come and into a "text" that legitimises, at every moment, its various shifts. Modernism never is. *It will be*; modernism will be. That *will be* that almost ontological dimension of a being to come, of a becoming...

HP: ... can we now talk of Deleuze's becoming?

BPA: Yes, it is a projection in time. The *becoming-other*, which requires the unwritten text.

HP: It calls for the text; it requires the text.

BPA: It requires the text and gives the criticism a relevance it had never had before. Because criticism was, until modernity, how a particular production belonged to a school... the new criticism projects the justification of what will be.

HP: Does it produce meaning?

BPA: It produces meaning, exactly. I will give you an example. When Duchamp sent the urinal to the Society of Independent Artists, and it was refused, he published a small scandal in *The Blind Man* magazine. It was an image of the work photographed by Alfred Stieglitz, and Apollinaire wrote an explanatory text stating that it was absurd not to consider the *art of the toilet* in the art of our time. A urinal, in the artistic tradition, made no sense at all. So, all this conceptual processing projected into the future requires a text to legitimise it constantly.

HP: Then again, the author of the text is not unknown, and the context of the publication is also legitimising.

BPA: Absolutely. This process drags on; it has a strong interlocution in World War II in which the cultural process, which seemed to ramp full steam ahead...

HP: Is curbed…

BPA: …is curbed, and more, it is repressed. Otherwise, it would be a long conversation.

HP: In the meantime, we leap to the United States of America (USA) benchmarks in the 50s/60s…

BPA: Because there is a displacement…

HP: Is Europe no longer able to provide a space of freedom?

BPA: No longer. There is a collapse of Europe… a sinking. Europe loses the ability to give legitimacy to this art. European culture was not able to halt the massacre and the war. In fact, we are now witnessing a terrible situation from that point of view again.

HP: With an impact on art?

BPA: If we had a third war, it would be tragic.

HP: The art world is not unscathed.

BPA: It can not be. Thus, when art moved to the USA in the late 1940s, right after the war, new contexts emerged. The US had virtually no art in the classical sense…

HP: .. they did not have that heritage, that history…

BPA: So they had incomparably greater freedom for experimentation.
In the USA, art became a matter of State. It was experienced in a way unknown in Europe. Museums were built from the 1930s onwards. Extraordinary things. Guggenheim, Rockefeller… European art was accepted. In the 1930s, in 35 or 36, Picasso had his first retrospective in the USA while still gaining ground in Europe, although with great prestige. However, he already had a retrospective in the USA. The *Dadaists* had a retrospective in the USA when they were cast out of Europe.
Duchamp had enormous prestige in the USA…

HP: I am thinking of Beuys himself, who also had enormous visibility in the USA.

BPA: That was a change. They welcomed the art that they lacked. Duchamp states that in his interviews. As Duchamp would say, in '68, everything was very easy because not only did they have a huge appetite for art in the USA as they were willing to spend money on it, but they accepted practically everything because they were a bit naive. Duchamp

said that, not me, but it was obvious. Because, in fact, they opened themselves up to a very, very broad experimentation. Very much based always on the possibility of the future.

HP: At that time, how were activities like criticism doing?

BPA: It was very strong. From Greenberg to Schapiro, before him, Michael Fried, who is still alive... America introduced very early modern art criticism and history into university education. It created journals. Rauschenberg, in '66, was brought to the Venice Biennale because there was a state department for that. Rauschenberg also got a grant from the United States Information Agency, a fund today known to have belonged to the CIA. It was part of the American strategy to oppose socialism in Russia.

The strategy claimed America was so free that it made abstract art, back when the Russians were still painting panels and glorifying type figures in socialist realism.

American abstract art, since the 1950s, has been protected by the American state as a matter of free world propaganda against the Soviet Union. As American cinema was, so was dance.

On the other hand, this group, John Cage, Rauschenberg... who define the openness at the end of the 1950s to this new American landscape, is the first great legitimiser.

The Surrealists, in particular, went to the US to escape the war. And after the war was over, in the 50s/60s, Warhol said that John Cage was the most influential person in New York. Some of them came from the European Bauhaus. The Americans had made a deep assimilation of the modernist model. When Warhol emerged, he already had space to assert himself. Warhol's *ready-mades* are a continuity of Duchamp.

HP: Speaking of Warhol, and going back to the significance of the text, it is well known how strategically he managed his career and cultivated a good relationship with the critics, the gallery owners, the art dealers...

BPA: Quite a lot... some were Jewish imigrants who had settled in the US and had the capital. There is a famous interview with Warhol that's on YouTube where they ask him a question, and he says, "I don't know how to answer that, ask my gallerist".

HP: As if to say I don't own the discourse.

BPA: I don't own the discourse. One can interpret this as a consignment, a surrender to someone else's text. A text that explains what I do. Now, this passage, going back to the archaeology I undertook and the successive models, will, in fact, lead to the *postmodern condition* of art at the end of the 1970s, when Lyotard published the text *The Postmodern Condition*. Postmodernism in art is anticipated because postmodernism consists of an epistemological shift, a linguistic turn, which consists of the transition from a comprehensive model to the idea that art corresponds to a thought being constructed next door and that this will explain the very outbreak of art.

HP: So, the reliance on discursive production is accentuated.

BPA: Absolutely. I tried to address this in the last book I published. American art, influenced by Duchamp and others and by a Protestant line, is the art of the text, not the image. That is to say, while European, Catholic, art is an art of the image...

HP: Given the tradition of iconicity...

BPA: All that... American art is the art of the text. The idea of there being an explanation for the image.

HP: The perception of art changes, but so does the artist's self-perception.

BPA: The artist who creates the image, the iconographer, can suddenly create the image for a text. Take Lichtenstein. Conceptual art is based on the idea of there being a text. Everything is explanatory.

HP: The process itself?

BPA: The process itself. The first artist of postmodernist art is an art critic, Donald Judd. He changes his role from critic to artist.
In other words, American art is an eminently textual art based on a regime of discourse and ceases to be an art of the image that stood for itself, which was the European tradition. In this difference lies the fundamental basis of what we call "post-modernity", not as a sociological concept but as a transition from one paradigm to another. It is an art not of the image but of textuality.

HP: We were talking about criticism, and I was thinking that we are also witnessing a change, even in terminology, since today, we speak perhaps more of curation. Criticism used to have a more legitimising role for art and artists in this more closed world, the art world. Today, perhaps, we can observe the transition from criticism to curation also because the term is more popular nowadays and will have taken, I wonder, the place of criticism, expanding its scope. I also wonder if curation hasn't also expanded. If it hasn't opened that limit, that closed the art world, since it cares about the public and not only the art dealer, the gallery owner and hence this different strategy that tries to define how to reach the public. That is maybe why today we talk about art education, the educational service... There is no reputable gallery that does not have its educational service. All this makes us think about several changes that go beyond terminology. What is meant by curation, art education, and mediation?

BPA: I agree with everything you said. I would only add one dimension, which I believe is crucial. With the development of our democratic societies and the victory of

the neo-liberal model in the West, this conquest of an open democratic space, reliant on discourse and legitimation, no doubt, but open and experimental, is influenced by the Americans who claim it is possible to educate through art, art for people's development, taking children to museums. I remember that in the 70s, you could barely see a handful of people in the museums...

HP: Besides, today we can also talk about the commodification of art...

BPA: Besides that. However, when I visited the European museums in the late 70s, I remember the Prado Museum without big crowds. Today that's no longer the case. The public space has opened to art.

HP: And art has opened to the public space.

BPA: And art has opened to the public space. The transition from the paradigm of criticism to the paradigm of curation has to do with this. The curator is the one who does the mediation. While the critic was a figure who still sought to explain art on an academic level, the curator mediates for the public. He decodes and shows the time to time. That is as if the art of his time could coexist with other times. It changes the very nature of art.

HP: I am thinking of Jeff Koons...

BPA: It is more of a *performance art*. He is a very bright man.

HP: They are artists who capture the ethos of their time...

BPA: Absolutely. When Koons had the first retrospective in Europe, at the Georges Pompidou Centre — and this is very interesting from the point of view of the sociology of art, at least — the largest room was by Jeff Koons and the room generally attributed to artists of some importance, but smaller, was by Duchamp. Now, this shows a profound paradigm shift. Duchamp was the hero of art in contemporary times, but interestingly enough, that is now the other way around. On the opening day, Koons was asked what he thought of his exhibition alongside Duchamp, and he said, "I find it very interesting that there are two exhibitions of two artists who were interested in the ready-made". As if Duchamp hadn't invented the ready-made and he wasn't just a successor...

HP: He put himself at the same level.

BPA: He totally put himself at the same level. That is what *post-history* is all about. It is a time in which historical succession is wiped clean. Because time now is not thought of historically but is thought of circularly.

HP: Back to Koons. He has been accused of plagiarism...

BPA: He is accused all the time. He has more plagiarism lawsuits than any other contemporary artist. Besides that only made sense in the period of the historical conception, which was suspended...

HP: Even so, can we say he has his own language?

BPA: He does. He is a follower of Warhol. He takes Warhol's paradigm to exhaustion. Koons is a millionaire artist who treats his art like he treats his business.

HP: Unabashedly...

BPA: Absolutely unabashedly. Smiling all the time. He's an utterly *medial* figure. A media figure, a pop star. He's part of the world of film actresses, the world of fashion... he's a figure who blends in with the popular culture.

HP: Koons breaks the distinction between high culture and popular culture...

BPA: Absolutely. Though the distinction existed in modernism. Adorno himself bases his whole aesthetic theory on a fundamental division between the model of popular culture and the model of high culture. The Frankfurt School transposed that message, which has been completely dissolved by contemporaneity.

In modernism, the critics' interlocutors are not the general public. Rather the small art world. The curator, in this sense, is a mediation figure incomparably more suited to an open *mediation*; that is, he cannot ignore the public.

However, there is still resistance and even resentment.

HP: I was thinking about the curator's profile since they can combine multiple skills, production, mediation with the artist, mediation with the media, and the pedagogical role, but some people believe the curator today also wants to step into the almost authorial field. All the more so because discursive production is also gaining prominence. In fact, the media always highlights the reference to a given exhibition curated by...

BPA: There is a transformation between the modernist and contemporary paradigms in which post-modernity is a crossing point. Contemporaneity is characterised by the loss of an authorial dimension and the shift of the author's role to the reality of art itself.

With Matisse, there is still a dispute over recognising the role of genius. This model of distinction and mediation has evolved into another in which art exists for its own sake (in essence, a model more like that of the 18th century). One works for art and not for the world. Koons makes what is already art when you start making it; that is, he goes to the art as the worker goes to the work. He is the boss (of a team). Art is for society.

There is a shift from the figure of the individual to the figure of the collective. But the problem is *how does the public perceive what is called "art"*? The curator helps in the mediation, taking on himself the protagonism of the activity. Curators last 15 days, three weeks, two years... they don't last any longer than that. The curator is like the television anchor. He succeeds while the programme is on air.

HP: Is their protagonism temporary?

BPA: It is temporary. However, while they are the anchor, they define what is to be shown. The curator is a figure of mediation between the powers. The curator is the one who explains to the media the importance of what is exhibited. And not only explains it but translates it into a media language.

HP: And does the curator reinvent meanings?

BPA: They reinvent meanings already covered by the media. While the modernist critic spoke to God, the curator speaks to ordinary mortals. And to the media. There is no exhibition of any significance today that is not preceded by an approach to the patrons, among others, a pre-viewing... that is, there is a new sociology of art. That means the nature of art, on the one hand, the art of a collective nature, although the artistic model based on the hero figure is still very present. The artist today is just the craftsman. That inaccessible figure is over.

That is not to say that one cannot take a back seat to the other. By becoming a much more collective and collectivised thing, art participates in the ideological construction of society. That is really important. Museums are crowded, and, in fact, the purpose of putting an end to art as something accessible only to the most privileged classes has been achieved.

At the cost of losing the sovereignty of the artist, who lost his aura (of genius). And the critic, who ceased to be the one who clarified. The curator does that directly to the media. And is open to the contamination of the market. Contemporary art demands a very strong market.

There has to be a lot of money circulating. The fact that the market has grown is not a negative thing. It is an advantage for art. This new art regime clarifies art in this new mass paradigm. No society has spent as much money on art as our democratic society in the West. That means that we give art extreme value. Art democratises society. It is such a strong social mobiliser that it produces the economic and financial society... and the public. Today art holds almost the place of religion in the 15th century and art is more political today than it has ever been.

HP: Addressing a more specific question, do you believe in the role of the art educational service in the context of different organisations? Is it important to educate the public and not just open the doors of the gallery or the museum?

BPA: In the context of democratic culture, art has been created as an educator of society itself. Today art plays a fundamental role in educating societies. Why? Because art is still a place of social, political and symbolic experimentation.

When some artistic model emerges, although it no longer has the outrageous character it had in modernism (women with three eyes, etc.), art has become one of the elements of contemporary thinking.

When we visit an exhibit, we may be looking at the model of society that anticipates any future because this dimension of open dialogue between art and society is as vibrant as ever. It is not about art that projects itself into the horizon of the future, in the sense of saying they will ultimately say we are right, but it is, on the contrary, a telescoping of the future in the present.

Art has always had an anticipatory value. Only in the past did it cause scandals when it moved too far into the present. Today, as art teaches tolerance, openness, and availability to the other... we see images of the future in the present. This acceptance is a hallmark of the contemporary. Today we no longer discuss whether it is good or bad. It is there because it is to be seen. That is a profound change in societies' nature and perception of difference.

Acknowledgements

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Varia | *Varia*

Jean Rouch, Filmmaker, Anthropologist, Engineer, and White African

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Abstract

In Jean Rouch's meeting with Manoel de Oliveira, the latter situated him and his cinema as more African than European, and Jocelyne Rouch identified him with the title of the film *Moi, un Noir* (I, a Negro; Rouch, 1958) — that is him. Rouch is also an engineer at Ponts et Chaussées. No wonder his cinema reflects the poetry of iron and steel, as does Manoel de Oliveira's. Rouch's bridges and paths are also connecting people, cultures and societies. The relationship of the real as imagined in his films — fascination with authentic Dogon rites and possession phenomena and modern anthropology focused on displaced people, migrants living in big cities, and urban life — is thus remarkable. This text seeks to address four dimensions of Jean Rouch's path: situating him in the context of ethnographic film, revisiting the archives of *Chronique d'un Été* (Chronicle of a Summer; Rouch & Morin, 1960) 50 years after it was produced, Rouch's meeting with the Dogon and the "poetry of iron and steel" shared with Manoel de Oliveira, referring to his dimension as an engineer, filmmaker and anthropologist. Other equally important dimensions were left out, for they do not fit into this reflection[1].

Keywords

ethnographic film, Jean Rouch, Manoel de Oliveira, Dogon, visual anthropology

Jean Rouch, Cineasta, Antropólogo, Engenheiro, Africano Branco

Resumo

No encontro de Jean Rouch com Manoel de Oliveira, este situou-o e situou o seu cinema como mais africano que europeu e Jocelyne Rouch identificou-o com o título do filme *Moi, un Noir* (Eu, um Negro; Rouch, 1958) — é ele. Rouch é também engenheiro de pontes e estradas. Não admira, pois, que a poética do ferro e do aço esteja presente no seu cinema, ao lado de Manoel de Oliveira. As pontes e os caminhos de Rouch são também entre pessoas, culturas, sociedades. É, pois, notável a relação do real como imaginado nos seus filmes — o fascínio pelos rituais autênticos dos dogon e os fenómenos de possessão e uma antropologia moderna virada para as pessoas deslocadas, migrantes que viviam em grandes cidades, e para a vida urbana. Procuramos abordar neste texto quatro dimensões do percurso de Jean Rouch: situá-lo no contexto do filme etnográfico, revisitar os arquivos de *Chronique d'un Été* (Crónica de um Verão; Rouch & Morin, 1960) 50 anos depois de sua realização, o encontro de Rouch com os dogon e a "poética do ferro e do aço" partilhada com Manoel de Oliveira, remetendo para sua dimensão

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de engenheiro, cineasta e antropólogo, consciente de que ficaram de fora dimensões igualmente importantes, mas que não cabem nesta reflexão.

Palavras-chave

filme etnográfico, Jean Rouch, Manoel de Oliveira, dogon, antropologia visual

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1. Ethnographic Film and Visual Anthropology

In the broadest sense, ethnographic film, or ethnographic cinema, encompasses a wide diversity of animated image use applied to studying humankind in its social and cultural dimensions. It often ranges from simple recordings to very elaborate research products. The methods of ethnographic filmmaking are also wide-ranging, drawing on different theoretical traditions and the means and procedures used in its production. Nonetheless, they are based on some fundamental principles: a long insertion of the researcher in the territory or environment studied, often as a participant, a non-directive (or authoritarian) attitude founded on reciprocal trust valuing the speeches of the people involved in the research (interlocutors), a descriptive concern based on in-depth observation and listening regardless of the explanation of the functions, structures, values and meanings of what they describe.

It is often referred to as the birth of cinema: for Claudine de France (1989), with the first Lumière films, from 1898 onwards, for Emilie de Brigard (1979), with the first ethnographic film produced in 1895 by Félix-Louis Regnault, a doctor specialising in pathological anatomy who, with the help of Etienne-Jules Marey's assistant, filmed a Wolof[2] woman making a piece of pottery at the West African ethnographic exhibition. This film has an explicit scientific intention: describing a pottery technique intermediate between that executed without a wheel and that with a horizontal wheel (Piault, 2000). Only in the 1950s did the ethnographic film become an institutional discipline with recognised experts and criteria (Brigard, 1979). However, André Leroi-Gourhan (1948), through his paper "Le Film Etnographique Existe-t-Il?" (Does Ethnographic Film Exist?) presented at the "International Congress of Ethnology and Cinematographic Geography" in 1948, marked the birth of ethnographic film, bringing to the fore the debate on the place that should be assigned to it in anthropological research and the exhibition of results.

The word "ethnographic" has two different connotations within the expression *ethnographic cinema* or *ethnographic film*. The first is the subject it deals with - *ethnos*, "people"; *graphein*, "a writing", a drawing, a representation. The ethnographic film would be "the representation of a people through film" (Weinberger, 1994, p. 4). The films *Nanook of the North* (1922) by Robert Flaherty and the essays on the ethnographic film written by McDougall (1979) and Asch (1975), Marshall e Brigard (1975), analyses by filmmakers who photographed or filmed exotic cultures, fall into this connotation. The second

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[2] Senegalese village.

connotation of the term "ethnographic" is the assumption that there is a specific disciplinary framework within which the film is or was made. That framework is primarily of ethnography as a scientific description related to anthropology. In this sense, Asen de Balikci and Guy Marie-Rousselière's series of films on the Netsilik Eskimos and Jay Ruby's (1975) writings can be considered ethnographic and anthropological. Ethnographic cinema was mainly descriptive. The images, as archives of an encyclopaedia on non-industrial, exotic or rural societies, were captured according to the programmes of classical anthropology. They describe the techniques, the habitat, the handicrafts, the different forms of agriculture, the rituals, and the ceremonies. For Brigard (1979), the most notable change in ethnographic film since its origins emerged clearly after the Second World War. It consisted of the displacement of the camera's centre of interest. It no longer looks from the outside to an exotic world but from the inside at its own environment.

According to Weinberger (1994), "ethnographic film has become either a subgenre of the documentary or a specialized branch of anthropology, and it teems with connection at the margins of both" (p. 47). Some authors such as Jay Ruby (1975), Emile de Brigard (1979), Heider (1976) and Eliot Weinberger (1994) argue that all films are ethnographic: "every film, no matter how' fictional', is an endless documentation of its contemporary life" (Weinberger, 1994, p. 4); furthermore, "it is customary to define ethnographic film as a discloser of cultural models. This definition suggests that all films are ethnographic in content, form, or both. However, some films are distinctly more revealing than others" (Brigard, 1979, p. 27). In fact, fiction films as results of a creative process are not pure fiction: "they have a claim to everyday evidence, to experience; they suggest a space, a history, a language, a look on the world" (Augé, 1997, p. 54).

Dziga Vertov and Robert Flaherty are usually considered the *founding fathers* of ethnographic cinema. However, Piault (2000, p. 53) adds other names: Edward Curtis, Thomas Reis, Jean Vigo, Jean Epstein, Alberto Cavalcanti, John Grierson, Walter Ruttmann, Luis Bunuel and Joris Ivens, among others.

Jean Rouch (1917–2004) is a key figure and the first reference of ethnographic cinema. Not only for the number of films he made but also for the quality of the works, the continuous innovation in research procedures, the creation of fundamental structures for the development of the genre — the creation of the Ethnographic Film Committee in 1953, the *Bilan du Film Ethnographique*, currently the "International Jean Rouch Festival", whose 44th edition was held in 2022, the development of training in France and its expansion/extension to many countries in Europe, Africa, Asia, Latin America, notably through the Ateliers Varan.

Jean Rouch, engineer, filmmaker-anthropologist or anthropologist-filmmaker, was born in Paris on May 31, 1917. He graduated in 1941 in civil engineering from the École des Ponts et Chaussés and left France with 20 other engineers the same year to work on railway construction in Africa. While there, Rouch discovered the mysteries of religion

and Songhai[3] magic and decided to study ethnology. In Paris, he attended the courses of Marcel Mauss and Marcel Griaule. He started his doctorate with Marcel Griaule on the Songhai in 1947, which he finished in 1952. In 1953, he founded the Ethnographic Film Committee with Henri Langlois, Enrico Fulchignoni, Marcel Griaule, André Leroi-Gourhan and Claude Lévi-Strauss. He made his first film in 1947 — *Au Pays des Mages Noirs* (In the Land of the Black Magi). His cinematographic work includes around one hundred and fifty films. His influence extends to the present day in cinema and anthropology. He was first recognised in cinema, and only later was he recognised in anthropology. He influenced the practices of visual anthropology discussed at the first "Conference of Visual Anthropology" in 1973. Jean Rouch's films became a paradigmatic reference (Ginsburg, 1999) and school, pursued in multiple places: at the University of Nanterre, with courses in cinema, audiovisual, culture and society, at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (Paris, Marseille) and at other institutions such as the Ateliers Varan, which expanded cinema training throughout the world.

Among Rouch's numerous films, it is difficult to highlight any in particular. Some because they represent important records in African history, society and culture, such as *Les Fêtes du Sigui*[4] (The Celebrations of Sigui; 1967–1974), *Sigui Synthèse, L'Invention de la Parole et de la Mort* (Synthesis of Sigui, The Invention of Speech and Death; 1981), or the filmmaking initiatives in Mozambique, others because they stand for innovative, creative processes, both in anthropology and cinema. I refer especially to *Les Maîtres Fous* (The Mad Masters; 1955), *Moi, un Noir* (I, a Negro; Rouch, 1958), *La Pyramide Humaine* (The Human Pyramid; 1961) e *Chronique d'un* Été (Chronicle of a Summer; Rouch & Morin, 1960).

From the beginning of the 19th century, anthropology and cinema established a relationship between the "indigenous" or "native" and the poor of European societies. The figure of the primitive savage was extended by the excluded Europeans (Kilani, 1994). Indigents, farmers, and mountain people were thus included, those whom the civilising action of science sought to rehabilitate for modern society. Anthropology had, apart from the romantic nature of the traditional societies' "preservation", "conservation", the philanthropic character of integrating the excluded, both values of modern society. Cast out of its traditional fields, anthropology at home (Davies, 1999) or anthropology (Kilani, 1994) not only failed to turn towards the centre, which it had rarely done during the colonial process, but also maintained the two great divisions — external: radical difference;

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[3] The Songhai Empire (also transliterated as Songhay, circa 1460 to 1591) replaced the Mali Empire (1240–1645) as the most important state in West Africa (covering southern modern Mauritania and Mali). Originally established as a minor kingdom on the eastern bank of the Niger River bend (around 1,000), the Songhai expanded their territory dramatically from the reign of King Suni Ali (1464–1492). With the capital based at Gao and managing control of the trans-Atlantic trade through centres such as Timbuktu and Djenne, the empire prospered throughout the 16th century until torn by civil wars, it was attacked and absorbed by the Moroccan empire around 1591.

[4] The Sigui is an itinerant ceremony passed on from village to village and region to region along the Cliff of Bandiagara. The Sigui is not celebrated in all places simultaneously, and its itinerary is significant: it begins in Yougo Dogorou, a mythical high place. Indeed, it is where the serpent's misdeed was committed, and from there, he set out in search of his spiritual principles. It was also to Yougo Dogorou that he returned. It takes place for seven years in a row, only to be repeated 60 years later.

and internal: differentiation nature/culture and, consequently, science and society, things and signs — and even lost some of its best features — holistic objectives.

Les Maîtres Fous is one of the best-known films, but it is also the object of much controversy among anthropologists and African communities. It is, however, still one of the most relevant ethnographic films, as it deals with important epistemological questions pivotal to anthropology.

Overall, Marcel Griaule's objective was linked to an *anthropology of urgency*. That is, he aimed to record disappearing rituals. Rouch addresses in *Les Maîtres Fous* the reconfiguration of ritual in today's society, emphasising the perception of ritual and society in the construction of narrative.

He disrupted a way of doing anthropology that advocated the integration of the social through ritual and ritual as a form of experience of this representation of integration. From its title, *Les Maîtres Fous* pointed to an ambiguity that suspended the question: which society was represented in the ritual? The African, the British, or both at the same time? Thus, *Les Maîtres Fous* provided a new look at what society was and reflected West Africa's transition. Rouch's interest was in displaced people, migrants living in big cities, urban life and the phenomenon of possession. In this sense, Rouch was part of the Enlightenment and yet its antithesis, the shadow around the light (Grimshaw, 2001, pp. 91–92). Rouch embodied in the best sense of the term this condition of the modern ethnographer: while he had a fascination for the authentic rites of the Dogon, as they had been thoroughly presented by Griaule, which Rouch filmed 40 years later, in the same way, that Griaule had written it, he was also aware that this experience is not possible in the modern world (Gonçalves, 2007, pp. 35–36).

In *Chronique d'un Été*, Rouch and Morin overcome anthropology's challenges in adapting to new situations by turning to the centre. Themes such as the city, young people, relations between workers and students, political debate, decolonisation — the Algerian war, the independence of the Republic of Congo and even a small reference to Pândita Nehru, Indian Prime Minister between 1947 and 1964 and responsible for the integration of the territories in India (namely, the territories under Portuguese rule), life in the city, the July 14 bal-musette (French national holiday ball), industrial production, the urban paths of workers, the outskirts of the city, the problem of housing, frustrations with work, intimate life and personal fulfilment, the dawn of the consumer society and financial concerns as a form of happiness.

The approach of the exotic and the distant, which had marked Jean Rouch's earlier films, is placed on an equal footing with the endotic, the close, the familiar, and the everyday life of our societies (*Chronique d'un Été*) or with the interaction between the worlds traditionally belonging to the observers with those traditionally belonging to those being observed (*La Pyramide Humaine*). Observation as a visual activity, knowing how to see, is now complemented by locally produced words and sounds, knowing how to hear, and knowing how to listen. The relationship between the observed and the observers (who is who in this process?) is transformed. Anthropology is also about knowing how to be — with others and oneself, even when we meet others. Finally, it is also about constructing

audiovisual discourse, integrating the technical possibilities of recording synchronous, audiovisual sound. It is closely marked by an affinity with new forms emerging in cinema — truthful cinema, the "new truthful cinema" (Morin, 1960), observation cinema, and interaction cinema (shared anthropology). This period and the influence of Jean Rouch extend to the present day.

In *Chronique d'un Été*, Jean Rouch overcame two technical constraints that hindered the development of the experimental or research film: the live capture of synchronous sound and a light camera that allowed him to follow the characters' actions — a *Vertovian* active camera. The close collaboration between Rouch, a *born craftsman,* and the engineer Coutant produced a prototype of a camera used in *Chronique d'un Été*. It contributed to the rapid progress of sound and image recording techniques. Rouch had in his team Michel Brault, an accredited cameraman, director and producer from Quebec, and Edgar Morin, who in this film was beginning to learn the practice of film-making and was embarking on a new working method: a film based on the word, on natural dialogue, captured live. This new method allowed them to get closer to people in one of their strongholds: the word, the instrument par excellence of human communication. It thus sought out the secret, repressed, forgotten things that emerge from the word (the mental representations). He also produced a profoundly innovative film in the French cinematic milieu: on a formal level, because, for the first time, "sound and image walked together, with the characters in movement, Michel Brault's camera investigated the characters, filmed around them, 'sculpted' them" (Marsolais, 1974, p. 270). In this film, the characters are not placed in a psychodrama situation nor called upon to relive a past situation; they are in their everyday lives. Through provocation or trust in the directors (Morin and Rouch), they are invited to express themselves and reveal their truth. The camera sometimes becomes discreet or intervening, with the aim of provoking and witnessing the confession. Above all, it is a film geared towards the problem of communication, not only in its formal and superficial aspect but also towards the revelation of the real problems that are not communicated.

2. *Chronique d'un été*: 50 Years Later

In 2008, the materials, images and sounds not used in the final editing of this film were digitised, and the sound was restored and synchronised. From these materials revisited by Edgar Morin and the main actors of the film — Régis Debray, Jean-Pierre Sergent, Marceline Loridan-Ivens, Nadine Ballot — and the comments of the researcher Raymond Bellour and Florence Dauman, the director, producer and director of the company Argos Film, producer of *Chronique d'un Été*, produced the film *Un Été + 50* (A Summer + 50; Dauman, 2011; https://www.allocine.fr/film/fichefilm_gen_cfilm=196828.html). The film thus reworks unpublished sequences from the film made in 1960, reread through conversations with its actors 50 years after the shooting.

The first editing of *Chronique d'un* Été (Rouch & Morin, 1960) produced a five-hour final work, version unknown. Subsequently, Jean Rouch e Anatole Dauman (Florence

Dauman's father) edited 85 minutes. This downsizing led to disagreements between Rouch and Morin, settled much later, but left many sequences that allow us to know the creation processes, filmmaking contexts, and the integration of many of the film's actors through cinema. That is, they allow us to reread this important work of reference — "an extraordinarily important film... a singular project [unique] by the confrontation of these two individualities [Rouch and Morin] and their two experiences: sociology without cinema and the ethnographic cinema in Africa" (Raymon Belour in Dauman, 2011, 00:02:04), in cinema and doing its ethnography and *genetic critique* — the theoretical-critical follow-up of the creation process.

Cinema and ethnography question what reality and the imagined are, the multiplicity of viewpoints, and the importance given to detail. Like social phenomena, cinema is both visual and sound. Cinema alters our knowledge and our perception of the sensitive. It simultaneously fosters a knowledge of the real and the imagined as a reflection on the imagined and constructed real. Each and every film is thus a privileged field for anthropological research, ethnographic description and anthropological reflection. This also applies to the creative process of filmmaking, construction, production and circulation dynamics. Un Été + 50 (Dauman, 2011) clearly shows us this. It also shows us how this figure of the anthropologist-filmmaker is good for thinking about both fields of knowledge — anthropology and cinema. Rouch stated in an interview with Enrico Fulchignoni in 1981:

> cinema, the art of the double, is already the passage from the real world to the imaginary world, and ethnography, the science of the thought systems of others, is the continuous passage from one conceptual universe to another, an acrobatic gymnastics in which losing one's foot is the least of the risks. (Stoller, 1994, pp. 96–97)

This same reflexive strategy is presented, in the form of a commentary, by Jean Rouch's voice in *Chronique d'un Été*: "this film was made without actors, but lived by men and women who devoted part of their time to a new experiment in truthful cinema" (Rouch & Morin, 1960, 00: 01.10). Synchronous sound and longer film rolls allowed Rouch and Morin to fulfil their intention to leave the marks of the passage from the idea to the film in their films.

The film begins with a proposal and a rehearsal of the experiment that Rouch and Morin intend to undertake. It seemed, then, that this experiment was too simple. However, the film's first images immediately point to its ambitious intention. It sets out to pair with and rival the excellent and innovative emerging and award-winning achievements of the time: Vittorio de Sicca's *Miracolo a Milano* (Miracle in Milan), Jacques Tati's *Les Vacances de Monsieur Hulot* (Monsieur Hulot's Holiday), Alain Resnais' *Hiroshima Mon Amour* (Hiroshima, My Love), Federico Fellini's *La Dolce Vita* (Life Is Beautiful), *La Source* (The Virgin Spring) by Ingmar Bergman, *Rocco i Suoi Fratelli* (Rocco and His Brothers) by Luchino Visconti, and establish itself in the history of cinema by continuing Vertov's truthful cinema and integrate the contexts of these masterpieces of European cinema.

The complexity and richness of Chronique d'un Été (Rouch & Morin, 1960) derive from the mixture and imbrication between life and cinema at all levels of the film. According to Morin (1960), what captivates the actors is the action of cinema in real life, how people, becoming characters, release some of their deepest concerns before the gaze of the camera. The film unfolds as a work in progress subject to the technical and human oddities of filming experienced as an encounter. The film, writes Morin (1960) after its making, "is hybrid, and it is this hybridity that makes it both infirm and interrogative". *Cronique d'un Été* has these elements inscribed not only in the film but also in the writings or interviews of the authors who provide information about the creative process — inspirational sources, creative processes, photographs of the shooting, technologies used, actors or characters to address in the film, but above all, a lot of filmed material that remained outside the final edit — editing that entered the circuits of distribution and exhibition. *Un Été + 50,* by Florence Dauman (2011), is a valuable document for a retrospective look at this film, considered today a classic in documentary cinema and anthropology. Florence Dauman's film (2011) introduces a double look at the actors' past after 50 years and their own images that remained in the film, or out of it, as unassembled material in the final copy, thus allowing us to see and reconstruct the filmmaking process; it brings out, or re-emerges, the intimate emotion where life and cinema overlap; it shows us the sociopolitical context of its making — *mise-en-situation filmée* (filmed situational awareness). The film's credits inform about the film itself and the international Critics' Prize awarded at Cannes in 1961. It also mentions the technologies used, the restoration of the images and synchronisation of the sound and a soundtrack of sound fragments from the shoot in which the first idea of the film's title is revealed and the divergence in a telephone conversation between Rouch and Morin at the beginning of the film — Rouch disagrees with Morin's proposal *Un Été Pourri* (A Terrible Summer); "without a title, there is no film", and the themes addressed that contextualise the political situation in France — the war in Algeria (Dauman, 2011, 00: 00:00:01) and Raymond Bellour situates this "outstanding film" in the context of the *nouvelle vague* and outlines the biography of its authors (00:01:20).

Jean Rouch and Edgar Morin's (1960) idea for the film *Chronique d'un Été* came up in Florence, where both met as members of the jury of the recently created "Festival dei Popoli"[5] —"International Festival of Ethnographic and Sociological Film" and was inspired by Lionel Rogosin's film *Come Back, Africa*[6] (1960) with Miriam Makeba in which the word is improvised, lived and filmed. This film particularly influenced Edgar Morin

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[5] The "Festival dei Popoli" (http://www.festivaldeipopoli.org/) was founded in 1959 by a group of humanities scholars — anthropologists, sociologists, ethnologists and the media, aiming to promote social documentary cinema. Based in Florence, it has some activities in New York. Apart from the festival's main activities, it conducts important work in preserving and digitising the archive (over 16,000 titles, including video and film) which is an asset in the training and organisation of courses and workshops for filmmakers and aspiring filmmakers.

[6] *Come Back, Africa,* secretly shot by Lionel Rogosin, exposes the cruelty and injustice with which black South Africans were treated. Miriam Makeba features elegantly in the film in a beautiful song accompanied by the voices of the participants in the show. The music, the dances, the sounds and the lived words are important hallmarks in the film, considered by Martin Scorsese as a "a heroic film of terrible beauty, of life in progress and that captured the spirit embodied by Rogosin and his fellow artists" (Rothschild, 2011, 00:00:33).

(1960), who, returning from the Festival, wrote in *France Observateur* the article "Pour un Nouveau Cinema Verité" (For a New Truthful Cinema). In this article, Morin states that "fiction cinema reaches the deepest truths, but there is one truth that it cannot grasp, the authenticity of lived experience" (Morin, 1960). Morin also believes that before the very heavy and not very mobile camera (attached to the tripod), life suddenly escapes and closes in, causing a halt in the fluidity of everyday life — "the intimacy of everyday life actually lived" and the loss of liveliness. Also, before the camera, everyone puts on a mask, thus losing authenticity. So, Edgar Morin (1960) concludes:

> cinema cannot penetrate the intimacy of everyday life actually lived (...); truthful cinema was, therefore, at a standstill if it wanted to grasp the truth of human relations on the spot. (...) Documentary cinema remained out of touch with humans, refusing to compete with fiction films.

For Morin, authenticity, truth, intimacy and capturing what is lived in the new cinema-documentary represent a synthesis of two contradictory tendencies: capturing what is lived is the surface, and intimacy and depth restrain liveliness. The challenge of the film would be "the intimate captured by the lived" (Morin, 1960). The words, the sonorities, and the speech of the participants in the film (directors and actors — social and in the film) are truly important and direct synchronous sound[7] is essential to meet this challenge. Morin was most interested in the dialogues, the spoken word and its added value for spoken cinema.

Morin (1960) considered that only Jean Rouch, "a filmmaker-diver who penetrates the real environment", would be capable of initiating this cinema. To do so, he envisaged a technical device that would allow great freedom, renouncing formal aesthetics and searching in life actually lived for its aesthetic secrets. The idea would be to reveal the beauty of life rather than attempting its "aestheticization" through formal processes. This concept would allow the combination of beauty and aesthetic truth. It would introduce the idea of beauty discovered and not brought from the outside. He then suggested to Jean Rouch that they make a film in France about "how do you live?". The film would then boil down to three phrases that he explained to Anatole Dauman, who would become the producer of the film: material/economic and moral/psychological problems; the added value that the spoken word brought to the cinema (Dauman, 2011, 00:03:51); only Jean Rouch could materialise this experience. At the outset, Edgar Morin saw a film made of everyday things, taken from people's lives, from conversations with them, as in *Come Back, Africa. Un Été + 50* describes the negotiations with the producer, recounted by Morin in the present day and experienced at the time by Rouch and Marilù (Dauman, 2011, 00:02:40). It also exposes the involvement of the actors, a consistent feature in the film (use of the start of shooting sign by Jean Pierre, Marceline and Nadine Ballot in the

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[7] Technical sound and image recording innovations were essential to this project's development. The development in the 1960s of the Nagra recorder by Kudelsi, which Marceline Loridan carried in the film, and the advent of synchronous sound were a revolution. Also, the launch of the Éclair Courant camera, whose design Jean Rouch followed, made it possible to record for around 10 minutes without reloading the camera.

street survey), in the process of making, viewing and appropriating the images and the work (in the original film and *Un Été + 50)*.

After the meeting with the producer — Anatole Dauman — the characters were contacted and built from Morin and Rouch's social relations (bande Morin and bande Rouch). They were the young Renault workers, Jacques Gabillon and Angelo Borgien; the latter became an important character in the film with Marilù Parolini, an Italian immigrant from Morin's close relations; Marceline Loridan-Ivens, a former concentration camp deportee whom he had just met; Jean-Pierre Sergent, a student (in a difficult love affair with Marceline); Jacques Galillon, a railway employee and his wife. Rouch, who had just directed *La Pyramide Humaine*, invited, among others, Nadine Ballot, a student he had met on the Ivory Coast and would become an actress in *La Pyramide Humaine* and other Rouch films such as *Gare du Nord* (Rouch, 1964), *La Punition* (Punishment; 1962), *Les Veuves de Quinze Ans* (The 15-Year-Old Widows; 1964). He also invited Régis Debray, a student at the Ecole Normale Supérieure in Paris; Landry, a young African medical student; and Michel Brault, who had travelled the previous year to California to meet Rouch, invited by Rouch to come and work with him in Paris.

The war in Algeria, the participation or desertion of young people (out of the film's final edit; Dauman, 2011, 00:21:25) and the independence of the Congo in 1960, until then, the private property of the king of the Belgians, were hallmarks of the socio-historical context of the filmmaking and the socio-historical context of the events, concerns and awareness and political differences of the young people. The conversations with the actors were about the issues of everyday life — individualism and monetary concerns, money, people's private lives, love, gender relations, boredom, immigration, racism, the meeting of two social groups that do not know each other, workers and students (foreshadowing May 1968, in which they jointly demonstrated but did not actually meet or question each other; Dauman, 2011, 01: 00:05), the holidays (the trip to San Tropez, Morin's idea), the beach, the sea, the movie stars (meeting of Nadine, Landry and Nicole), and the conversations about the conflict between Jean-Pierre Sergent and Marceline[8].

In editing, they produced a first version of five hours and another of an hour and a half, which Jean Rouch and Anatole Dauman thought was very good, but which left Edgar Morin perplexed, which he did not overcome until 20 years later. In solving this problem, self-censorship worked. On the one hand, the Algerian war — Jean-Pierre was in the pro-National Liberation Front network — on the other hand, people's private lives and more intimate dialogues, which would become trivial after May 1968 but were here a first public exposure that later, in 1964, Pier Paolo Pasolini would pursue further in *Comozi*

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[8] Scenes from an apparently fictional film, which were not included in the final edit of *Chronique d'un Été*, but which Marceline and Jean-Pierre believe to be true, and this was only possible, in Marceline's words, 50 years later, because she trusted Edgar Morin and Jean Rouch "I was not afraid to say what I felt to both of them... I lived what I said. The sorrow over Jean-Pierre's break-up was real". Other intimate conversations were also left out of the film's final version, such as the conversation between women — Marilu and Nadine — which Morin, 50 years later, reinterprets by Marilu's meeting with Jacques Rivette and change in the work of the Italian chamber of commerce for the *Cahiers du Cinéma* "a relationship between the world of cinema and that of this film", as Morin states (Dauman, 2011, 00:51:35).

d'Amore (Love Meetings)[9]. The intimate dialogues between Jean-Pierre and Marceline are admittedly from a fiction film (Dauman, 2011, 00:39:13)

Both Rouch and Morin considered the need for light technology, a hyper-movable camera. The idea was of a provocative camera that is seen, that is evident, that deeply disturbs the person filming and the person filmed.

The differences and complementarity between Jean Rouch and Edgar Morin are evident in the film. Edgar Morin is an important and very well-known sociologist — "a great sociologist and a great connoisseur of cinema and sociology" (Dauman, 2011, 00:01:39). His works on cinema are renowned: The *Cinema or the Imaginary Man* (Morin, 1956) and *The Stars* (Morin, 1957), and the article published in *France Observateur* in January 1960. There are also many interesting stories about the *author's epistemological trajectory* (transdisciplinarity, complexity, reciprocity towards the theory and economy of reciprocity), which shed some light on the genesis of the film *Chronique d'un Été*. He also published with Jean Rouch *Chronique d'un* Été (film script; 1962). Morin has a more ideological and militant role in the film; Rouch has a more interlocutory, ethnographic position.

Like Marcel Griaule, the ethnologist who supervised Rouch's thesis, he deserved burial ceremonies and resting at the Cliff of Bandiagara, close to the Dogon ancestors, as documented in the referred film. For Raymond Bellour, Rouch is "a great filmmaker partaking in the *Nouvelle Vague* from ethnographic cinema in a unique position" (Dauman, 2011, 00:01:30).

We can say that Rouch and Morin make hybrid direct/truthful cinema from multiple influences and participations (like Michel Brault). They use the technical resources of direct cinema — light cameras (Coutant-Mathot and Nagra), small crews, direct sound, and natural light (https://www.avoir-alire.com/chronique-d-un-ete-la-critique-le-test-dvd). However, they use them as a kind of provocation to free expression, expecting from their characters an involvement that does not exist in other documentary schools. The procedure is meant to be scientific, and ethnologists and sociologists used the technical resources, not journalists. This use of the apparatuses (specific technical means and procedures) challenged everything Michel Brault had acquired as the specific language of direct cinema.

The presence of Rouch and Morin and the apparatuses on the scene were not to be concealed. They would become the film's protagonists themselves in the initial presentation of the idea for the film and in the negotiations/instructions given to the interviewers (Marceline and Nadine).

Rouch's originality is most noticeable in terms of language. In *Chronique d'un* Été, the interviewer's relationship with the protagonists is not entirely new, and he establishes a new relationship with the protagonists (the interview gives way to conversations between interlocutors).

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[9] In *Comozi d'Amore*, Pasolini starts with a question, "how are children born?" to address the issues of sexuality — the importance of sex in life in Italy, inspired by Rouch and Morin's film and the idea of a "new truthful cinema". Accessed on May 2023, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JKGvqxBZWS0.

It is also a hybrid film, somewhere between documentary and fiction. The character freely reinvents his/her story without any staging: (a) this procedure avoids the dramatisation of the narrative, which corrupted neorealism, by seeking the possibilities of revealing behaviour in a message; (b) for Rouch the camera is not an obstacle to the expression of the protagonists but on the contrary an "incomparable stimulus". The protagonists participate in the shooting themselves, signalling the camera to start and the synchronism (film clapboard). It is about getting, thanks to the complicity of the undirected and unscripted/guided characters, reality as it happens — the very life of the young people described by Marceline and referred to above: "I never know what I'm going to do the next day. I have a principle that tomorrow can take care of itself. For me adventures are always around the corner" (Marceline in Rouch & Morin, 1960, 00:03:56).

Un Été + 50 (Dauman, 2011) presents a final reflection, in the form of a polyphonic mosaic, on *Chronique d'un Été* by the actual words of its actors — Debray, Sergent, Marceline, the film researcher Raymond Bellour and the final conversation not included in the original version of the film (00:58:57). Here, they address issues that clarify and give new life to the work of Rouch and Morin:

- the construction of their own characters in the film;

- the film as a premonition of something (May 1968? – Rouch and Morin's question);

- the general understanding of each other and the challenges of this understanding;

- the "ambivalent conclusions of our adventure" (Morin) — a holiday film. The holiday is over. What happened during that holiday in the world (in the Congo, in the United Nations, in France), and to the people in the film;

- the main goal of the film, based on the results of the survey presented in the film;

- the evolution of people in the film (especially Marilù, who finds a new job and emotional stability);

- the actors' expressions before the camera (highlighting Marceline — the main character of the film);

- the "paradoxical film therapy in reverse" (Dauman, 2011, 01:04:35), for which Rouch and Morin are responsible;

- the stance towards work.

Raymond Bellour's final comments on the shooting techniques, the focus, the synchronous camera, the totally determining importance of sound — "it becomes image" — the ability to penetrate the interstices of reality. The film ends with Marceline's words, 50 years later, next to a reel of film to be shot — "for this film, I thank Jean for having made it. There is a truth in this film, not truthful cinema, but an authenticity of all these characters" (Dauman, 2011, 01:06:40) and Jean-Pierre:

> in film, the truth is debatable... but one reality that shows itself, whatever the circumstances in which it takes place, is the level of sincerity. Some people stage themselves. Marceline plays herself. She is very conscious of what she is doing. In the discussion, I am aware of the role I play... there is a kind of more authentic spontaneity in people... This is what makes the charm and the power of this film. (Dauman, 2011, 01:07:04)

Morin's statements prompt us today to new reflections on cinema, on the relationship of cinema with the lived and with the autobiographical, or the auto-socio-biographical, and not only in cinema as Annie Erneaux shows us in literature.

Marceline Loridan-Ivens, the main character in the film, directed the film *Algerie, Année Zéro* (Algeria, Year Zero; 1962) with Jean-Pierre Sergent and with Joris Ivens, whom she came to marry, *Le 17ème Parallèle* (The 17th Parallel; 1968), *Une Histoire de Ballon, Lycée n° 31 Pékin* (The Football Incident; 1976), *Comment Yukong Déplaça les Montagnes* (How Yukong Moved the Mountains; 1976), *Les Kazaks* (The Kazaks; 1977), *Les Ouigours* (The Uigurs; 1977), *Une Histoire de Vent* (A Tale of the Wind; 1988). She was also an actress and scriptwriter/screenplay writer. Marilù Parolini worked at the Italian Chamber of Commerce, met Jacques Rivete, and started working at *Cahiers du Cinéma*. Régis Debray, philosopher, journalist, writer, Althusser follower, a friend of Fidel Castro and Ernesto Che Guevara, the descendant of a well-to-do family, PhD at the École Normale Supérieure and a philosophy professor at the University of Lyon. Nadine Ballot, an actress in *Chronique d'un* Été — interviewer with Marceline —, and in other Rouch films, also played small roles in films by Jean-Luc Godard and François Truffaut. Jean Rouch made a hundred and fifty films and is an absent physical character, but is the one most referred to in *Un Été + 50*, and was given a symbolic funeral by the Dogon, as had previously happened to Marcel Griaule, at Cliff of Bandiagara. In this funeral, the Dogon include the rites Rouch filmed and in which he was initiated. From these rites of his last return to Africa, the German filmmaker Bernd Mosblech (2007) made the film *Je Suis Un Africain Blanc – L'Adieu à Jean Rouch* (I Am a White African – Farewell to Jean Rouch). Perhaps this film will shed some light on the African presence in Chronique d'un Été.

3. Jean Rouch: The Last Meeting with the Dogon

The documentary filmmaker and the anthropologist live the same experience of going through, sometimes, the same situations, the same socio-historical contexts, the same ethical and political responsibilities and the same conditions for their work, and even, sometimes, the same precariousness of means and the same constraints. The anthropologist-filmmaker, or the filmmaker-anthropologist, lives a unique experience, in a specific place, with specific people, similar to a rite of passage. An original route and an original work are required of them. The completion of a project, entailing a passage to another place, where they will conduct fieldwork, the adaptation to the situation in which they will undertake this work (crisis of adaptation, of interactions, of representations), the focus on intentions, the densification of objectives and the definition of strategies and the implementation of actions aimed at achieving these objectives. Finally, the conclusion of a journey through the presentation of expected results, likely to lend credibility to the return to the institution (cinema, anthropology) with a different status from that of departure. It is, therefore, a rite of passage in which one seeks recognition of his work's value and, consequently, also a rite of institution.

In this journey, we see the recognition of the work by the institutions where it fits. However, in this rite of passage, there is contact with places and people — an effective and emotional passage into the terrain hard to leave. Thus, it is not a mere passage through the field to collect information without any ties to the people, the groups, the institutions, and the places. People would risk becoming objects, susceptible to being manipulated and reified. Both the filmmaker and the anthropologist bring to life the work, the people and the places — the affections and the conflicts experienced in the fieldwork and the production of the cinematographic work. This situation puts the anthropological and cinematic project in a complex process of personal, political, economic, ethical and aesthetic decisions.

Unlike fiction cinema and literary work, which can fabricate and determine the destiny of their characters, the documentary filmmaker and the anthropologist work on reality. They work on what they see and hear, the way they see and hear, what they choose and freeze (characters, frames, places, events, actions); they choose characters, a choice mostly driven by affinities without excluding, however, certain characters essential to understanding the theme dealt with, even if grudgingly integrated. The same is true for places — geographical territories. The whole world can be offered to the research of documentary filmmakers and anthropologists since the birth of anthropology and cinema (since the Lumières operators who spread all over the world) — faraway places and exotic cultures, or the "drama on the doorstep, the drama of the ordinary" (Sussex & Grierson, 1972, p. 27). Like anthropology, the documentary was born from wandering and exploring the unknown.

Jean Rouch was an anthropologist and filmmaker faithful to his social themes, region, ethnographic cinema, and, most of all, a respect for the cultures and the people he filmed. Marcel Griaule, who had headed the Dakar-Djibouti scientific mission (1931–1933), in which Michel Leris (*Afrique Fantôme* [Phantom Africa], 1934), André Schaeffner, Deborah Lifshitz, Eric Lutten, Jean Mouchet, Jean Mitten, Abel Faivre and Gaston-Louis Roux participated — would later direct his doctoral thesis on religion and Songhai magic (1952), becoming a researcher at the National Centre for Scientific Research.

Figure 8. *Dakar-Djibouti mission (1931–1933)*

Credits: Membres de la Mission Dakar-Djibouti au Musée d'ethnographie du Trocadéro. De gauche à droite : André Schaeffner, Jean Mouchet, Georges Henri Rivière, Michel Leiris, le baron Outomsky, Marcel Griaule, Éric Lutten, Jean Moufle, Gaston-Louis Roux, Marcel Larget [Fotografia], por ©Charles Mallison, 1931. Creative Commons 3.0. (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/legalcode)

How were they "invented" for anthropology, and how do the Dogon appear in Rouch's life? The first contact was with Marcel Griaule and Michel Leiris, who toured fifteen African countries in the Dakar-Djibouti mission (1931–1933). They spent two months among the Dogon, and Griaule made some films on this West African people in the following years: *Au Pays des Dogons* (In the Country of the Dogon; 1935), *Les Techniques Chez les Noirs* (The Techniques of Black People; 1942) and *Sous les Masques Noirs* (Under the Black Masks; 1938). However, it did not record the most important Dogon ceremonies repeated every 60 years for seven consecutive years — the Sigui. This mission would be accomplished by Jean Rouch and Germaine Dieterlen (1967–1973).

Marcel Griaule, through the first contact, Germaine Dieterlen, through the systematic research, and Jean Rouch, through the cinema, make up the trio that constructed or at least introduced or made visible the Dogon mythology to Westerners. Rouch and Dieterlen had the privilege of filming the Sigui ceremony — *Sigui Synthèse, L'Invention de la Parole et de la Mort* (1981), a synthesis of films made between 1966 and 1974.

Jean Rouch reached the Dogon later, when its notoriety in Africa and France was already evident due to the films made in West Africa (Mali, Ivory Coast, Nigeria), his participation in the truthful cinema movement (*Chronique d'un Été*) and the *nouvelle vague* — as Bellour states "a great filmmaker partaking in the Nouvelle Vague from ethnographic cinema in a unique position" (Dauman, 2011, 01:26:00). These facts have definitely contributed to Dogon's popularity in the restricted circles of anthropology experts and students, ethnographic film and visual anthropology.

On February 18, 2004, 50 years after the shooting of *Cimetière Dans la Falaise* (Cemetery in the Cliff; Rouch, 1950), Jean Rouch died in a brutal car accident in Nigeria while on his way to the film festival to present the film *Le Rêve Plus Fort que la Mort* (The Dream Stronger than Death; 2002). Three years later, the Dogon people in Mali held his symbolic funeral.

> Jean was a strong man (recognised, esteemed) in this village and was initiated before he died. Jean asked that when he died, they do the same thing they did to the Dogon after their death. We informed them. So tomorrow, Jean will be buried as an initiate in this village, Tyogou, Koundou. (Anagaly Amadigné Dolo em Mosblech, 2007, 00:05:08–00:05:48)

Jocelyne Rouch was to participate, as Rouch's widow, in the funeral ceremonies and hand over the personal objects that were requested of her — clothing and his main working tool. Earlier, Marcel Griaule, locally known as *Mr. Dam*, had also been given a similar ceremony in 1956 (Mosblech, 2007, 00:15:30).

German filmmaker Bernd Mosblec accompanied Jocelyne Rouch, recording his contact with Rouch's friends in the Dogon. He handed the traditional gifts to Ogon, the village's religious chief, and to the women who taught Jocelyne how Dogon widows participate in the funerals of their relatives and their husbands.

The film is not a biography but a remembrance of the filmmaker through the rites commented on by Jocelyne Rouch. The title borrows a statement by Rouch, "I am a white African". She also recounts, during the journey that leads her to the Dogon, the circumstances of the car accident in which they were involved. The Dogon funeral rites follow, dances with masks, the sacrifice of an animal (bull) according to the importance of the deceased, and, finally, the climbing of the straw mannequin, dressed in Rouch's usual clothes, blue shirt, beige trousers and hat. Jocelyne Rouch's emotional voice overlaps with those of the rites in a vibrant and joyous farewell amid sacrifices, libations and corn beer.

Among the Dogon, funeral ceremonies included dances on the terraces covering the houses of the dead, in which many masked people took part according to the precise rules of the ritual. The aim is to drive away the deceased's soul, preventing it from returning by terrifying the family members. A periodic festivity allowed the wearing of a large mask in the shape of a snake. This symbolised the ancestor, the link between the world of the living and that of the dead. Where patriarchal systems dominated societies, ancestor worship thrived. In any case, as the Mozambican writer Mia Couto (2003) summarised, "in Africa, the dead never die. Except those who die badly... After all, death is another birth" (p. 30).

The Cliff of Bandiagara, Mali, is a geological fracture approximately 200 km long and 300 m high. Located between the savannah and the plain of the Niger River, it served as a natural refuge for the Dogon. Its craggy rock walls offered protection and shelter, and their houses were made with clay and straw for camouflage. They were, and still are, almost indistinguishable from a distance. This mimicry in the constructions was not at

all coincidental. It was a topography of war and, in fact, ideal for defending the settlements. The houses, erected next to the highest cliff walls, are only accessible by climbing the rock, especially those that served as an object for the initial occupation. The terrain, here and there, dotted with loose stones, made it difficult for cavalry groups to enslave their members. And, from the top of the cliff, it was possible to observe and signal the approach of threats when they could still be avoided or their impact minimised.

After Jean Rouch's mannequin was laid down on the cliff in a secret location, his main working tool — the AATON camera — was handed over to Ogon, the village's religious chief, who smashed it against the rocks before the silence of the funeral participants.

The film has seven parts: it opens with climbing the Cliff of Bandiagara, followed by the title in German and French. The first part covers the journey and the entrance to the village of Tyogou. In this part, the director and Jocelyne Rouch-Lamothe narrate Rouch's connection with the Dogon and the circumstances of Rouch's death in a kind of external (director) and internal/participant (Jocelyne) interlocution that refers to the film *Le Rêve Plus Fort que la Mort* (2002), which Rouch was to show to his friends, Damouré Zica and Tallou Mouzourane. On the route, we have Rouch's itinerary in Africa in archive images and the director's narration. Jocelyne announces the arrival in the Dogon village, the ceremonies to take place and the common knowledge of these ceremonies and their actors. The second part, in Tyogou, is of offerings, introductions and greetings to the religious chief of the village — Ogon, and statements about the reason for the ceremonies to honour Rouch.

As in the first part, the narrative of Rouch's itinerary through Africa, through cinema, through ethnography in interlocution with Jocelyne continues, with archive images of Rouch or the Dogon, filmed by Rouch. The third part begins with preparing the mannequin that will represent Rouch, with his blue shirt, beige trousers and other objects brought by his widow, the fire of rifles and the mimicry of colonial military manoeuvres.

The historical narrative in this part evokes a ceremony similar to that of Griaule, who lies in a secret place on the cliff. The narration is provided by the director, Rouch's widow and the Dogon collaborator, who describes where the filming took place. The fourth part is mainly composed of funeral ceremonies. The fifth part contemplates the ascent of the mannequin to the cliff, ending with the destruction of the AATON 16 mm camera. The ceremonies are then restarted with Rouch's films about funerals, followed by the dance of the masks and their interpretation by the narrator, who has Rouch's voice as an interlocutor. The seventh part is the personal narrative of the experiences in the ritual of meeting and living with Jean Rouch — a kind of catharsis in which the separation between Rouch and Jocelyne occurs.

Paula Morgado e Denise Barros (2008), in a paper delivered at the "26ª Reunião Brasileira de Antropologia" (26th Brazilian Meeting of Anthropology), notes the cultural changes of the Dogon, stemming from the installation of the media and the development of tourism. According to this researcher from the Laboratory of Image and Sound in Anthropology of the University of São Paulo, in 2002, only one generator in Bandiagara provided power for part of the population. Even so, the first cybercafé was installed and

quickly, a growing number of young people, generally tourist guides or people linked to development projects of one of the various non-governmental organisations operating in the area, began their incursion into the Internet, mainly to send correspondence abroad. Later, North American support installed a room with five computers with satellite access in the Bandiagara administration. These changes introduced significant disruptions to the local culture. In 2027, when the Sigui rituals are performed again, what will the Dogon be like? Will the rituals persist? How will they be reconfigured? Furthermore, will scientific institutions and film anthropologists still be available to spend the seven years of their performance with the Dogon? Will the Dogon be making their own films, studying their own culture and processes of change?

4. Jean Rouch and the Poetry of Iron and Steel

Une Poignée de Mains Amies, Fleuve Qui par Dessous les Ponts, Ouvre la Porte de la Mer (A Shake of Friendly Hands, River that Beneath the Bridges, Opens the Door to the Sea) was the film that Rouch directed, in Porto, with Manoel de Oliveira, in 1996:

> savouring an old Port wine, I was talking to Manoel about the Douro bridges, and we immediately agreed — of all the bridges, the one built by Gustave Eiffel before he built the Tower of Paris was a great work of art. In less than five minutes, the project for this film was created. Manoel would write a poem that we would perfect with our friends. (En une Poignée de Mains Amies, Fleuve Qui par Dessous les Ponts, Ouvre les Portes de la Mer, s.d., para. 1)

The meeting and the idea of the film connected the two filmmaker friends, two films, *Douro Faina Fluvial* (Douro River Fishing; 1931), by Manoel de Oliveira, and *Beau Navire* (Beautiful Ship; 1990), by Jean Rouch, two cities, two filming approaches to the "modern poetry of iron and steel" (Régio, 1934), the works of art by the same engineer — Gustave Eiffel. Rouch (1992) always referred to the way Manoel de Oliveira filmed the D. Luís Bridge across the Douro River in *Douro Faina Fluvial* and how he filmed the Eiffel Tower himself: the "third film where I got a plan-sequence" (p. 38) showing what was happening

> under the skirts of the Lady Eiffel Tower. So I lay down on top of a car and approached the Eiffel Tower at twilight (…) the sky was completely blue, and the lighting contrasted with the sky so blue as she turned all golden. So it had a gold jewel on a blue background. And I could see my Eiffel Tower underneath (…). So I added a poem that I like very much, a poem by Baudelaire to a Creole and which I quote by heart: When you walk, with your wide skirt, sweeping the air. (Rouch in Ribeiro, 2007, p. 38)

Rouch's meeting with Manoel de Oliveira took place in 1955 and was mediated by Georges Sadoul during a meeting of filmmakers in Paris. Rouch had just finished directing *Les Maîtres Fous*. This first meeting did not seem very promising, but it set the two

filmmakers on a path of multiple encounters and forms of mutual recognition (https://images.cnrs.fr/video/6543).

It would be difficult to conceive of Jean Rouch's presence in Portugal before April 1974. The country had its colonies and, since 1960, wars in Guinea-Bissau, Angola and Mozambique, and a growing flow of emigrants to central Europe. Themes and ideas dear to Rouch's work — Africa, migrations, shared anthropology — were banned in Portugal. The regime watched and persecuted field researchers in the human sciences — the geographer Orlando Ribeiro, the linguist Lindley Cintra, and the musicologists Lopes-Graça and Michel Giacometti. Anthropology was almost exclusively taught at the Instituto de Ciências Sociais e Política Ultramarina, where colonial administrators were trained. Under these circumstances, although Rouch had produced almost a hundred films by then, these were not known in Portugal, and the police were more easily admitted to the university than cinema.

Soon after April 1974, Jean Rouch came to Portugal several times, especially to Porto, invited by the cultural attaché of the French embassy (Centro Cultural Francês do Porto; French Cultural Centre of Porto), Jacques d'Arthuys, a career diplomat between 1944 and 1989, cultural advisor in Valparaiso, communication advisor to President Salvador Allende, then transferred to Porto. In Portugal, d'Arthuys wrote the script for Thomas Harlan's film *Torre Bela* (1977). According to Jean Rouch (1979), he and d'Arthuys began their experiments there in Super 8 — they jointly developed the idea of creating Super 8 workshops with small cameras with synchronous sound. Jean Rouch had found an ideal tool in the Super 8 format to initiate a teaching programme dedicated to visual anthropology at university in France. These workshops would later be held between 1978 and 1980, in Mozambique, with the aim of training in the techniques of documentary cinema the staff and workers of the Centro de Estudos de Comunicação (Centre for Communication Studies) of the Eduardo Mondlane University, in Maputo. This training was provided by a group of young filmmakers — Philippe Constantini, Miguel Alencar, Nadine Wanono, Françoise Foucault — coordinated by Jean Rouch and Jacques d'Arthuys, then appointed cultural advisor in Maputo. During his stay in Mozambique, Jean Rouch and D'Arthuys made the film *Makwayela* (1977; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SxGa25BSRbA), produced with sequence plans. This document showcases a dance originating in South Africa, in which several Mozambican workers were working in the gold mines reconfigured in post-independence Mozambique. This film drew the attention of Jacques d'Arthuys and Jean Rouch to the need to provide Mozambicans with tools for the visual and audio recording of their history and the effervescence reigning between 1975 and 1980, during the first years of independence.

Jean-Luc Godard and Anne-Marie Miéville joined the project during the distribution of the films made by the students in the villages and took an interest in how the peasants perceived the images. Godard and Miéville's project went beyond the training scope in which the young directors were involved. They negotiated with the Mozambican leaders the proposal for television in Mozambique. This project, entitled the "nascimento da imagem de uma nação" (Birth of the Image of a Nation), challenged the communication

practices of state television and anticipated collaboration between their production company Sonimage and the Mozambican government, inspired by Armand Mattelart's experiences with Salvador Allende. This television programme never materialised.

The experiences developed in Porto and Mozambique by the influence of Jacques d'Arthuys definitively contributed to the birth, in 1981, of the Ateliers Varan, a member of the International Association of Film and Television Schools and consultant for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Though founded in January 1981, its origins went back to the mid-1970s in Portugal and late in the same decade in Mozambique. They were mainly due to Jacques d'Arthuys, its manager until 1988, meeting Jean Rouch and the proposal made by both to several filmmakers to come and film what was happening in Mozambique. In this context, Rouch proposed that Mozambicans should film themselves, offering to train future filmmakers by initiating the making of documentary films. The development and worldwide dissemination of this first experience brought together dozens of professionals (directors, editors, operators, sound engineers, etc.) who would later set up the Ateliers Varan (https://www.ateliersvaran.com/), teaching their practices in internships and workshops that are still held today.

5. Final Remarks

Cinema and anthropology emerged around the same concerns, the perception of movement and the inventorying of cultural diversities. The visualising tendency of the first images intended for archives and museum collections was followed by voices and discourses, which, in different ways, brought other forms of anthropological representation and communication between cultures to anthropology. This is how the ethnographic film was gradually defined and consolidated. From the middle of the twentieth century, Jean Rouch became a key reference for his long career as an anthropologist, filmmaker and Africanist. With Edgar Morin, he achieved innovative work in cinema and anthropology, both in technological processes and in shared and participated anthropology, as well as in the forms of discourse and the approach to relevant themes of 1960s Parisian society. The remastering of the *Chronique d'un Été archives* 50 years later gives us an ethnography of the creative process and a longitudinal ethnography of the social actors involved in making the film. Rouch did not leave African themes aside when he turned to "anthropology at home". On a trip to present the film *Le Rêve Plus Fort que la Mort* (2002) at a film festival, he died in a car accident. Jocelyne Rouch was left to tell the story of the accident and the symbolic funeral celebrated by the Dogon in Bernd Mosblech's film *Je Suis un Africain Blanc*. From 1975, Rouch travelled frequently to Portugal for Manoel de Oliveira's honorary doctorate at the Faculty of Architecture of the University of Porto, for meetings with Jacques d'Arthuys, and for cultural initiatives at the French Institute in Porto. These meetings made it possible to visit Mozambique and contact Manoel de Oliveira regularly. These were the four relevant moments from

which we can build a look at the manifold journey of the most relevant character in ethnographic film and visual anthropology.

Translation: Anabela Delgado

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Interculturality in the Musical Work of Robert Plant

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Abstract

This scientific essay analyses and discusses the concept of interculturality across the work of the musician Robert Plant, from his early career to the present day. We seek to contribute to what we call the "intersectional mainstream" and to understand the locus of interculturality throughout the singer's 40-year career. Our main question is: what are the musical limits of Plant, who is recognised as one of the greatest rockers of all time and who has always sought dialogue with other musical genres and cultures? To answer this and other questions, we based our text on the theoretical communication assumptions of Muniz Sodré's (2006, 2014), and Néstor García Canclini's (2005) and Homi K. Bhabha's (1998/2014) postcolonial precepts on interculturality. Based on the analysis of Plant's work, we conclude that the musician's challenging approach of dialogues and intersections remains to this day, cyclical and dialectical, the guiding star of the artist, who is not content to be just mainstream, much less a static mainstream, but an artist immersed in cultural dialogues and always willing to transcend market barriers.

Keywords

interculturality, Robert Plant, intersectional mainstream, communication, rock

A Interculturalidade na Obra Musical de Robert Plant

Resumo

Este ensaio científico analisa e discute o conceito de interculturalidade ao longo da obra do músico Robert Plant, desde o começo da carreira até os dias atuais. Procuramos avançar na constituição do que denominamos "mainstream interseccional" e compreender o local da interculturalidade ao longo dos mais de 40 anos de carreira do cantor. Nosso principal questionamento é: quais os limites musicais de Plant, reconhecido por ser um dos principais roqueiros de todos os tempos e que sempre buscou dialogar com outros gêneros musicais e culturas? Para responder esta e outras questões decorrentes, nosso texto está baseado nos pressupostos teóricos comunicacionais de Muniz Sodré (2006, 2014) e nos preceitos pós-coloniais sobre interculturalidade de Néstor García Canclini (2005) e Homi K. Bhabha (1998/2014). Com base nas análises realizadas da obra de Plant, concluímos que a postura desafiadora de diálogos e atravessamentos do músico permanece até hoje, de forma cíclica e dialética, sendo a estrela-guia do artista, que não se contenta em ser somente mainstream,

muito menos um mainstream estático, mas um artista imerso em diálogos culturais e sempre disposto a transpor barreiras mercadológicas.

1. Introduction/*The Principle of Moments*

Robert Anthony Plant[1] is a songwriter who continuously refuses to take the easiest route and represents what we conceive as *intersectional mainstream*[2]. He is a sort of outsider/insider of contemporary music culture, a feature that is present and absent in the logic of the market and the phonographic industry.

A promising solo artist for CBS Records in the second half of the 1960s, Robert Plant would soon become the frontman of one of the most respected and well-known rock bands of all time, Led Zeppelin. This band, reigning and virtually unchallenged during the 1970s, had its course cut short in 1980 after drummer John Bonham passed away at 32.

In that same decade, in his solo career, Robert Plant would experience ups and downs, both in his personal and artistic life, but always challenging the dictates of the phonographic industry. Thus, he moved in and out of this system. Like his former band, he followed the rules but also confronted them. All in all, he has been active for more than five decades. And the praxis of the *intersectional mainstream*'s true representative carries on or, as the song says, "remains the same"[3].

With Led Zeppelin and his solo career, in practically all of this journey, the musician still pursues innovation in his productions, a practice that gives him authenticity[4] within the phonographic industry game. This search for the new, the audacity, challenging oneself is what makes Robert Plant an example of *intersectional mainstream*.

As such, we consider this category part of an approach that either interacts or does not interact with the phonographic industry's market logics. As we understand, *intersectional mainstream* is a communication approach towards extrapolating a certain media performance guided by exclusively marketable rules. In other words, to risk and dwell in environments not strictly stipulated by the big phonographic industry and its close relationship with the media field present to this day. That is to say that Robert Plant

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[1] Son of a middle-class family, typical "British working class" (a civil engineer father and a housewife mother), Robert Anthony Plant was born on August 20, 1948, in West Bromwich, Staffordshire, England. Passionate about American rock and blues, he formed his first bands in his teens. Black Snake Moan and The Crawling King Snakes were among these when he met drummer John Bonham, his future best friend and drummer of Led Zeppelin.

[2] "By promoting dialogues with possibilities other than blues and hard rock, we can place the group in the 'intersectional mainstream' when it promotes a kind of 'going beyond' the mainstream in the classical sense" (Cruz & Curi, 2017, p. 50).

[3] Referring to the song "The Song Remains the Same", from the album *Houses of the Holy* (1973) by Led Zeppelin.

[4] According to Janotti Júnior (2007), "authenticity then involves the controversial aspect of creativity in the cultural industries and the search for distinctions and differentiations amidst the musical universe. Ultimately, to be recognized translates into gaining a certain creative autonomy, but, at the same time, finding a place in the market" (p. 10).

keeps certain successful formulas of his creative trajectory while engaging and seeking tensions and cultural intersections and, therefore, challenging other sound possibilities in his productions. Being part of this *intersectional mainstream* is also not being a slave to the chains of success, a recurring pattern in artists and bands that represent what we call the "static mainstream", something that happens in the work of some bands formed at the same time as Led Zeppelin, like, for example, the Rolling Stones, whom even today play the same songs from the past in their shows.

In the record *Mighty Rearranger* (available in Full Album, 2022), Plant reiterates this approach and the need always to go down new paths, a trait very close to what we call the *intersectional mainstream*.

> I'm moving up to higher ground, I've found a new way out/There's parasols and barbecues and loungers by the pool/The late night conversations filled with 20th century cool/My peers may flirt with cabaret, some fake the rebel yell/ Me - I'm moving up to higher ground, I must escape this hell. (Plant, 2005, 00:00:38)

Keeping the base of hard rock and blues while stimulating creativity in his productions, the musician concomitantly denies what we call "static mainstream", which presupposes keeping consecrated aesthetic and sound formulas that work and thus sell[5]. Overall, adopting certain — static — approaches to music is to foster a scenario that meets what the fans (and the industry) want to consume.

However, Plant does not always abide by this prospect. Not by a long shot. He actually prefers the promotion of intersections, and intercultural dialogues, as we will explore and discuss in this essay, based mainly on Muniz Sodré's (2006, 2014) theoretical assumptions, and Néstor García Canclini's (2005) and Homi K. Bhabha's (1998/2014) postcolonial precepts.

The musician establishes many dialogues and intersections: to hard rock and blues, his base, as mentioned above, Plant introduces songs and ballads inspired by English folk music, electronic experiences, elements of pop music, new wave, break, rockabilly, folk, soul, the psychedelia of the 1960s, bluegrass, among others. In short, a melting pot of music genres.

Constantly challenging the canons of the phonographic industry, Robert Plant keeps the essence but converses serenely and calmly with other possibilities in search of still-unknown maps of old and new sound geographies. Taking this perspective, one of the most expressive tensions with different rhythms and cultures would be experimentalism with North African music. Thus, we emphasise that this intersection and interculturality will be the guiding thread of this study.

As we shall argue below, interculturality is the underlying premise for such an intersection. In this way, we seek to build on the discussions previously explored in the article "O Incessante Rugido: Robert Plant e o Mainstream Interseccional" (The Ceaseless Roar:

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[5] As examples, we can cite the Australian band AC/DC and the British bands Iron Maiden and Ozzy Osbourne, artists who, production after production, follow to the letter the same formats that gave them notoriety and, later, permanent success.

Robert Plant and the Intersectional Mainstream; Cruz & Curi, 2017) and understand the role of interculturality in the construction of what we call the *intersectional mainstream* from the analysis of Robert Plant's work over the 40 plus years of his artistic career. We ask: what are the musical limits of an artist recognised as one of the greatest rockers of all time and who has always sought dialogue with other musical genres? Or rather, are there limits for Robert Plant within the phonographic industry, which often labels him as a mere rocker?

To answer such questions and further the debate, this text has three sections, apart from the introduction. In the following subsection, we will deal with the theoretical and methodological concepts of communication and interculturality and how they relate to the concept of *intersectional mainstream*. Afterwards, we will conduct a detailed analysis of how such concepts can be perceived throughout the work of Robert Plant. Finally, we will present the final considerations on the issues addressed throughout the article.

2. Theoretical-Methodological Perspectives/An *"Immigrant Song"*

To Muniz Sodré (2014), "communication proves to be the primary organisational form" in today's society. He adds: "we emphasise 'proves to be' because communication means, in fact, in its essence (…) the organising process of mediation essential to the common human being, the approximate resolution of pertinent differences in symbolic forms" (p. 15). Therefore, as Sodré (2006) also states, the challenge of communication as social praxis would be to generate an understanding of the contemporary world. In other words, a "knowledge and at the same time an application of what is known, to the extent that the subjects involved in the discourse are guided, in the concrete situations of life, by the sense communicatively obtained" (p. 14).

The meanings we give to music and the sounds surrounding us stem from human communication (Wisnik, 2007) of different social and cultural bonds in our lives, full of intersubjective interactions. In this virtual arena, our belonging is negotiated. Music, throughout history, as Wisnik (2007) states, is the result of communication and an extensive conversation between "sound (as periodic recurrence, production of constancy) and noise (as relative disturbance of stability, superposition of complex, irrational, lagging pulses)" (p. 30). The meanings we give to this dialogue will always be produced and interpreted according to different cultures.

That said, looking at Robert Plant's trajectory, we can see that being in-between places, communicating, migrating to different places, and moving in time and space between different cultures and symbolic forms has always been a striking and constant feature of the artist's life. Plant's working-class mother was Roma, and he grew up amidst Welsh and Celtic folklore, peoples who are recognisably nomadic, diasporic, migrant and intercultural.

So, what interculturality are we talking about here? Initially, the concept is based on Canclini (2005). According to the author, the way the world was previously conceived, based on the idea that national States, laws, and educational and communication policies that organised the coexistence of groups in demarcated territories, over the last decades, have

become inadequate in light of the expansion of intercultural mixtures. Canclini (2005) thus defines interculturality as an intertwining and a confrontation, which refers to what happens when groups, individuals and cultural representations engage in relations and exchanges. Unlike multiculturalism, the anthropologist states, which presupposes acceptance of what is heterogeneous, interculturality assumes that "those who are different are what they are, in reciprocal negotiation, conflict and borrowing relationships" (Canclini, 2005, p. 17).

The researcher's scientific interest is to observe the effective contemporary destabilisation of social, gender and generational orders caused by the recent global interdependence. However, Canclini (2005) is interested in the mismatches, in what stems from inequality, and perceives culture and cultural relations no longer as a collection of traits that make one society different from another but as a system of relations of meaning that identifies contrasts, differences and comparisons. According to Canclini (2005), "it is about paying attention to the mixtures and misunderstandings that bind the groups" (p. 25). That is, to understand the cultural action of an individual and a group, we must "describe how it appropriates other people's symbolic products and materials and interprets them: the football or *musical fusions* [emphasis added], the television programmes that disseminate heterogeneous cultural styles" (Canclini, 2005, p. 26).

Thus, for obvious reasons, it is worth noting here that when we set out to analyse interculturality in Robert Plant's work, we know that the musician speaks from a Eurocentric place, from an imperialist nation, England, which, most of the time, was and still is oppressive, hegemonic. Plant's work is inscribed within the cultural industry, the mainstream, and the classic and well-known format of Adorno and Horkheimer (1944/1985)[6], which feeds back into the capitalist and neoliberal system.

So, what do we mean by the *mainstream*? Considered a "broad consumption strategy", it means making

> admittedly efficient product creation choices relating to elements of consecrated works and with a relatively guaranteed success [It entails a] system of production/circulation of the major music companies. Consequently, the repertoire for the consumption of mainstream products is widely available to listeners, and the plastic dimension of the song displays a variety defined, to a large extent, by the entertainment industries and that repertoire. (Janotti Júnior & Cardoso Filho, 2006, p. 19)[7]

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[6] The term "cultural industry" (in German: *Kulturindustrie*) was conceived by German philosophers and sociologists Theodor Adorno (1903–1969) and Max Horkheimer (1895–1973) in the chapter "The Cultural Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception" in the book *Dialética do Esclarecimento* (Dialectic of Enlightenment; Adorno & Horkheimer, 1944/1985), where they posit that popular culture is akin to a factory that produces standardised cultural goods — films, radio programmes, magazines, among others — used to manipulate passive society. Following industrial and financial capitalism logic, the cultural industry standardises products and homogenises them to be consumed by most people. Thus, everything that belongs to the cultural industry must follow a predefined consumption standard: the static mainstream.

[7] To clarify and distinguish, according to Cardoso Filho (2008), the underground, on the other hand, "follows a set of principles of product creation that requires a repertoire more defined for consumption. The 'underground' products have a particular production and circulation organisation and are almost invariably established on the negation of its other (the mainstream). This is an oppositional value positioning in which the positive corresponds to a segmented sharing, which is opposed to broad consumption" (p. 12).

In this same line of thought, in order to engage the target audience, the phonographic industry works to shape the image of its products according to the demands/desires/tastes of its audience/fans. Therefore, forming and building a media identity around the bands and/or artists is essential. That will be the basis to foster elements identifying these agents with their followers.

Our query dwells precisely within this field and pre-established formats of market demands from both the public and the so-called "expert" critics. In other words, knowing the limits of Plant's work within this industry, how the interculturality he perceives and produces through his songs and shows interferes and, sometimes, transcends the limits set by the industry and, in a macro sense, in the Eurocentric culture itself.

Here, a second author helps us in the argument proposed. Bhabha (1998/2014) claims that the broader condition of interculturality lies precisely "in the awareness that the epistemological limits of those ethnocentric ideas are also the enunciative boundaries of a range of other dissonant, even dissident voices and histories" (p. 25), which include immigrants, Roma people and restless artists like Robert Plant. According to the author, this is because "the demography of the new internationalism is the history of postcolonial migration, the narratives of cultural and political diaspora", and the "great social displacements of peasant and aboriginal communities, the poetics of exile, the austere prose of political and economic refugees" (Bhabha, 1998/2014, p. 26).

The author argues that interculturality occurs in what he calls *in-between*. That is, Bhabha (1998/2014, p. 28) proposes an epistemological way of positioning oneself in the world that would be the "being beyond", that is, "inhabiting an intermediate space" between past, present and future. Thus, the intermediate space becomes a space of intervention in the present itself. Something we seek to highlight in the analysis of Plant's work.

In this way, culture's border work demands an encounter with "the new" that is not part of the past and present continuum. He creates an idea of the new as an insurgent act of cultural translation. This art does not just take up the past as a social cause or aesthetic precedent; it renews the past by reconfiguring it as a contingent "in-between" that innovates and interrupts the performance of the present. The past-present becomes part of the necessity, rather than nostalgia, of living (Bhabha, 1998/2014, p. 29).

In short, for Bhabha (1998/2014), the theoretical recognition of these in-between places can also be called the "third space", as the "split-space of enunciation", which may open paths and horizons for the meaning of an "international culture" based "not on the exoticism of multiculturalism or the diversity of cultures, but on the inscription and articulation of culture's hybridity" (p. 76). The author states that we must remember that it is the "inter – the cutting edge of translation and negotiation, the in-between space – that carries the burden of the meaning of culture" (Bhabha, 1998/2014, p. 76). In other words, by exploring this "third space, we may elude the politics of polarity and emerge as the others of our selves" (Bhabha, 1998/2014, p. 76).

Such perception connects with what we argue about Plant's work relating to tradition, seen as a constant process, rediscovered, never static, much less immobile and immersed in the past. Thus, we dare to say that Plant's work, based on its *intersectional*

and intercultural characteristics sustained here, disrupts even the market and cultural borders so present in the musical works produced in what we call Western culture. We may find these characteristics in works such as *Lullaby... and the Ceaseless Roar* (2014) and *Carry Fire* (2017).

3. The Way/*That's the Way*

As previously exposed, only this time focusing on the musician's artistic career, we argue once again that Robert Plant's journeys through time and space[8] started very early. Concerning North America, for example, the birthplace of Led Zeppelin's greatest hits, until the release of the second album, *Led Zeppelin II*, released on October 22, 1970 (Thomas, 2009), the band had already toured four times (Lewis, 1991). However, what really began to stir that young man who, from an early age, was attracted to travel and experiences beyond the British island and the European continent, happened in October 1971.

Soon after the end of the Australian tour, while drummer John Bonham and bassist and keyboardist John Paul Jones flew back to England, Plant and guitarist Jimmy Page decided to tour Thailand and India. According to reports from the band's manager, Richard Cole,

> we had a great time. I got some good local drivers who took us wherever we wanted, even to places we didn't know. (...) Robert loves to travel, he likes to eat different food, meet different people, listen to all kinds of music. (Rees, 2013/2014, p. 112)

Four months later, in February 1972, Plant and Page would return to India, more specifically Mumbai, to record with musicians from the city's symphony orchestra. They reworked "Four Sticks" (track from the 1971 *Led Zeppelin IV* album; Led Zeppelin, 2015) and "Friends" (track from the 1970 *Led Zeppelin III* album; Led Zeppelin, 2020) with the local musicians, "setting a precedent that Plant, in particular, would follow other times" (Rees, 2013/2014, p. 112). However, another remarkable trip, still in 1972, impressed the young singer even more and would mark him forever:

> this time to Morocco, at the north-western tip of Africa, just across the sea for those coming from Europe, but a world away. In Marrakesh, a city of centuries-old red-brick buildings in the south of the country, Plant first heard the music of the indigenous Berber and Gnaoua – seductive, trance-like hums, rhythmic and hypnotic. He and Page took a tape recorder and drove up the Atlas Mountains, the great mountain range that stretches 2,500 kilometres from east to west of the country, recording the songs in villages and street markets. Back in Marrakesh and walking through the profuse network

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[8] Alluding to an excerpt from the lyrics of "Kashmir" (Led Zeppelin, 2017) from Led Zeppelin's album *Physical Graffiti*, "released on February 24, 1975" (Rees, 2013/2014, p. 134).

of souks, Plant also met Oum Kalsoum, Egyptian by birth and the greatest Arab singer then alive. Her remarkable, high voice, an instrument in itself, haunted the city's radios. (Rees, 2013/2014, pp. 112–113)

In Plant's own words, hearing Oum Kalsoum's voice was a revelatory experience that would influence the cross-cultural composition of the artist's work and, more importantly, his singing style ever since.

I would hear that voice above all the noise — Oum Kalsoum singing. Her voice was everywhere; it came out of every door, flickered amidst the commotion, the chaos, the car horns and the braying donkeys. I kept thinking: "Wow, how can I put that in what I do?" And I went for it. (Rees, 2013/2014, p. 113)

However, the answer to Plant's question would only come three years later, in 1975, on the album *Physical Graffiti*. Originally titled "Driving to Kashmir" (Williamson, 2007/2011, p. 226), "Kashmir", the song at hand, would recount the artist's personal experience during a trip to Morocco. It is considered the musician's greatest pride in his period with Led Zeppelin. The mysterious track carries a sonority classified until then as oriental[9] and, according to him, is the definitive hallmark of the band (Wall, 2008/2009).

The North African atmosphere would resurface vigorously in 1982. In his solo career, Plant (2016c) composed "Slow Dancer", one of the tracks on his debut album, *Pictures at Eleven*. Regarded as a kind of sequel to "Kashmir", the song featured a Leylet Hob (Radio Martiko, 2019) inspired guitar, the best-known version of which was by Oum Kalsoum.

While on the following album, *The Principle of Moments* (1983), the intersection with Arabic music sounded timid, on "Wreckless Love" (Plant, 2016g), the same cannot be said about "Watching You" (Plant, 2016e), from the album *Manic Nirvana* (1990). Underpinned by heavy percussion that brings rock and North Africa together, Plant again evokes the mysterious side introduced with "Kashmir".

Three years later, in *Fate of Nations* (1993), *intersectionality* and *interculturality* resurface in songs like "Down to the Sea" (Plant, 2016f), with Indian percussive tablas and, especially, with "Calling to You" (Chanobass, 2015), the album's opening track, with oriental sonorities and exotic musical scales, little used in rock records of the major phonographic industry. According to Williamson (2007/2011),

Fate of Nations [was] the most daring album of Plant's solo career up to that point and set directions for his future project, *Strange Sensation*. '*Calling to You*' kicks off in crushing fashion with a 'Kashmir' style riff before Nigel Kennedy's [English violinist] thrilling violin coda takes the track to new heights. (p. 198)

Robert Plant would reach the apex of interculturality in his following project, *No Quarter* (1994), by combining and mixing musical sounds and rhythms from different

[9] Edward Said (1978/2013), in his work *O Orientalismo: O Oriente Como Invenção do Ocidente* (Orientalism) suggests that the terms by which the world is divided, "East" and "West", although it may seem a mere innocent distinction, actually tend to intensify differences and hinder some attempts to bring cultures closer together.

cultures and continents, such as the inclusion of North African music. After accepting an invitation to participate in the *MTV Unplugged* series, the musician joined forces again with his Led Zeppelin partner Jimmy Page. This (re)conciliation resulted in a symbiosis between his ex-band's catalogue and the sound mentioned above. That is, Plant inhabits here the *in-between*, as Bhabha (1998/2014) reminds us, "a return to the present to rede-scribe our cultural contemporaneity (...) to touch the future on its hither side" (p. 12).

Thus mixing Led Zeppelin classics revamped with new songs, the singer also pro-moted a meeting between two different cultures, "but without one diluting the other" (Rees, 2013/2014, p. 223), according to the Egyptian percussionist Hossam Ramzy. Here the musicians gathered instrumentalists from the London Metropolitan Orchestra with an Egyptian string and percussion ensemble. Ramzy himself defined Plant in the project:

> Robert knew a lot about Egyptian and Arabic music altogether (...). He would ask me a lot of questions about the Arab world. He wanted to make sure he understood. He would come and practice Arabic with me because he had learned the language (...) Robert i s one of the sweetest people you can meet, but when it comes to making music, he has no friends. He is very demanding, and every note is important. (Rees, 2013/2014, pp. 223–224)

Plant's real immersion in Arab culture shows once again that he does not perceive it as mere caricatured or illustrative art, like cultures that would be on shelves to be used commercially in an exotic and eccentric way, but rather, something that the artist seeks to understand, to take part in, to inhabit the *in-between*, and then incorporate into his work.

 Plant's meticulousness and interest in other cultures would remain strong on the world tour that followed soon after the release of *No Quarter*. So, on the road, the singer promoted, once again, an unusual scenario: he gathered the same group of Egyptian mu-sicians with orchestras from the places the tour was going to, such as, for example, São Paulo, Brazil. Hence, the song that would sum up all this effort was "Kashmir", the *in-tercultural intersectionality* between the music of their past and the North African sound.

Soon after the *No Quarter* tour, this intersection would be reflected again in *Walking Into Clarksdale*, 1998, a new record by Plant and Page. The most emblematic track in this sense would be "Most High" (Maul1977, 2010), which even won the Grammy for best hard rock performance the following year, attesting to how the limits of rock can be ex-ceeded. After that, the singer would end the partnership with the guitarist and move to his next endeavours and his 1960s musical roots with 2002's *Dreamland*.

By this time, Plant had a new band, Strange Sensation, with guitarist Justin Adams, "whose interests in North African music provided a strong foil for Plant's own World Music passions" (Williamson, 2007/2011, p. 145).

Soon, the new partnership would rekindle the singer's flame for the oriental sound on *Mighty Rearranger* from 2005. There are plenty of examples: besides "Another Tribe" (braxfijun, 2011), the album's opening acoustic song, the musician would showcase three other movements of his intersection with North African music, namely "The Enchanter" (Plant, 2016b), "Dancing in Heaven" (Plant, 2016a) and "Takamba" (Plant, 2016d).

The artist would then take a break from working with the band Strange Sensation, to record albums which proved very successful on both sides of the Atlantic: *Raising Sand* (2007), partnered with the American singer Alison Krauss, and *Band of Joy* (2010). Both productions show influences from folk, country, blues, rhythm and blues, psychedelia and bluegrass.

However, in 2014, the singer would rejoin the musicians of Strange Sensation — now renamed Sensational Space Shifters — and release *Lullaby and... the Ceaseless Roar*. The inclusion of Gambian musician Juldeh Camara gives an *intersectional* and *intercultural* sound to almost every song on the album. Songs like "Little Maggie" (Plant, 2014a), "Rainbow" (Plant, 2014b), "Up on the Hollow Hill (Understanding Arthur)" (Plant, 2016h) and "Arbaden (Maggie's Baby)" (Plant, 2016j) are some examples of that.

Three years later, in 2017, the partnership with the Space Shifters would release *Carry Fire*, the artist's last production. Once again, it is possible to perceive Plant's *intersectionality* and dialogue with North Africa and the never-finite new possibilities, as in the tracks "Carving Up the World Again... a Wall and Not a Fencer" (Plant, 2017c), the album's title song (Plant, 2017b) and *New World* (Plant, 2017d), a song that sums up the artist's trajectory thus far and the constant search for new horizons, expressed in the song's first lines: "with songs we praise a happy landing/on yet another virgin shore/ escape the booming world/embrace the new world/out here the immigrant takes hold/ across the plains and over mountains" (Plant, 2017a, 00:00:20).

4. Final Considerations/*Coda*

Based on the description and analysis of Plant's work, we may suggest that the artist's challenging approach to dialogues and intersections remains to this day, cyclical and dialectical, *coda*-like[10], the guiding star of the artist, who is not content to be just mainstream, much less a static mainstream, much to the contrary, the musician sought and still seeks to overcome market barriers. We know the current market, like the artistic mainstream, is dynamic and increasingly directed to niches. Therefore, the logics of the market can expand according to each culture. However, even so, we understand that a kind of static mainstream persists in the rock segment, which would be the niche that Robert Plant should fit in, which in fact, is not the case.

The cultural industry's pre-established formats are marginal to the artist's posture. Primarily those referring to general aesthetics, with the guarantee that they will be sold and accepted by the general public, such as, for example, traditional rock band formations, which boil down to bass, drums and guitar, or the stereotype of a traditional rocker, the one who wears black, silver, sunglasses, and several tattoos.

Plant has long understood this whole game. He knows the demands of being mainstream. He recognises that record companies and the media see musicians as products.

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[10] A musical element at the end of a song, symphony, sonata or composition that brings the whole piece to an end. *Coda* is also an album that includes a musical collection by Led Zeppelin, released on November 19, 1982, with the band's songs recorded between 1970 and 1978.

So he knows you have to label them to create identification and appreciation. Immersed in this reality for over five decades, Plant plays the game. He plays the game, and he also doesn't. He has constantly been in and out of the dictates of the phonographic industry since the days of Led Zeppelin. As Janotti Júnior (2007) states, the band inhabited the dwelling where "the permanent tension involving creative processes and commercial logics" takes place (p. 3). That is, the restlessness with ready-made formulas was and still is the core of the artist's position in the contemporary world, immersed in contradictions typical of a consumer society[11].

Not to follow the same format or the paths the music industry seeks to set — that seems to be the mantra Robert Plant has been evoking for almost 50 years. The artist seeks constant challenges by engaging with tradition, the past, the present, and the future. Could he be a kind of "mainstream left-winger"? Someone who breaks the barriers of what a rocker is, as stipulated by the hegemonic media. According to him,

> yes. I create the challenges. Also because there is no other way of doing things. Unless you're composing just to keep your career afloat, to keep your house in Malibu. If that's the game, then I've entered the wrong profession. I don't want to follow that line. ("Robert Plant Conta Tudo", 1988, p. 49)

He adds:

> I know it's just music, entertainment, but for me, it's very important. The main thing is that I have fun. My business is to evolve, to change, but to keep that special Led Zeppelin thing. Our intention has always been to develop music. Today, the big record companies have ready-made formulas to survive. It was always a struggle to get me played on the radio. Nobody trusts me commercially. And that's a victory. I have a huge ego... I remember a newspaper calling me "the prince of anti-pop". I loved it. It keeps me away from the Bon Jovis of life. ("Robert Plant Conta Tudo", 1988, p. 28)

Sometimes neighbouring and sometimes not neighbouring the logics of the market, Robert Anthony Plant thus stands as an authentic representative of the *intersectional mainstream*. He dialogues with these trends and, in the next instant, turns his back, looking for alternatives, seeking dialogues, tensions, and intersections with other cultures, the argument that we seek to highlight here from the encounters and paths pointed out in the singer's trajectory and seek to advance on this issue.

Our argument seeks to push this issue forward by perceiving and highlighting that the intersectional mainstream in contemporaneity, based on the analysis of Robert Plant's work, only happens and can only be effectively perceived when he proposes new intercultural perspectives beyond a closed vision, which sees Europe as the centre of the world, even if involuntarily. The centre is displaced. It becomes mobile, non-static, mutable and hybrid.

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11 For Bauman (2007/2008), the consumer society "represents the kind of society that promotes, encourages or reinforces the choice of a consumerist lifestyle and existential strategy, and rejects all alternative cultural options" (p. 71).

Bhabha's (1998/2014) "third space" is where Plant's work resides, conceived here as the place where intercultural intersections take place, the continuous dialogues between cultures. In this space, there are no hierarchies but feedback and fusions. In other words, the artists involved do not leave their cultures aside. There is a mutual, dialectical and constant learning process where the market premises remain in the background.

In the intersectional and intercultural, there are no ready-made formulas. They are the result of encounters, of journeys with single tickets only. The one possible return is to the place of origin, which we will never know where it is because music is made of codas and mutual relations. It does not exist individually, but in the group, the common, the dialogue, and the communication.

Translation: Anabela Delgado

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