

**Cinema, education and Africanness:
the memory in the documentary *Caixa d'água: qui-lombo é esse?***

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Abstract

This paper aims to analyze the documentary *Caixa d'água: qui-lombo é esse?*, by Everlane Moraes (2013), in order to investigate Blackness based on the themes of history and memory. Thus, the construction of the documentary was analyzed as a place of memory that records the history that seeks to physically, functionally and materially demarcate a people's trajectory, their belongings and identities. The text starts with the hypothesis that cinema – as an educational tool – collaborates to reflect upon the history and memory of African peoples and their descendants in the formation of the Brazilian population, established in Law 10.639/2003 as a compulsory subject in regular education. Based on a film content analysis with thematic decomposition, description and recomposition, we understand that the documentary questions historical content disseminated in Brazilian education as a representation of truths about black people. Thus, it is not only a simple way of making and/or thinking cinema, but a commitment to the resignification of black existence.

Keywords

Cinema. Education. Memory. Africanness. Documentary *Caixa d'água: qui-lombo é esse?*.

Cinema, educação e africanidades:

a memória no documentário *Caixa d'água: qui-lombo é esse?*

Resumo

Objetiva-se analisar o documentário *Caixa d'água: qui-lombo é esse?*, de Everlane Moraes (2013), para interpelar o negro a partir da temática da história e da memória. Desse modo, analisa-se a construção do documentário como um lugar de memória que registra a história que busca demarcar física, funcional e materialmente a trajetória de um povo, seus pertencimentos e identidades. Parte-se da hipótese que o cinema – como ferramenta educativa – colabora para refletir sobre a história e a memória dos povos africanos e afrodescendentes na formação do povo brasileiro, temática instituída na Lei nº 10.639/2003 como obrigatória no ensino regular. Partindo de uma análise fílmica de conteúdo, com

decomposição, descrição e recomposição temática, entende-se que o documentário questiona conteúdos históricos difundidos na educação brasileira como representação de verdades sobre os negros. Desse modo, não é tão somente um simples modo de fazer e/ou pensar cinema, mas um comprometimento com a ressignificação da existência negra.

Palavras-chave

Cinema. Educação. Memória. Africanidades. Documentário *Caixa d'água: qui-lombo é esse?*.

Cine, educación y africanidades:

la memoria en el documental *Caixa d'água: qui-lombo é esse?*

Resumen

Se objetiva analizar el documental *Caixa d'água: qui-lombo é esse?*, de Everlane Moraes (2013), para entender al negro desde el tema de la historia y la memoria. Así, la construcción del documental se analizó como un lugar de memoria que registra la historia que busca demarcar física, funcional y materialmente la trayectoria de un pueblo, su territorio, sus pertenencias e identidades. Se parte de la hipótesis de que el cine – como herramienta educativa – colabora para reflejar la historia y la memoria de los pueblos africanos y afrodescendientes en la formación del pueblo brasileño, temática instituida por la Ley nº 10.639/2003 como obligatoria en la educación regular. Basado en un análisis del contenido de la película, con descomposición, descripción y recomposición temática, se entiende que el documental cuestiona los contenidos históricos difundidos en la educación brasileña como una representación de las verdades sobre los negros. Por lo tanto, no es solo una forma simple de hacer y/o pensar cine, sino un compromiso político con la resignificación de la existencia negra.

Palabras clave

Cine. Educación. Memoria. Africanidades. Documental *Caixa d'água: qui-lombo é esse?*.

1 Introduction

In Brazil, Law n. 10.639, from January 9th, 2003, establishes that the guidelines and bases for national education include in the official curriculum of the education network the requirement to study themes that investigate “African Brazilian history and culture”. This law suggests discussing historical content disseminated within Brazilian education concerning the representation of truth about Black people. Thus, it is intended as a decolonizing law, as far as it contributes to blur the frontiers of Black identity set in a past of slavery, the result of a colonial history that is updated nowadays.

Black cinema, based on Law n. 10.639/2003, can be considered an educational tool, grounded on the principle that it is possible, through images, sounds and feelings, constitute stories that go beyond the official discourses that have hegemonically determined part of the Brazilian cinema scenario¹. It is relevant to discuss the Black body and the signs that surround it in a school context, since ethnic-racial relations in Brazil are still marked by huge gaps of inequality, despite legal and political acknowledgement by the government regarding the need for affirmative actions that value and minimize ethnic inequalities (OLIVEIRA; ARAGÃO, 2018).

In this sense, we consider the possibility of thinking about connections between cinema and education according to three principles: political and aesthetic principle, opening oneself to the world, to times and places far from the world we inhabit; creative principle, since entering those worlds means to reassess one's own space and time in a dimension of reconstruction and reinvention of one's stories; propositional principle, by viewing children and teenagers as collective subjects who are situated in their worlds and constantly give them new meanings (FRESQUET, 2016). The school, consequently, become fertile ground to watch movies, to produce movies, to reconstruct histories and memories.

Thinking about the issues that permeate ethnic-racial relations and their derivations in the educational field, this text intends to present the documentary *Caixa d'água: qui-lombo é esse?*² (2013) as a cinematographic work that mobilizes memories and the imagination of Brazilian Africanness.

The study was structured as filmic analysis following the model by Penafria (2009). This methodology is based on the decomposition of a cinematographic work, i.e., the description of its main elements and its subsequent regrouping in essentially a content analysis. According to Penafria (2009), film content analysis considers the film as a report and seeks to identify its theme. To that end, a film description is done, highlighting the founding elements that unveil its theme. Considering that the movie analyzed here is a documentary grounded on the unveiling of a community's stories and memories, its theme

¹ The study by Carvalho and França (2019) shows an interesting bibliographic review about researches that discuss the strategies to combat racism in school. Law n. 10.639/2003 was the most frequent theme of the studies.

² The 15-minute short film can also be watched on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-3agxwd_hfo. Access on: 20 Apr. 2020.

advances in the composition of movement, from life to the narrative and back to the lives of the community.

The short film *Caixa d'água: qui-lombo é esse?*, an intellectual production created by director Everlane Moraes, tells the story of a community from the city of Aracaju, located in the Getúlio Vargas borough (comprising the Cirurgia borough, Morro do Cruzeiro – where the first water tower was built, and nowadays there is the Creativity Center). The allusion to the water tower in the movie title (“*caixa d'água*”) is due to the fact that the borough where the quilombo is located was founded because of the construction of a water tower, which characterizes the place to this day. Maloca is located between Riachão, Marechal Deodoro, Estudantes and Marechal Floriano Peixoto streets and is acknowledged as the second urban quilombo in Brazil. Their history is told orally, considering the speech position of the oldest residents, with archived documents: videos, photographs and body performance as a support for the projection of images.

Therefore, this study aims to present and analyze the documentary *Caixa d'água: qui-lombo é esse?*, in order to investigate the Black body through the themes of history and memory. In this perspective, we seek to analyze the construction of the documentary as a place of memory that records a history that counterpoints official history, a dimension of “history of the defeated” that seeks to physically, functionally and materially demarcate a people’s trajectory, their belonging and their identities.

In order to achieve this study’s objective, the text is presented in four sections. In the first section, we present the historical context of the Maloca quilombo, in order to locate the reader within the place to which the documentary gives memory. In the second section, we present the cinematographic documentary *Caixa d'água: qui-lombo é esse?* as a historical cinematographic production. In the third section, we investigate the Black body based on the history and memory in the composition of the filmic narrative. In the fourth and last section, we draft some assessments in the form of synthesis and propositions.

2 Aracaju, the Maloca quilombo and the construction of memories

Sergipe became independent from the province of Bahia in 1820, fighting since then to guarantee their political and economic autonomy. Their economy, based on sugar

cane and cotton plantations, was, as all Brazilian provinces, supported by slave labor. The need to move the agricultural production, aiming to establish direct contact with other provinces and even with Europe, urged the province to build a new harbor, an enterprise that the old capital, São Cristóvão, couldn't afford.

The alliance between landowners, the political class and an emerging group of industry investors managed the process that changed the state capital to Aracaju, a village located in marsh terrain with several mangroves. On March 17th, 1855, in this inhospitable environment, the yearning for progress and civility began the adventure of the first planned capital in Brazil.

According to Vilar (2006), the main characteristic of that moment was the administrative-political fight to transpose the province's bureaucratic machine, in addition to the challenge of draining the ponds, mangroves and swamps to build the harbor and the new city. They commissioned, from engineer Sebastião José Basílio Pirro, an urbanistic project that achieved the expected modernity and progress, which were consolidated in the straight, broad lines of Downtown Aracaju that recalled a gigantic chess board, eternalized as "Quadrado de Pirro" ("Pirro Square"). Visually, the projected city was born and prompted the desired promising future.

From an economic point of view, however, the abolition of slavery, in 1888, undermined the slave economy in Sergipe, generating an exodus of freed slaves to rising Brazilian economies, especially cocoa beans in southern Bahia and rubber in Amazonas. According to Passos Subrinho (1987), the abolition of slavery didn't lead Sergipe or the rest of the Northeast to develop wage relations, but to a reinforcement of pre-capitalistic relations, notably the exploitation of cheap and unqualified labor in the rising textile industry.

The design for the new urbanity of Aracaju, affected by the new work relations, with the weakening of the agricultural industry and a still emerging manufacturing industry, started to be formed:

To the north, textile factories consolidate a working-class district. To the south, the construction of a suburb with the urban improvements of the time reinforces that district as a privileged housing area, attracting a wealthier population. The inauguration of the first streets in the Siqueira Campos borough encourages the population from rural areas to settle there. The west side was, at that time, occupied by a low-income population, with little infrastructure available. The fourth area individualized in the urban structure is downtown. The concentration of

service activities, whether commercial or administrative, individualizes that area in the city's scenario. (VILAR, 2006, p. 52-53, our translation).

In this scenario, the west side of downtown Aracaju wasn't limited to low income and little infrastructure; there, settled those who weren't accepted for factory work or public administration, relegated to the margins, territorially and socially. There lived the residents of Maloca, a quilombo in the midst of modern urbanity.

Considering the trajectory of memory preservation, always linked to those who have economic, political and symbolic power, quilombola communities, excluded from the official productive sectors and always overlooked in government educational programs, are permanently fighting to preserve their memory and record their history. According to Marcon (2008), urban quilombola communities turn their homes, streets, squares, sidewalks, monuments, social relations and parties into the signs that identify their cognitive references for existing in the world.

The frontiers between history and memory are always slippery and complex and are always under constant pressure. According to Nora (1993), memory and history are opposed to each other! Memory is life in evolution linked to remembrance and forgetfulness; it is always current, lived in the present; it is magical, grounded on vague and fluctuating recollection; it belongs to groups, therefore is collective, multiple, plural; it is concrete and absolute. In turn, history is always a problematic and incomplete reconstruction of what no longer exists, what is gone; it is a representation of the past; it is an intellectual, analytical and critical operation; it simultaneously belongs to everyone and no one, with a calling for universality; it is in the evolution of time and of things, therefore it is relative.

Having those premises by the French historian as a guide, analyzing the movie *Caixa d'água: qui-lombo é esse?* intends to contextualize it as a study of the diverse places of historiographic tradition. In this case, automatically submitting the quilombola community Maloca to a reflective return about their memory, recording their history, would demarcate the end of the memory tradition. This historiographic operation would disappear a fluidity of lives that underlie the memories constructed in the quotidian of speech, walks, the experiences of playing in their streets and squares. Thus, memory would be subsumed to a constructed and closed historic reason.

The documentary points to a distinctive dimension, although we are in the constitution of a memory place. Forgetting and constituting official histories might cause the loss of the memory experience. In this context, Nora (1993) advocates for the construction of memory places in celebrations, archive records, party speeches and funereal cries. In historically oppressed communities, the historic record of memory guarantees its preservation, as well as the preservation of the people's living soul.

That is why the defense, by minorities, of a sheltered memory on privileged focus and jealously guarded does no more than bringing into incandescence the truth of all memory places. Without celebratory vigilance, history would quickly wipe them. They are bastions on which it is supported. But if what they defend weren't threatened, the need to build them wouldn't exist. If we truly lived the memories they involve, they would be useless. And if, on the other hand, history didn't take over them to deform, transform, beat and petrify them, they wouldn't be memory places. It is this back and forth that constitutes them: moments of history ripped from the movement of history, but that are returned to it. (NORA, 1993, p. 13, our translation).

Although from different theoretical backgrounds, the approach by Pierre Nora and the philosopher Walter Benjamin becomes fertile ground to demarcate this effort by the Maloca community and the documentary's director to constitute, with the movie, a place of memory. According to Benjamin (1987), the state of exception, in the plan of the capitalist world, is the rule, consequently, history is always written by those who own the means of material and cultural production³. It is necessary to establish resistance and organize history in a different direction: acknowledging that monuments of culture are also monuments of barbarism, such as the 300 years of slavery in Brazil, consolidated in culture transmission. It is paramount to write a different history, that gives voice to the silenced, considering as a task to "go against the grain of history" (BENJAMIN, 1987, our translation).

The movie by Everlane Moraes is, therefore, a demarcation of a place of memory, resistance, preservation of memory through a substantive image manner, available to the public as a way to permanently pressure the history of the community.

³ The 1988 Brazilian Constitution aimed to give the remaining quilombos the right to be acknowledged as belonging to a community called "quilombola" as a guarantee of self-definition, securing rights to the land and repairing historical damage. The Maloca quilombola community was officially acknowledged by Brazilian government as having originated from quilombos through the Palmares Cultural Foundation in 2008. 110 years after slavery was abolished, it was through everyday struggle, especially in legal disputes in loopholes of the rule of law, that the community had their rights minimally acknowledged and guaranteed.

Considering Nora (1993) once again, we can infer that Everlane Moraes intends her movie as a place in the material, symbolic and functional aspects. The materiality of the streets and surroundings is loaded with symbolic dimensions. The functionality is filled with the ritual aspect of songs, dances, stories told, materialized in the real and metaphorical scars of a fighting people. This desire of memory of the community constructs, through the movie, a place of history, not in an academic dimension that turns the story into a record, but in a living, pulsing dimension, in colors, sounds and rhythm.

3 *Caixa d'água: qui-lombo é esse?: a documentary of history/memory*

Director Everlane Moraes released, in 2013, the short film *Caixa d'água: qui-lombo é esse?*, the result of a government subsidy to short digital audiovisual productions offered by the Secretariat of Culture of the state of Sergipe (Secult, in Portuguese). The movie has stylistic traits that place it in the documentary genre, however, while the dynamics of contemporary cinematographic arts are hybridized in diverse narratives, it dialogues with other genres: fiction, experimental, body performance representation, converging to a symbolic representation of the body in the own body, as an extension of the screen where the movie images are projected.

The movie was the result of an ethnographic research. The research team for the movie consisted of Everlane Moraes, Black Malê, Williams Souza, Rosália Alves and Daniela Moura, who had as a starting point for the documentary a preliminary sequence emphasizing the period of the Empire in Brazil, in the province of Sergipe, showing how Black people were seen and treated in the context preceding May 13th, 1888, and then the document declarations about the sources that substantiate the movie: historical photographs of the construction of the Creativity Center and a mapping of the statements about the founding myth of the community, which was carried out with the oldest people from the borough and with those who live and/or participate in the universe of Everlane's life. The movie is part of audiovisual productions characterized within Black cinema in the feminine. Among the characteristics, there is the collective construction, based on the dialogue established with the technical staff involved in the production of the movie, as well as with each resident, in the perspective of displaying their speech and creating strategies to achieve autonomy and alterity.

The production of a cinematographic work directly interacts with its time, potentialities and intentions. Since its invention, in the end of the 19th century, cinema has sought a dialogue with the world experienced by individuals, projecting their reality, their desires, their daydreams. According to Singer (2004), in a dialogue with Walter Benjamin, cinema entered a neurological concept of modernity in which subjective experiences and collective tensions are mediatized by the perceptive shocks of the urban environment. For the German philosopher, cinema would provide a strategy for humans to deal with the hardships of modern life. Among those strategies, there would be the recording of history and preservation of memories.

The documentary emerges among those tensions as an approximate method to replicate reality. According to Rosenstone (2010), the documentary took upon itself a reality-indexing function, in which, apparently opposing fictional movies, it would approach real life, people's everyday lives, the remains of the past in the present in order to constitute a living narrative of facts. It is obvious that, along the last century, the debate established blurred those distinctions between fictional and non-fictional worlds. The documentary also uses images that are close to reality – not only reality itself; enacts and constitutes narratives that border the fictional; at certain points, enacts history itself aiming to preserve or demarcate history in their possible versions.

In this debate, Carroll (2005) seeks an ontological definition of what is conventionally called documentary, pointing to a new term: film of presumptive assertion. For the North American philosopher, every movie is presented to the public with some type of indexing, among them, the documentary, which opposes the film of fiction due to its authorial aspiration to record reality, although we know the filmmaker and their staff also have intentions. In the film of presumptive assertion, authorial intentions are directly linked to the interaction with the public addressed by the movie. These films demand from the public an assertive mental attitude, the acknowledgement of the filmmaker's intentions, the perception that it is trying to describe a state of things, committing to objectivity and truth of facts – in Everlane Moraes's movie, the description of memories of the Maloca community and how individuals demarcated their place of history.

Notwithstanding the assertive intentions of filmmakers, it is important to consider that many of them don't intend to make academic history, but communicate with their public in order to immerse them in the story, make them reflect about their memories and the

memories of others. Thus, it is fitting to use the well-established documentary expression, acknowledging, according to filmmaker Alan Rosenthal, cited by Rosenstone (2010, p. 133):

I want to have my spectators touch historic reality. I want, using a certain artistic ability, to transmit important ideas to people who know little about that theme. I want to encourage spectators to ask questions after watching the movie. I want to tell a good story that will exert mind and intelligence as well as heart and emotion. I want spectators to touch the past in a way that academics cannot. I want to help them keep their memories alive. And I want to remember a long-forgotten story or a neglected moment in history that seems important to me. Obviously... I cannot give them reality, but I can offer a plausible representation of reality and say certain things that may affect who they are and how they see the world.

Memories and the history of the Black bodies from the Maloca community, shown in the documentary *Caixa d'água: qui-lombo é esse?*, are alive, excited, in constant historic movement.

4 Black body, history and memory

Carrying out the initial work of description and decomposition of the film, the documentary begins with excerpts from historic newspapers (from 1849) that reported runaway slaves from sugar mills and their owners. At the time, it was common for landowners, almost daily, to announce runaways, offering rewards and money to those who brought back their enslaved Black people, as well as it was common (in the province, villages, farms and mills) to warn those who hid or gave shelter to slaves.

Here are some examples of announcements⁴:

ANNOUNCEMENT – 05-05-1849

On 14-04 ran away a slave named Pedro from Angola heritage, looks creole, short, thick, is 18 years old, spotted face.
Sugar mill from the city of Laranjeiras
– Joaquim Martins Fontes

ANNOUNCEMENT – 12-05-1849

On 09-04 ran away an Angola slave very tricky, ordinary height, black color, assumed age of 30 years, slim body, thin legs, wide eyes, missing the front teeth, escaped from Araçá-Laranjeiras mill.
Serafim A. de Almeida Rocha

⁴ Our translation.

ANNOUNCEMENT – 09-05-1849

Ran away from the Vicar of Divina Pastora, Francisco José Travassos, a female slave of Nagô heritage named Suzana: ugly, large lips, scratched face, ordinary height and slim body.
Manuel Horennio Alvares Pereira

The language in the announcements used in the movie intentionally describes the characteristics of Black people as an image allegory that ironically despises the described body, wielding a premade writing constituted in the newspaper's type holders. And if it wasn't adequate to the public notice, new characteristics were emphasized in the text, accompanied by a compositional element – the *typographical emblem* (symbol) of a runaway slave, from the point of view of a desired inexistence of a body, corroborated by a White violence recorded so as to invisibilize the qualities, so that Black people were seen and sought as ordinary.

Next, we see the display with the film title, *Caixa d'água: qui-lombo é esse?*, in a composition using movable types, typical of old newspapers. However, we notice that the director's name isn't shown, while in a fusion there is an enactment, with black and white images, of a Black man, played by Gilson Marinho (*Inha*), working on a farm, growing corn, under a blazing sun. Intentionally, the camera focuses on the sweaty body, as a lens flare⁵ from the center to the border of the image, turning everything white, creating a perception of exhaustion and time-space passage through the work. A new sequence of images of the Black man walking through the corn field, accompanied by a music score characterized by percussive sounds (off-screen), as the voice of a resident (off-screen) appears – old man:

So my grandfather walked by with a letter, then the workers were in the field working, right? Then he said 'throw the hoe away!'. Then the overseer said: 'Work, you listening to a stray walking the road?'. That was the royal road, it was called. After a while, the owner of the mill called all slaves and said: 'Look, from now on, you're free, gonna work for yourselves'. Then it was a party for them all.

Another voice of a resident (off-screen): "My grandmother is an African descendant). While the image focuses on a close-up of the Black man's face and in the background there is the diffuse image of a church, the resident – old man says (off-

⁵ "Optical defect caused when the light enters directly through the extremities of the lenses. This defect causes light spots in the shape of circles or hexagons. Although it is originally an imperfection, many photographers, nowadays, use that 'defect' to their advantage as a kind of effect" (our translation). Available on: <https://focusfoto.com.br/sobre-o-efeito-flare/>. Access on: 30 Dec. 2017.

screen): “It was on May 13th, 1888”. And the image is composed by the Black man walking on the field, with the hoe over the shoulder and the eyes fixed ahead, towards what, we don’t know, certainly the province of Aracaju.

In a significant portion of the movie, before the interviews and the testimonials, the camera was already positioned near the residents to capture image and audio. According to Everlane, they began with this sentence: “Talk, I want to listen to you. What you’re going to say is important!”. And the result was unexpected, because some people explain in detail facts about the history of the community and its foundation; others smile; others look at the camera with suspicion, and it is all natural behavior, because people aren’t used to the possibility of someone arriving at their home with a camera and asking about what they know or think about something. In this act of listening and approximation by Everlane and her team during filming in the community, we infer that there was a meeting of dialogues with acceptance from the people. This meeting was mediated by the affection of obtaining knowledge about the history and existence of that place.

In the movie, the testimonials/lines of the residents aren’t identified through subtitles, just as there isn’t synchronism between the voice being heard and the image being shown. This assertion continues throughout the movie, until the final credits, when the residents’ names appear. This is an intentional resource used by the director: in each line, the resident speaks anonymously. However, we believe that the director intends to evidence to the collective of residents the importance of the story, of telling/speaking about the neighborhood, where each voice, even dissociated from the image, itself, pure speech, carries a force that is symbolic and representative of stories that recall several images and other and other stories. Prioritizing orality, subverting the hegemony of image over sound, was a way that director Everlane found to structure her documental narrative. This, within the collective of the movie’s technical staff, certainly generated good methodological discussions.

The classic documental aesthetics brings a heritage that seems to demand that, for each line, an image must be associated to a subtitle. But Everlane’s documentary seems to evidence that the strategy used breaks with formal and aesthetic principles, subverting the idea of the classic documentary and pointing to a perspective of film creation that aims for experimental. Meanwhile, analyzing the bibliography, we invoke a confluence in which we realize that the film *Caixa d’água: qui-lombo é esse?* dialogues

and/or trails a subversion path regarding the classic documentary decoupage, opening itself to the unexpected of “experimenting the experimental” between image and sound, in a new audiovisual culture, with contributions from the videography and digital aesthetics (TEIXEIRA, 2012).

In the context of telling the community’s history, there was also an aesthetic form that brought, in its base, a contemporary artistic form, favoring the listening, the completeness of orality: in a scenario where sounds, from the capture of voices, were audible images in the real subtlety of diverse types that made up a sound environment marked by the different types of voices that need to be heard and, foremost, known. We return here to the conclusions by Nora (1993) concerning the construction of history and memory. The quilombo streets and their surroundings are tainted with symbolism expressed through speech, music, dance and stories. Everlane Moraes’s work materializes the community’s desire for memory, becoming a place of history. Likewise, the action of writing history against the grain, as suggested by Benjamin (1987), is the radicalization that the action of a people in permanent resistance must be translated into material and symbolic narratives. The movie by Everlane Moraes fulfills that task.

The movie *Caixa d’água: qui-lombo é esse?* brings back an interview from the archives of Aperipê TV, with singer and songwriter (*in memoriam*) Wellington Santos (known in the musical and cultural scene of the state as *Irmão* [Brother]), Everlane’s uncle. This interview, introduced in the movie, is the only moment when there is a subtitle associated to the voice matching the image. From this scene, we excerpted *Irmão*’s speech, which is illustrated with a panoramic aerial photograph of the borough, preceded by the sound of the great kiskadee. The cultural and artistic aspects of the Cirurgia and Maloca community/territory are introduced through *Irmão*’s testimonial (CAIXA..., 2013, our translation), proffered in 1993:

I was born in Cirurgia and raised also in Cirurgia. We are now from a region considered or denominated quilombo. A region... like, that was marked by many cultural movements, such as... the... the *Chegança de João do Pão*, the *Guerreiro de Euclides* or the *Reisado de Piliu*. Yeah... we also had in the region... we had Mrs. Isabel’s *candomblé*; we had Mr. Lê’s *candomblé*; we also had the Samba Circle, Mr. Enoque’s *Samba de Coco*. So, I think that I... I come from a very rich region, culturally speaking.

The director’s strategy of using Black bodies without identifying them in her documentary is a criticism to the entire History that invisibilized the Black body, leaving

them outside the History of Law. Making a body invisible also means removing their ability to look, because, if my face cannot be seen, it also cannot see. Modern science, along its path, created policies that justified erasing the Black body as far as the same body can be read under the shadow of its history, under the darkness of policies that made them invisible.

Modern age “invented” the body/individual under biology’s lexicon through eugenicist and sanitary policies legitimized by the modern science from the 17th and 18th centuries. Modern biology creates the political categories of modernity. “*Las libertades políticas empiezan y terminan por los cuerpos. Las dictaduras siempre la toman con los cuerpos. Aclaremos: con su anatomía y con su fisiología*” (MILNER, 2013, p. 18). Biology starts to be an imperative, more than a method; a morality, more than a theory (CANGUILHEM, 1976). Thus, racism is implemented through biology, and the Black body is considered inferior in the signs of their color – racism is an applied policy of biology. Thus, thanatopolitics were created, a part of biopolitics that reproduces a rational, discursive and practical program of extermination of the other, a program that is naturalized under the aegis of law (AGAMBEN, 2004).

During the time that the borough grew and developed, some manifestations were preserved, some disappeared and new ones emerge with new meaning in the subjectivity of the present, especially supported by the territory’s history and memory. With that, we infer that the movie is a historic document – collective of the Maloca community. Resulting from a broad convergence in fields of knowledge, the movie makes a historic synthesis, in a search for memory. And, in that perspective, we can conjoin concerns, signaled by Karnal and Tatsch (2013, p. 15, our translation), who state:

What could have caused this increase? We can identify the emergence of new fields to which traditional History (politics) paid little attention. There is an oral history, there is a history of images (different from art history), there is a history of the child, a history of women, a history of the body and many others⁶. Such broad objects dialogue more with the fields of anthropology and sociology than traditional History did. Necessarily, the increase in themes led to the expansion in the notion of document.

Within this context, in *Caixa d’água: qui-lombo é esse?*, Everlane Moraes brings a camera pointed at the rescue of memory, seeking historical and documental sources in

⁶ According to Burke (1992, p. 11, our translation): “[...] New History started to show interest in virtually all human activity”.

the contingencies of stories, be them in the fixed body, the moving body, in things and objects. We defend here a preliminary argumentation and certainly in another, more extensive study we will be able to further explore the concerns that the movie *Caixa d'água: qui-lombo é esse?* is a document that constitutes an intangible heritage of the Maloca quilombola territory, substantiated by direct speeches and the images of the people who live there.

Another categorical point is the direct participation of the documentary filmmaker Everlane Moraes in the movie, which, incidentally, is opposed to the tradition of documentaries; “[...] generally, the Brazil we see in documentaries is always a very different Brazil from the one where the filmmaker lives” (TEIXEIRA, 2004, p. 65, our translation). The movie contains characteristics of an authorial essay film; the filmmaker’s participation in a scene is frequent; images are projected over her body, such as the scene where she is parallel to the image of the group of young people and the image of the women, closing with a projection over her face, while several overlapping voices (off-screen 1 and 2) accredit her belonging to the community and the construction of history.

1 – There is the borough that has a lot of Black people, Cirurgia | 2 – I really am African Brazilian | 1 – Thank God! | 1 – I’m Black. I’m satisfied. | 2 – My father oversaw slaves | 1 – My father is all Black | 2 – My grandmother was a slave | 1 – Really descendant from Africa | 2 – My father was White and my mother was Black and it was all mixed | 1 – My father danced in Nagô | 2 – And I got this beautiful color | 1 – African Nagô. I have no prejudice against my color. No way! I’m actually Black. Black, Black, Black... Black, Black, Black, and I am satisfied in my Blackness. My blood is African!

When Everlane Moraes opens her eye, the movie shows, next, a close-up image of *Irmão’s* guitar, with the final musical score, a rap paying homage to the residents of the Cirurgia borough.

Only the people have the new / have the breath / have the change / Only the people tip the glass / Curse the pig / avenge the body / Only the people know the game / have the strength / live the fool / Only the people of the race / of the drink / of the disgrace / Only the people with the hustle / with the muscle / with the drums / The people with no sun / with no cover / of soccer / Only the people of survivors / survivors / super resistant / Only the people with no teeth / unconscious / is the seed / Only the people who are trouble, instead of the system core / Only the people suffer the hurt / suffer the life / the way out / Only the people of the race / of the drink / of the disgrace. (our translation).

Notwithstanding, regarding the structure of the narrative in the documentary film *Caixa d'água: qui-lombo é esse?*, we dare say that the result corresponds to a set of things

that were connected to the method of conception of the movie, which makes us reflect about its theme – the history of the Maloca community. So to speak, each element that constitutes the movie – locations with the technical team, enactment, animation, soundtrack, historic sources, interviews, videos, photographs and final editing with the intentional disjunction between sound (*voices*) and visual (*images*) – also indexes the movie in an experimental and authorial narrative, in the sense that the presence of the filmmaker marks the territory's space-time, capturing each resident's testimonial and with the inscription of images projected on her body, which reflects an action of thoughts cinema and a body that is also a territory.

With that, beyond a camera that catches stories and creates strategies to communicate with the other, the movie brings up memories, remembrances that were veiled by the sheets of the past. We claim this in the search for a cinema of the body, based on Deleuze (2007, p. 248, our translation), when discussing the notion of memory according to Resnais, Proust and Bergson:

Because memory is no longer, certainly, the faculty of remembering: it is the membrane which, following the most diverse methods (continuity, but also discontinuance, involvement etc.), corresponds the sheets of the past to the layers of reality, the former arising from an inside that was already there, the latter emerging from an outside that is always coming, and both scouring the present, which is nothing but their encounter.

In summary, gathering people to talk about their life stories regarding the space where they live went beyond giving voice, it potentialized “[...] the other as an intercessor with whom the filmmaker can be rid of the worship of their own fictions or, said otherwise, who puts them in front of unwavering identity as a fiction” (TEIXEIRA, 2004, p. 66, our translation). Meanwhile, it means that contemporary technologies, associated to the documentary genre, become fruitful tools for collective writing and discourse.

Should we question who we are? Why, in the face of our eyes/camera, must we know who we film? And, in the movie *Caixa d'água: qui-lombo é esse?*, we are surprised by its method, which is to know the urban quilombo Maloca and, especially, to promote the encounter with cinema, in order to make us think. It reiterates in the film composition, in the flow of the lines of real characters, in the urban structures and in the community's rhythm, as stated by Carroll (2005), the demand that the spectator adopt an assertive mental attitude, dialoguing with the filmmaker's intentions, the descriptions of facts and

the tensions in narrative construction. This obligation to think assumes the premises of construction of places of memory in places of history. It is in the symbolic and functional materiality of the actions of individuals, in the everyday poetry of their streets and manifestations, in the resistance of their bodies that cannot be silenced that history is materialized in all of its critical force.

5 Final considerations

Returning to the study's objective, which was to present and analyze the documentary *Caixa d'água: qui-lombo é esse?*, in order to investigate the Black body through the themes of history and memory, we infer that this film is the gathering and the encounter of people who live in Maloca, aiming to give new meaning to their experiences, stories and memories of that territory. The documentary is in consonance with Law n. 10.639/2003, since it also questions the official curriculum by investigating historical subjects disseminated in Brazilian education, such as the representation of truth about Black people fixated on the identity of their enslaved past or marginalized present. That is, the documentary by director Everlane Moraes isn't only a simple way to make and/or think cinema, but a movie resulting from her intellectual reflection and commitment to the resignification of Black existence, therefore with the resignification of a social practice.

In this sense, thinking about ethnic-racial relations and their materiality in school education, we agree with Gomes (2005) that this discussion should be part of teacher training courses and that conceptually understanding racism, racial discrimination/segregation and prejudice would help educators combat racist practices in schools. Likewise, it would help these professionals realize that these practices are grounded in the history and memory of a country, a city, a community, which need to be confronted.

According to Gomes (2005), knowing other successful pedagogical practices to combat racial discrimination and cultural productions that reveal our cultural and ethnic plurality should guide the actions of Brazilian educators. We understand, therefore, that the movie by Everlane Moraes should enter the education world so that, with grounded mediation by teachers, the school can lead students to understand that "[...] human

beings aren't constituted only by intellect, but also by differences, identities, emotions, representations, values, titles" (GOMES, 2005, p. 154, our translation).

In summary, the movie *Caixa d'água: qui-lombo é esse?*, by Everlane Moraes, is a cinematographic support that demarcates the "place of speech" of the director and the oldest residents of the Maloca quilombo, constituting a binding element of resistance and centrality in the preservation of oral memory and the collective history, especially together with cinema – this art capable of making the silence of its sound emerge from the moving image.

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