

Coffee with cinnamon from the perspective of black cinema and cultural history

ARTICLE

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Summary

Based on the 2017 film "Café com Canela" (Coffee with Cinnamon), directed by Ary Rosa and Glenda Nicácio, the aim of this article is to weave together under the lens of Black Cinema, directed, scripted and acted by black people, and the New Brazilian Cinema, with a focus on regional social realist aspects, the pedagogical character of this production involves generational and gender aspects, in multiple temporalities, the plot offers insights into everyday life in the Recôncavo Baiano region and sensitivities about death, mourning, affections and disaffection. Under the methodology of Cultural History analysis, the film was subdivided into parts: the first, a screening for 10 spectators selected for the study, the second, decoupage or decomposition of the scenes for description and the third, reconstruction to understand the relationships between the elements and the interpretation of the researchers and co-participants. The contribution was the understanding of cinema as a record/document of history and proof of its educational nature for discussions on the humanization of black people.

Keywords: Black Cinema. Death. Mourning. Everyday life. Recôncavo Baiano.

Café com canela sob a perspectiva do cinema negro e da história cultural

Abstrato

Este artigo tem como objetivo, a partir do filme "Café com Canela", de 2017, dirigido por Ary Rosa e Glenda Nicácio, tecer sob as lentes do Cinema Negro, com direção, roteiro e interpretação de pessoas negras e do Novíssimo Cinema Brasileiro, com foco em aspectos realistas sociais regionais, o caráter educativo dessa produção envolve em aspectos geracionais e de gênero, em múltiplas temporalidades, o enredo oferece percepções sobre o cotidiano da região do Recôncavo Baiano e sensibilidades sobre morte, luto, afetos e desafetos. Sob a metodologia de análise da História Cultural, o filme foi subdividido em partes: a primeira, exibição para 10 espectadores selecionados para o estudo; a segunda, decupagem ou decomposição das cenas para descrição; e a terceira, reconstrução para compreensão das relações entre os elementos e interpretação dos pesquisadores e coparticipantes. A contribuição foi a compreensão do cinema

como registro/documento da história e a comprovação de seu caráter educativo para discussões sobre a humanização do povo brasileiro.

Palavras-chave: Black Cinema. Death. Mourning. Everyday life. Recôncavo Baiano.

1 Introduction

The 2017 film "Café com Canela" (Coffee with Cinnamon), directed by Ary Rosa and Glenda Nicácio, deals with themes involving death, mourning and the daily lives of black people, and touches on daily life, gender and generational issues in the Recôncavo Baiano. This article aims to use the film analysis methodology proposed by Cultural History and the perceptions of ten viewers who were co-participants in the study to analyze the pedagogical nature of the film for movements and collectives of black people and people in general, as well as for studies on Black Cinema.

Any film production bears witness to its social, cultural and political context and is related to its production style, intentions and the historical time of its production. In addition to the objectively constructed images, which reveal the filters and meanings of those who produced them, there are subjective contents, made up of elements that go beyond the intentions of the authors of the work and the period in which it was created. A film is always a visual/sound representation, loaded with kinetic, linguistic, sound and musical codes in motion, revealing tensions and restraints of an individual nature (director/screenwriter), socio-historical constructions and visible and non-visible ideological "zones" of the society to which it belongs (SCHWARTZ, 2010). In this sense, Noel dos Santos Carvalho (2015), in his reflections on the political importance of film productions and the role of artists in the plots, points out that cinema has the potential to document/record and to construct or deconstruct deep-rooted behaviors and values.

Black Cinema in Brazil, based on the theoretical foundations of Cinema Novo, enabled the first black artists and filmmakers to act and play a leading role in a period of questioning the interpretations of Brazil from the 1920s, 1930s, 1940s and 1950s, providing

theoretical and methodological support for the problematization of racial representation in the aesthetic and political agenda of developmental Brazil (CARVALHO, 2015). In his undertaking, a new representation of the Brazilian should be constructed, presenting black men and women in social identity frames no longer associated with the dispossessed, disregarded and not included in Brazilian class society, thus, through new aesthetics, their bodies and their Afro-Brazilian cultural expressions should be valued and presented in artistic productions.

At first, these cultural artistic productions brought together black content and themes, such as social issues relating to enslavement, but they did not problematize the historical continuities arising from 19th century racial theories in a Brazil thirsty for modernity. Their aim was not yet the historical/cultural deconstruction of the metamorphosis of blacks into enslaved, subaltern people, but rather to bring part of the history of colonization into cultural productions (SCHWARTZ, 2010).

In the 1970s, Black Cinema developed in Brazil with unique characteristics, in opposition to stereotyped representations of African countries and the black population of the diaspora. It criticized hegemonic discourses, fixed and prejudiced identities that made it invisible to deconstruct the idea of black people categorized as inferior, unruly, undisciplined and naughty, as well as the performance of black actors and actresses mostly submitted to racially marked roles (SHOHAT; STAM, 2006).

The perspective of Cultural History considers Black Cinema and Black-themed Cinema as analytical categories that make it possible to respond to historical, social and cultural demands, in which black people score adjectives of belonging and recognition. The inclusion of black actors behind the camera and as filmmakers or screenwriters is a social tool with the potential to deconstruct stereotyped narratives and representations. Through audiovisual language, the black population has been gradually transforming the historical continuities resulting from the Brazilian civilization process, since both the spectators watching the productions and the professionals involved in making the films become active parts in the process of recognition and belonging. There is a pedagogical function in the

practice, in other words, this feeling of belonging moves towards recognition, as Stuart Hall (2016) states.

When discussing a film that fits in with the proposals of Black Cinema as a tool for instigating reflection, new voices enter the story and new stories are written. Researching these artistic/cultural productions and understanding them as records/documents is a political act that has consequences for everyday relationships. It means valuing the trajectories and struggles of black men and women in Brazil and reinforcing the role of black people and their stories in academia.

In this way, both black-themed cinema and black cinema have put black artists in the spotlight and, despite there being just over 130 years since the date on which slavery was legislatively and officially abolished from Brazilian society, May 13, 1888, in practice, black populations, who are descendants of diverse African peoples and Afro-Brazilians who were enslaved during the slave-owning period, are still not effectively included socio-economically and culturally in Brazil.

The process of objectification of these subjects has left socio-economic and cultural remains that affect black populations unfavorably to this day and, according to Temuu Mäki (2014), art has the potential to transform social and educational change outside the school environment. The cinematographic language of the film *Café com Canela* awakens us to the situation of the black population's body and reveals the condition of oppressed individuals in Brazil, a multifaceted and unequal society. The relationship between black and white, worker and boss, man and woman is permeated by an ethic and aesthetic of inhumanity.

The issue of racism, in the sense of the oppression of black men and women, is a problem of humanity and one of the aspects of Brazil's history is defined by the logic of inhumanity, a logic so dominant that it allows us to affirm the predominance of structural racism in the country. The bodies of black men and women bear the marks of this inhuman condition. In this sense, racial prejudice is not the action of an individual, but of an organic system that permeates institutions, the market, culture, in short, all social structures (ALMEIDA, 2018).

2 "Coffee with Cinnamon": methodological aspects of film analysis"

Analyzing a film means deconstructing it in order to decode the implicit and explicit messages. Thus, it is necessary to establish stages: first, to watch the film without interruption, then to decompose each scene, in other words, to describe in order to establish relationships between the decomposed elements, with the aim of interpretation (VANOYE, 1994). Decomposition encompasses processes of organization that must be recorded as concepts relating to the image loaded with plastic description of the shots, the framing, the composition of the angles and the lighting. Sound and narration also require description, as they form part of the composition with the aim of provoking sensations. Once this stage is complete, we move on to the structure of the film, i.e. the shots, the scenes, the significant sequences in order to unveil its intentions for what it came from, what it will be used for and to propose an interpretation.

By separating the scenes using the decoupage process, i.e. reading them frame by frame, with separate notes, the themes of death, loss and everyday life, presented through the protagonism of black artists, were related to cinematographic technique and style. Reconstructing the sequence made it possible to see how the elements were associated and linked.

The film *Café com Canela* is the starting point for its decomposition and the end point for interpretations of experiences, everyday tensions and its pedagogical character. The scenes, in their formal aspects (images, sound, colors and lighting, and content), place ten observers and researchers in the Recôncavo Baiano and in the daily lives of the characters. It makes use of luminosity and darkness at various times, as well as multiple angles and excess and scarcity of objects, in an attempt to give the viewer ideas of cut-outs in a larger or smaller reality.

When studying the value and meaning of cinematographic images, many methodological approaches must be constructed in order to promote dialog between works and theories of works, between historical production contexts and local, regional and global

cultures, and between formal and social dimensions. Cultural History considers the image to be a cultural product, the result of social work and sign production. In this sense, the entire production of imagery is associated with the technical means of cultural production and, from this perspective, it can, on the one hand, contribute to the dissemination of new behaviors and representations of the class that controls these means and, on the other, act as an efficient means of social control by educating the eye.

Based on this premise, the images analyzed frame by frame are not just images, but also historical sources and, as such, must go through the procedures of external and internal criticism and then be organized into a series, following a chronological proposal for analysis. From Manguel's point of view (2001), narratives arranged in extensive series are not capable of accounting for the significant universe that each fragment possesses, so selection criteria have to be created. This corpus selection is necessary to understand the different categorical series in the analysis.

Café com Canela was shot in Bahia's Recôncavo region (Félix and Cachoeira), breaking away from the Rio-São Paulo cinematic axis. It conveys the experiences of the region: predominantly black, with an African religious matrix of Candomblé and Catholicism, and actors and supporting actors who are mostly black, with the exception of Adolfo.

The work's technical and aesthetic choices involve learning from history, full of social meaning, through the geometry of the recôncavo explored in vanishing points to give the impression that each character is on their own journey. Insects and plants are inserted into images of the city to bring the plot and geographical context to life. In the dialogues, the actors go beyond the raw text, abusing colloquialisms that refer to their socio-economic and cultural natures.

The film is directed by a black woman, Glenda Nicásio, and a white man, Ary Rosa, who met while studying film in the Recôncavo Baiano region, making it possible to immerse themselves in the geographical environment, in the social and cultural territory of the region, which is mostly made up of black people, which is why, in some frames, the camera focuses entirely on a plurality of black faces, with different shades of melanin, noses,

mouths and eyes. The central characters are two women, former teacher Margarida and her former pupil and baker Violeta, who end up united by the pain of death, loss and the pain of memory. The theme is centered on the difficulties of everyday life and the disfigurement of everyday life by death. Death and mourning are the focus and appear mixed with everyday experiences, affections and proximity.

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The filmography brings parallel stories that converge in the two women, thought of in a non-linear way and intertwining realism with expressionism. This observation was obtained through textual analysis based on the linguistically-inspired structuralist approach of the 1960s and 1970s. The aim is to understand its structure. The division into segments, dramatic units and syntagms reveals what was intended to be marked in the scene. For example, the first scene is set in a conversation between friends in which the character named Cida tells a shameful and prejudiced story she experienced years ago when she was still young in the city of Salvador. The series of segmented images show the city and the way to a neighborhood called Rio Vermelho. The bus route is highlighted, placing the viewer in the space of the city and in an everyday event fraught with prejudice. By considering the film a text, the analysis focuses on codes: perceptual (the viewer's ability to recognize places); cultural (the viewer's ability to interpret what they see, drawing on their past/present culture) and specific codes (the viewer's ability to interpret what they see) based on cinematographic resources.

The everyday event that the scene wanted to point out is the maintenance of the historical permanence of prejudices. Cida, the main character in this story, was wearing a watch owned by her aunt. Inside the bus, well-dressed, she comes across a popular guy and gets the impression that he has stolen her aunt's watch. She takes a pointed object from her bag and puts it inside her clothes, giving the impression that it is a gun. She then puts her fake gun close to the man's body and takes the watch back without looking at it. When he got off the bus, he realized that his watch had fallen out of his bag and that he had accidentally stolen the man's watch. When she meets the police, she hands over the watch in shame. The framing of the scene and the lighting direct the viewer towards these

maintenance tasks in the urban universe. The everyday theme is presented in a direct and simple way.

The second scene is made up of images from a home video of the birthday celebration of a child named Paulinho, son of the teacher and co-protagonist Margarida. The series of images shows the joy of the guests at the get-together. All the scenes with the character Margarida are expressionistic, taking the viewer to a world apart, as well as being distorted and broken by an abrupt change in time. Margarida is suddenly in a penumbra in front of a mirror, as if she were a smaller version of herself, giving a feeling of fragility and impotence. Her movements are slow and her body is wrapped in white clothes, as if she were a ghost, a dead and living person. She smokes a lot in every scene and is always haunted by the shadows of the past.

The themes of death, mourning and loss grow with each scene, and the identification of the film's theme is structured with each decomposed scene. Even in the atmosphere of a barbecue where friends of a doctor named Ivan share stories, death is present. The memories illuminated by the framing and lighting and the glint in the character's eye as he verbalizes how he lived each day without thinking about tomorrow is interrupted and watered down by death, without addressing how the loss happened. Mourning, death and loss are blended into the scenes of everyday life in multiple codes and levels of coding that provide meaning to the cultural universe of local society.

Images of the city are installed, including the D. Pedro II bridge that connects the cities of São Felix and Cachoeira, not in reference to leaving one point and arriving at another, but rather in the relationship between the points, as the expressionists of the German current The Bridge proposed.

In *Café com Canela*, there are suggestions of trances and small daily rituals. Mateus Aleluia, the last member of the Afro-Brazilian rhythm band Os Tincoãs from the region, made a special soundtrack for the film, full of drumming inspired by the religion of African origin with lyrics in Yoruba¹. These codes are not ahistorical entities, they are

¹ This is a language of African origin belonging to part of one of the ethnic-cultural groups that arrived in Brazil as slaves.

always situated in the cultural-spatial-temporal sphere. Regionality involves scenes like that of Ivan and Adalto, married for twenty years, which is shifted to the dog's gaze (seen from below), when death knocks on their door. Darkness surrounds the entire scene, and the camera moves slowly, just like the scenes in which Margarida is the protagonist. This scene problematizes the death of a gay person. The issue is problematized by the scene in which Felipe, a young resident of the house, is unaware of his friends' affective relationship and only becomes aware of it at the moment of Adalto's death. Most of the residents also discover that they were married at that time. The backdrop is one of affection and closeness.

The analysis of the film as a text also goes through the poetics that understands the film as a programming and creation of effects, in which the effects must be enumerated in order to identify sensations, feelings and meanings that each scene is capable of producing. If we consider that the film is made up of a set of media (visual and sound, depth of field), we have to identify how these media have been strategically organized in order to produce certain effects. For example, there's a scene in which a would-be bar owner insinuates himself to a woman called Violeta. She doesn't give in to his advances. The centrality of the camera highlights this woman and her values constructed in a feminine universe through her gestures, clothes and looks. In the same place where Cida and Violeta meet, while Violeta is hugging and exchanging words with a man she knows, Cida immediately thinks that her friend is shamelessly flirting with him, even though she is married. The scene condemns the characters without having to use verbal narratives.

The two excerpts deal with the values imposed on the female and male universes, the machismo still present in Brazilian culture and especially in smaller towns. The classification of codes and their constitutive network reveals the conjunctural view of images and the construction of meanings.

Since image production is a human work of communication, it is therefore guided by socially conventionalized codes that have a connotative-functional character that refers to the ways of being and acting of the context in which they are inserted as messages. Thus, in order for the analytical gaze to go beyond the nature of the image as a mere analog

of reality, camera movement and environmentalization, other mechanisms are used for analysis: the relationship between sign and image and technical and aesthetic options. In the dialectic between image and sign, the image is seen as something 'natural', in other words, something inherent in its own iconic nature - a mirror of reality - and the sign becomes valid as a symbolic representation. This distinction is a false problem, given that the image can undoubtedly be conceived as an iconic text, but that, before depending on a code, it is something that institutes a code. In this sense, in the context of the messages in each scene, the image, by taking the place of an object or an event or even a feeling, incorporates sign functions - representation of something, as in the scene referring to Violeta's visit to Margarida's house. In this scene, the ritual of coffee with cinnamon, the title of the film, appears. The fresh preparation by the visitor awakens something, a different sensation in Margarida, who was used to drinking stale coffee and letting food spoil in the fridge. She didn't seem to feel any pleasure in living; the framing emphasizes her look of helplessness, loneliness and detachment from life. The stale coffee and spoiled food represent the hopelessness of her son's death. His dead son's room appears locked, immaculate, just as it was when Paulinho was alive. After a succession of frames and the camera moving away from the house, the scene changes to Violeta and Margarida entering the room, where she allows herself to cry for her son, touch objects and touch Paulinho's bed. We can see that the locked room represents the fear of losing the past, the maintenance of living memories, the fabrics of memory. In the house, the bathroom looks like a prison through the framing, placing the viewer inside and outside Margarida's head, and the whole environment assumes, in the dialectic of these images and signs, the relationship between the elements of life and death and the social context.

The thematic and temporal cuts are required to bring the viewer to the drama of the film's central theme, Death and Mourning.

The entire plot relates past and present, such as scenes and images of Margarida surrounded by the sounds of past moments, happy conversations between her, her husband and their son, which are gradually replaced by her and her husband experiencing the passage of grief until they are displaced by disagreements between Paulo and

Margarida. Her husband can't accept that his wife has given up living because of her son's bereavement, and finally, at times, she feels tormented by memories of her son playing full of life.

The scene in which Violeta forcibly talks to Margarida to help her be reborn from the pain of mourning, just as she had done for her years ago when she experienced a tragedy that left her without her parents when she was very young, is iconic. Margarida reacts and Violeta goes on to recite a poem, probably the same one her former teacher had shared with her to make her whole again, until Margarida explodes and Violeta is effectively thrown out of the house:

Underwater everything was more beautiful, bluer, more colorful, but you had to breathe.

Underwater, forming like a fetus, serene, comfortable, loved, complete, without a floor, without a roof, without contact with the air.

But I had to breathe. Every day, every day, every day. Every day.

Underwater for the time being, without smiling, without crying, without lamenting, without knowing how long that moment would last.

But I had to breathe. More blue, more colorful. But I had to breathe. Underwater (Violeta in a scene from *Café com canela* 01:08:14 to 1:09:00)

In the process of getting her life back on track, Margaret, after her conversation with Violet, begins to receive a red rose probably every day. At first she finds it strange, until she starts to feel awake and more lively. She feels more alive again and wants to admire herself in the mirror, clean her house and straighten up.

For much of the film, Margarida is dressed in white clothes, which have their symbolism in African religions linked to an Orixá, as well as exploring the sounds of nature and everyday life, such as running water, waterfalls, frying and chewing, among others.

With regard to the roses, Margarida learns that Dona Roquelina, Violeta's grandmother, is dying and so she puts roses on Violeta's door to help her through this process of loss, just as she was helped in the past. The story embeds the images in the choices made by those who chose them - an expression and a content - composing objects of cultural significance through non-verbal signs. The regional cultural manifestation encompasses the imagery of the film, such an important expression/content that it is reserved in a specific cognitive region, the visual world, which has its own logic with plastic

thinking. After sending roses to Violeta, Margarida pays a visit to her house, at which point she prepares the coffee with cinnamon that her former pupil and friend had taught her, which smells different and thus awakens something new. And according to popular culture, cinnamon can be linked to attracting positive energies and warding off negative ones, as well as being linked to abundance, money, employment and protection.

At the beginning of the film, there is a scene in a movie theater with several people, in which a woman, Margarida, sits down among the people to watch the film and her feelings are stirred up. This scene is retaken at the end of the movie. And a few moments earlier, while Violeta is helping to clean the house, they talk about the cinema and Margarida confesses that the cinema is magical for her and ends up explaining its meaning so that her friend can understand her point of view:

You immediately smell something different, familiar, disturbing, and it gives you a little chill in your stomach. It also gives you a bit of insecurity, because even though you know you're in a room full of people, you feel alone in front of the screen. It's as if it cuts the link you have with the security of things and throws you headlong into an experience that you don't even know where it's going.

Everyone says that movies help you forget about life, your problems and live in a magical world, far from your reality. I don't really believe that.

For me, a good movie is one that shows the dirt, the limitations, the anguish that everyone has.

First and foremost, a good movie wants to experience you and wants to be experienced.

Ah, Violeta, and when that happens you lose your ground, you lose your shame, you lose your line and you transcend.

In the dark, in front of that image dominated by sound, you can finally hear everything you don't have the courage to say to yourself and that's when you find yourself. You find yourself and lose yourself once and for all.

No mask, no fantasy, even if it's just for a few minutes. When the movie ends, the lights come back on and everything is different, empty. The one who sat in the seat will never get up again, and the one who gets up is new, someone else. That's it, that's what movies are for me.

(Scene from *Café com canela*, 01:27:21- 01:29:20)

Café com Canela is known for bringing the daily lives of black people to life. The aesthetic elements - the artistic style of the work - the subjective nature of the aesthetic models created, the language, the camera movements, the shots, the framing, the lighting

and the sound design all contribute to immersion in this universe. The subjective world of Margarida and the objective world of the recôncavo are traced throughout.

The scenes change with the deaths, all the records of the recôncavo become heavy, including for the protagonist Violeta, who also appears in a bathroom that becomes a prison, revealing that deaths and mourning are communal.

The death of Violeta's grandmother appears in her bedroom, with irregular lights at various points in the room, reminiscent of the herbs that grow in Margarida's house in a dream. In these moments, the film moves away from realism and towards expressionism.

Margarida needs to face the reality of pain in order to then face the reality of life and time. This passage is represented by a closed door on the right side of the room. The other characters open doors and move on, but Margarida remains trapped in the shadows and moves away from the door. However, what allows the passage is Violeta's visit. In the scene of their conversation, the camera is neutral, they appear sitting facing each other symmetrically at a table, indicating uncertainty about what will happen. As Violeta starts to talk about death, the scene becomes polluted, full of objects in the background illuminating only her, as if the character were invading the house and Margarida in the dark, smoking, blowing smoke into the light, driving away that intruding light until they fight. The camera moves, leaving the atmosphere chaotic.

In the aftermath, another scene divides Margarida between light and shadow, when she receives news of another death, Dr. Angelina. She decides to invite Violeta into her life and, from that moment on, the scene changes completely. The camera frames the two lightly and Margarida manages to open the door. Nevertheless, the scene again surprises by showing Margarida alone with her thoughts dancing with the camera flowing with her, not frantically as in previous scenes. She becomes in tune with the world around her. The scene is sensitive, full of subjectivity.

Death engages spirituality and the characters face their fears. The last scene of the movie is realistic, showing that life must go on for all these mourners. Violeta's smile and the realistic scenes of everyday life throughout the film become poetry.

The analysis took into account what is present implicitly (content between the lines) and "everything that the producers wanted to reach the viewer explicitly" (NOVA, 1999, p. 5).

In *Café com Canela*, at many moments, it seems as if the viewer is filming; at other times, the angle of the shot is at the height of a child, sometimes at the height of a dog and, at other times, at the height of an adult. At various times, the film zooms in on details: cigarettes, drumsticks, chewing, coffee, various faces, smiles and so many other everyday details. There are also passages of wide-open shots in which you can see the whole picture.

The lighting is generally natural, as are all the sets. There's nothing perfect or too tidy, we can see the dirt, the mess, all the details, and so it's possible to bring the viewer closer to the film, which indirectly makes you feel invited to be a part of how realistically everyday everything is.

The sounds are a mixture of the present time presented by the film, with conversations from the past and with an emphasis on the sounds of nature and everyday life. Thus, it is possible to try and feel the story, through the metaphors of what lies behind the movie, which is the story of the black people who inhabit that place.

The type of analysis used understands the film as a means of expression that focuses on the filmic space and resorts to cinematographic concepts of the close-up and only one shot depending on the scene, to give information to the viewer. With this methodology of analysis, we find out how directors and screenwriters conceive of cinema and how cinema allows us to think and take a new look at history.

Each scene analyzed used the methodology of Cultural History, and the researchers and the ten co-participants in the study were left with the feeling that a lot remains to be said about the film, but its pedagogical character is evident, both for anti-racist and gender issues. Together, we proposed an internal and external analysis of the film. Scenes as possessing singularities in order to identify their styles and as the result of a set of historical and cultural relationships in which its production, realization and

fundamentally the protagonism of black artists took place, and themes that involve generations and gender.

3 Black protagonism and representations

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After the methodology, we moved on to questions about the protagonism of black people in Brazilian black cinema and its pedagogical relevance. Unlike the standard in Brazilian films, series and soap operas, which show black characters with no emotional or affective ties, as in the case of Dona Anastácia and Uncle Barnabé in *Sítio do Pica-Pau Amarelo*, or with jobs linked to subalternity such as security guard, or with the sexualization and hypersexualization of bodies, as in the soap opera and film about Chica da Silva, in the television series *O sexo e as negas*, in the soap opera *Da cor do pecado* or linked to crime and violence, as in the film *Cidade de Deus* and the series *Irmandade*. "Café com Canela" centers its reflection on everyday life and people's fear of death, through black protagonists deconstructing patterns that reinforce Brazil's structural racism.

Bell hooks² (2019, p. 62), points out that: "we cannot value ourselves in the right way without first breaking down the walls of self-denial that conceal the depth of black self-hatred, inner anguish, pain without reconciliation." When we think of black women, the fact that they are constantly objectified in films, acting as singers, in their personal lives, are explicit remnants of the period of enslavement. This kind of stereotyped image needs to be changed. The author herself emphasizes the importance of black men and women constructing new representative images of themselves in order to bring about change.

In *Café com Canela*, the emotional bond of both family and friendship is built and shown around Margarida and Violeta, building a new image of black women. It is directed not just by a black woman, but by a duo who share the experience of the recôncavo region. It is possible to see, through this lens, that:

The women appear in the most different day-to-day tasks, with their fears about their lives and their losses.... which are multiple. The film is not just about death; it

² The author prefers her name to be used in lowercase letters.

focuses on the anguish and sadness of the region's population, in a world that separates generations, social groups and goals. It teaches us to see the people of the region, their cultures and their everyday constructions, black people are represented by black people and this makes this film a model for all of us (SILVA, 2023).

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The film has a pedagogical vector because it promotes this humanity to the black population and, in general, in this sense, it corroborates the theory of Temuu Mäki (2014) who points out that art is a transmutative vehicle and has a pedagogical character. The ten co-participants in a united voice agreed with Mäki, who proposes functions for art through the mediation of pleasure, the search for wisdom and emotional development. Art can lead people to a better understanding of themselves and their region, and of gender, race/place asymmetries.

Café com Canela is set in a Brazilian region that is not often covered, either in film or in tourism, so the film provides an opportunity for those who watch it to get to know its territory, its culture and the black and mestizo elements of multiple matrices.

Dramatic art reveals new breadths and depths of life. It conveys a perception of things and of human destinies; of human greatness and misery, in the face of what our common experience seems poor and trivial. We all feel, in a vague and undefined way, the infinite potentials of life, which silently await the moment when they will be awakened from their slumber into the clear and intense light of consciousness. It is not the degree of infectiousness, but the degree of intensification and illumination that is the measure of the excellence of art (CASSIER, 2012, p. 242).

As a result, for non-blacks, they also end up acquiring perspectives of diverse black experiences and for blacks, realizing that there are countless realities that are different from theirs, but also with some similarities, and better understanding how they feel.

With regard to provoking discussions, this happens when art suggests reflections and thus incites people to do the same in their lives, thus being able to deal with and solve problems with greater complexity. Since one of the motifs of the film in question is death and loss, which is complicated for everyone in general, it ends up helping with various processes of loss, including death, through the experiences of Ivan, Violeta and Margarida.

And so, like these characters, those who watch the film are able to create new lives, to reinvent themselves.

Finally, Mäki (2014) stresses art as a search for wisdom, because it manages to explore politics and philosophy in a more versatile way through its creative arguments. It is also a method of communication and, as a result, enables people to create knowledge and mastery of subjects through contact with art.

What we often see when we watch Brazilian films, series and soap operas are images of wealth, of perfection, of a small section of the population that doesn't include everyone and ends up alienating those who watch it. *Café com Canela* and its intimacy with the veracity of everyday life shows that it's okay to have a simple life, while at the same time addressing the problem of the economy through product prices and the newspaper headline, which is something that affects everyone and can count on everyone's help to change the issue.

The voice and subjectivity that the film shows of black women is important and, with it, the stimulus for people to think about their routine attitudes and those around them.

This occurs by establishing sympathy with subjects outside the world of individuals, making them understand conflicts from different points of view at once, making it easier to distance people from their individual perspectives and agitations and to consider conflicts in a rationalized way (CAETANO, 2020, p. 28).

The relevance of art as a platform for social transmutation is tangible. The specific contemporary focus of the film *Café com Canela* made it possible to detect the transformations and cultural continuities arising from the processes of enslavement of black bodies in Brazil in small everyday relationships. It depicts urban individuals and their joys and sorrows, and its popular and experimental language won it three trophies at the Brasilia Film Festival in 2017 and led to it being shortlisted for the official selection of the International Film Festival Rotterdam. The film is a document, a documentary record of history, presenting different experiences of the inhabitants of the city of Recôncavo Baiano.

The viewer is invited to immerse themselves in the universe of black people in multiple "films" within "one film". As Guerreiro Ramos, Abdias do Nascimento and Joel Rufino said, the Brazilian people are black and are not a foreign component of Brazilian

demography. Black people live and coexist historically and sociologically in permanent problematic conditions and their disadvantage or pauperism comes up against categorizations of value and aesthetic alienation eager to identify with white European populations (RAMOS, 1995). Racial integration takes place in different contexts and discourses in *Café com Canela*, which features black artists in various images.

The cultural and political agenda of black Brazilians is born out of the struggles against the asymmetries created and recreated since colonization and the demands for equal social rights and access to citizenship, which come up against cultural, social and economic barriers that are repeated and diffuse in the social fabric. These barriers have been transformed into flags of struggle, from the Brazilian Black Front in the 1930s, which pointed to the origin of discrimination, to the anti-racist mobilizations, linked to the thinking of Guerreiro Ramos, who in his political ontology for black Brazilians, stated that they must have their "place". It's not a question of race, but of place. This shift in meaning, from race to place, denounces the social isolation of black people, induced by the propagation of the aesthetics and science of white Europeans.

By dealing with the theme of death and loss in a region that originated with enslaved Africans, full of hybrid African cultures and customs of resistance, the film *Café com Canela* shows the basis of Brazilian popular culture and different ways of thinking about Brazil. Following the denunciations of "racial democracy" as a discursive refuge for dominant ideologies in the 1960s and 1970s (FERNANDES, 1965), the Unified Black Movement, a decade later, systematically opposed this concept, proposing an authentic democracy, in which black people should think about their "place", that is, the "place of the people".

And it is in this discussion that we find the threads that weave together the film's script and its pedagogical character.

4 By way of consideration

The analysis seen from a cultural historical perspective showed a kind of dialog that went beyond the questions: What is the theme of the movie? What is the main scene? What is the purpose of the movie? The finding of the study was to move on to what the duo Ary Rosa and Glenda Nicácio, after *Café com Canela*, went on to explore, enhance and publicize: the black universe that makes up the majority of the Brazilian population, in other words, the "people's place". In subsequent films: *The Island* (2018) and *Until the End* (2020) they continue to resignify the representation of black people along the lines of bell hooks' Afrofuturism.

In the words of the ten co-participants of the study, the organic integration of the text with dances, songs, gestures in poetry with elements from the region's *terreiros* was highlighted in a continuous pedagogical action to open up paths for the deconstruction of the tragic crushing of black people's culture by the dominant culture. The creation by black men and women of scripts and film direction deepens feelings about the dramas of Afro-Brazilian life hidden by white historiography. The fusion of plastic and poetic elements proposes the search for liberation from a cruel racism of multiple dimensions, specifically gender, by prioritizing the appreciation of the female personality and culture of black people.

It mirrors the existential peripetias of human life within the structures of Brazilian society laden with hidden oppression, faced with the tensions of structural racism and gender asymmetries in everyday life. Death, loss and disappointment are pedagogical tools that highlight concerns and fears about discriminatory practices. They aim to direct the viewer to the torn conscience of women and men in the face of racism.

The film *Café com Canela*, from black cinema, is one of the strategies of educability, with a view to a long-term social revolution, from the perspective of a politicality that generates an affirmative image of black men and women, in a humanizing process. This movement of transformation must lead whites and blacks to "distance themselves from the inhuman voices of their respective ancestors, so that authentic communication can emerge. Before embarking on a positive voice, freedom requires a prior effort at disalienation" (FANON, 2020, p. 242).

Between the lines of the film comes Fanon's interpretation of the concept of social revolution. It is necessary to let the dead bury their dead and build a new civilizing process marked by humanization and not inhumanity, of bodies free from relations of inferiority and subservience (FANON, 2020).

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Responsible editor: Cristine Brandenburg

Ad hoc experts: Margaréte May Berkenbrock Rosito and João Carlos Pereira de Moraes

How to cite this article (ABNT):

CAETANO, Sheila Cristina Silva Aragão; SCHWARTZ, Rosana Maria Barbato; SOUZA NETO, João Clemente de. Café com canela pela perspectiva do cinema negro e da história da cultura. **Rev. Pemo**, Fortaleza, v. 5, e10637, 2023. Available at:

<https://doi.org/10.47149/pemo.v5.e10637>

Received on May 6th, 2023.

Accepted on August 29, 2023.

Published on August 29, 2023.