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VOZES DE MULHERES NEGRAS DE PARELHEIROS: INTERNET, INTERSECCIONALIDADE
THE VOICES OF AFRO-BRAZILIAN WOMEN FROM PARELHEIROS: THE INTERNET AND INTERSECTIONALITY
ANA GABRIELA LIMA, ANGÉLICA BENATTI ALVIM, JAQUELINE DE ARAUJO RODOLFO

PT | EN

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Abstract

This study explores the discourses of the Afro-Brazilian women of Parelheiros — one of Sao Paulo city's most impoverished and violent neighborhoods —

disseminated via Internet websites. The methodology entailed surveying websites addressing issues related to race, underserved outlying districts, gender, and problems faced by women in Parelheiros. Then we built a theoretical framework for analysis involving four main themes: intersectional feminism, Afro-Brazilian women's voices on the Internet, the context of Parelheiros, and positioning the discussion within the framework of the Global South epistemologies. The results revealed that the dissemination of different forms of written expression via the Internet has become a tool for overcoming the so-called "silencing of the underserved outlying districts", enabling the development of networks for solidarity, organizing of events, and the running of training and empowerment projects. Also, Afro-Brazilian women's voices disseminated over the Internet expressed needs and aspirations, both personal and collective, which would be difficult to convey by other means. The accounts describing the way urban spaces can provide and promote – yet also hamper and impede – opportunities for these women serve to portray the ways social, economic, racial, and gender inequalities are experienced and tackled by these groups and their communities.

Keywords: Global South, Afro-Brazilian women, Parelheiros, Intersectionality, Internet

1 Introduction

The voice of black women is rarely heard or taken into account in the processes of planning, designing, and implementing interventions in urban communities in the cities of the Global South, characterized by diversity and inequality (Broto and Alves, 2018; Rigon and Broto, 2021). As these communities develop, specific groups emerge through programs and techniques stimulating and exploiting active practices of management of individuality and building of identities, personal ethics, and collective alliances (Rose, 1999 cited in Rigon and Broto, 2021). In this sense, the writings of black women from underserved outlying districts disseminated on Internet sites can be seen as a strengthening tool, a means of conferring meaning to the sense of self of these women, and also for aiding the development of networks for support, training, and creativity. The present study analyzes the written discourses of the Afro-Brazilian women of Parelheiros, a neighborhood located on the Southern outskirts of São Paulo city, that has one of the highest levels of poverty and violence in the region. From an intersectional perspective, we observe how the living experiences in these urban spaces impact the life opportunities and experiences of these protagonists.

The analysis of these discourses draws on the epistemological framework of the Global South, as defined by Santos, Araújo, and Baumgarten (2016). These approaches challenge the "exclusions produced by Eurocentric concepts" (p. 20, our translation) and regard the question "of production and circulation of knowledge and epistemology" (p.14, our translation) as central to the decolonial debate. Hofmann and Duarte (2021) also observe that feminist authors from the Global South identify, in development policies, a continuation of patriarchal colonialism. With their extractivist dynamics, these policies trample territories and bodies. In this respect, the current discussion places black female authors as epistemic subjects that "produce, interact and share their knowledge" (Hofmann and Duarte, 2021, p. 44, our translation) on the territories in which they live.

The methodological steps followed were: firstly, a survey of online sites addressing issues related to race, underserved outlying districts, and gender in Parelheiros was conducted based on the narratives of Afro-Brazilian women. The survey centered on the experiences and reflections which arise through interaction with built or urban environments. Examples include, on the one hand, narratives of meetings in libraries and classrooms, activities performed in the street or public squares, and, on the other hand, accounts and reflection on the experiences of violence, fear, discrimination, or difficulties involving the lack of urban infrastructure and facilities. Subsequently, a theoretical framework comprising four themes was devised to analyze the resultant narratives: intersectional feminism, the voice of Afro-Brazilian women on the Internet, the context of Parelheiros, and the positioning of the discussion within the context of the production and circulation of knowledge in the Global South.

On the first theme, the discussion addressing intersectional feminism is underpinned by the theories of Allen (2016), Akotirene (2019), and Silva and Ribeiro (2018). The focus of this analysis, from the intersectional feminism perspective, centers on specific issues experienced by Afro-Brazilian women in the district of Parelheiros, bringing to the fore the way in which racism and sexism interact as a mechanism of oppression. On the second theme, the analysis of the voice of Afro-Brazilian women on the Internet draws on both the concepts of the work of Silva and Ribeiro (2018) and on the discussions promoted by sites including the Centro de Estudos das Relações de Trabalho e Desigualdades (CEERT - Center for the Study of Labor Relations and Inequalities), Articulação de Mulheres Negras Brasileiras (AMNB - Articulation of Brazilian and Afro-Brazilian Women) and Blogueiras Negras (Afro-Brazilian Bloggers). Based on this analysis, the role of the Internet in the dissemination and circulation of discourses of Afro-Brazilian women from underserved outlying suburbs, generally blocked by the mainstream channels of publication, will be elucidated. The third theme

entails characterizing the situation of social and territorial vulnerability in Parelheiros, particularly with regard to racial and gender aspects. To this end, a search of government sources of data was carried out, including the Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia Estatística (IBGE - Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics), the Plataforma Municipal Geosampa (Geosampa São Paulo City Platform) and the Fundação Sistema Estadual de Análise de Dados (SEADE - Foundation State Data Analysis System). The fourth theme of investigation places the discussion in the context of the epistemologies of the Global South, as outlined by Santos, Araújo, and Baumgarten (2016) and by Hofmann and Duarte (2021), shedding light on the epistemic subjects invisible in the perspective of the key conceptual and intellectual principles based on the values of the Global North. Within this framework, from the decolonial perspective, it is possible to acknowledge the importance of the voices of Afro-Brazilian women of Parelheiros over the Internet not only for the analysis of the aspects of the territory they live in but also in terms of their role as active participants of a network of voices derived from different areas of social and territorial vulnerability in the Global South. It is considered that these women knowledge is pivotal to devising effective territorial interventions in these areas, as emphasized by Broto and Alves (2018) and Rigon and Broto (2021).

1.1 Addressing intersectional feminism

The intersectional perspective lays bare mechanisms of oppression that cannot be perceived through other lenses. The dynamic of coproduction of cities reveals that the use and control of infrastructures and resources in urban areas reflect the hegemonic structures of power (Allen, 2016). These dynamics give rise to different forms of violence, stemming from a failure to recognize specific ways of life and problems experienced on an individual level (Broto and Alves, 2018). Intersectionality is situated in the ambit of black feminism, whose foundations have been built by black female authors since the 19th century. Maria W. Stewart, Ida B. Wells, Anna Julia Cooper, and Sojourner Truth distinguished racism and sexism as different mechanisms of oppression. By mutually articulating and strengthening each other, these mechanisms give rise to problems that are specific to black women and who experience them in a way white women and black men do not (Allen, 2016).

The term “intersectionality”, coined by the Afro-American intellectual Kimberlé Crenshaw, appeared in two papers published in 1991: *Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory, and Antiracist Politics and Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color* (Allen, 2016). The academic popularity of these texts grew following the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (2001) held in Durban, South Africa, albeit running the risk of being changed “from the originally intended meaning to the point of becoming devoid of it” (Akotirene, 2019, p. 13-14, our translation). In the Brazilian milieu, back in the late 1970s, the intellectual Lélia Gonzalez was dealing with issues involving class, race, and gender oppression, alerting to the intersectionality (without using the term) of these forms of violence. In parallel, Afro-American sociologist Patricia Hill Collins used the concept to denote the work of black female activists and researchers in Brazil and Latin America. However, according to Silva and Ribeiro (2018), the ideas of Gonzalez did not enjoy the recognition and impact they deserved, perhaps because they emerged during a decade with scant means of dissemination and communication. This would explain why a large contingent of young black feminists credits Crenshaw with creating the concept of intersectional feminism.

The debate broadened by intersectional perspective inspired protagonists such as the Brazilian philosopher and activist Sueli Carneiro to set up the Portal Geledés - Instituto da Mulher Negra (Geledés Platform - Institute of Afro-Brazilian Women)¹. Regarded as the most prominent black organization in the 1990s and 2000s (Silva and Ribeiro, 2018, p. 254), the website is considered a “forum for public expression of their achievements past and present [...]” (Portal Geledés, 1997 - 2021). As a vehicle for disseminating information, the Geledés platform was visionary in recognizing the importance of this channel of communication as a way of countering the dominant narratives, paving the way for other black women’s organizations that employ the Internet to communicate. This is exemplified by the Criola² and Blogueiras Negras (Black Bloggers)³ websites (Silva and Ribeiro, 2018). The Internet and social media platforms served to consolidate the popularization of black feminism, largely because their protagonists were able to reach the public without having to overcome the barriers of academic approval or major publishing houses. Via these communication channels, the narratives of these women, albeit mothers and homemakers, vulnerable women from the northeastern region of the country, transsexuals, and youths who never completed high-school education can be voiced (Silva and Ribeiro, 2018), providing a glimpse of worlds that were hitherto invisible.

1.2 Voices of Afro-Brazilian women on the Internet

The last few decades have seen a growing presence of young black feminists on channels of communication. Traditional broadcast TV and news portals now feature protagonists who have benefited from the channels opened up by the fight of organizations representing black women since the 1980s. Prior to this shift, these protagonists had made important inroads in the areas of education and culture, public policy-making, and other areas of knowledge (Silva and Ribeiro, 2018). This provided the bedrock for the development of the Geledés site, in addition to the key websites of the CEERT, the AMNB, and Blogueiras Negras.

The São Paulo-based CEERT⁴ was set up in 1992 by Hédio Silva Jr., Ivair Augusto Alves dos Santos and Maria Aparecida Silva Bento. As a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO), it “produces knowledge, and develops and executes projects aimed at promoting race and gender equality” (CEERT, 2002 – 2021, our translation). It is involved in the areas of education and race, as well as in congresses and forums, school actions, and student exchange programs through institutions, such as the British Council. With an emphasis on gender issues, the CEERT runs projects such as *Enfrentamento da Violência Contra as Mulheres* (Tackling Violence Against Women), with specific focus on race, in collaboration with the Avon Institute and the *Assessoria para a Equidade de Raça e Gênero* (Advisory on Race and Gender Equity) program, together with the *Fundação Itaú Social* (Itaú Social Foundation).

The portal AMNB website⁵ brings together 29 organizations from all over Brazil. Their mission is: “to promote coordinated political action of groups and NGOs representing Afro-Brazilian women” (AMNB, 2021), seeking to combat racism, sexism, and class oppression. The site maintains a map of the location of its member organizations, together with contact details and information on their respective fields of action (AMNB, 2021). The organization is currently run by the *Centro de Estudos e Defesa do Negro no Pará* (CEDENPA – Center for Study and Defense of Black People in Pará State), by the *Instituto de Mulheres Negras de Mato Grosso* (IMUNE – the Institute of Afro-Brazilian women of Mato Grosso State), by *N'Zinga – Coletivo de Mulheres Negras de Belo Horizonte* (Collective of Afro-Brazilian Women of Belo Horizonte), by *Odara - Instituto da Mulher Negra* (the Institute of Afro-Brazilian Women) and by the *Rede de Mulheres Negras do Paraná* (RMNPR – Network of Afro-Brazilian Women of Paraná State). Created to strengthen and amplify the visibility of culture production, the online platform *Blogueiras Negras*, founded in 2012, originated from the *Blogagem Coletiva da Mulher Negra* (Collective Blog of Afro-Brazilian women) with the goal of increasing the visibility of a large body of literature by black authors. Comprising a 1300-strong community of women, the platform gathers the writings of 200 black authors aimed at combating racism, lesbophobia, transphobia, homophobia, and fatphobia. Forms of cultural output covered by the site include blogs, videos, books, and audio tracks which also promote and celebrate the culture of African descendants (Blogueiras Negras, 2020).

The four sites demonstrate the strengthening of the organization of black communities over the past few decades during which, in Brazil alone, a large number of events took place supporting these initiatives. One of the most notable was the *Marcha das Mulheres Negras 2015 contra o Racismo e a Violência e Pelo Bem Viver* (2015 March of Afro-Brazilian Women against Racism and Violence and For Well Being), a Brazilian movement which mobilized 50,000 women to march on Brasilia. A *Carta das Mulheres Negras* (The Letter from Afro-Brazilian Women) from 2015, was published on the *Portal Geledés* to mark the event. Its demands included securing by the State and society of the right to life and freedom; promotion of racial equality; the right to work, employment, and protection of black workers across all sectors; the right to the Land, Territory, and Housing; and the Right to the City, in addition to rights to social security, education, justice, culture, information and communication, and public safety (Portal Geledés, 2015).

2 Territorial and social vulnerability situation in Parelheiros: race and gender

According to the last Census by the IBGE (2010), 37% of the 11,253,503 population of São Paulo city self-reported as black (brown and black). These data, according to gender stratification, revealed a predominance of black women, totaling 2,130,240 subjects, or 51% of the total population self-reporting as black. Although the city’s black population does not represent the majority in terms of self-reported race (61% white, 37% black, and 2% yellow), the spatial map of the population depicted in Figure 1 below shows the density of specific groups in sub-prefectures of the city. The three main districts with the greatest density of black and brown individuals are Parelheiros (57.1%), M’Boi Mirim (56%), and Cidade Tiradentes (55.4%) (São Paulo, 2015). The three regions with the highest number of white individuals and with fewer than 15% black individuals are the districts of Pinheiros, Vila Mariana, and Santo Amaro (São Paulo, 2015).

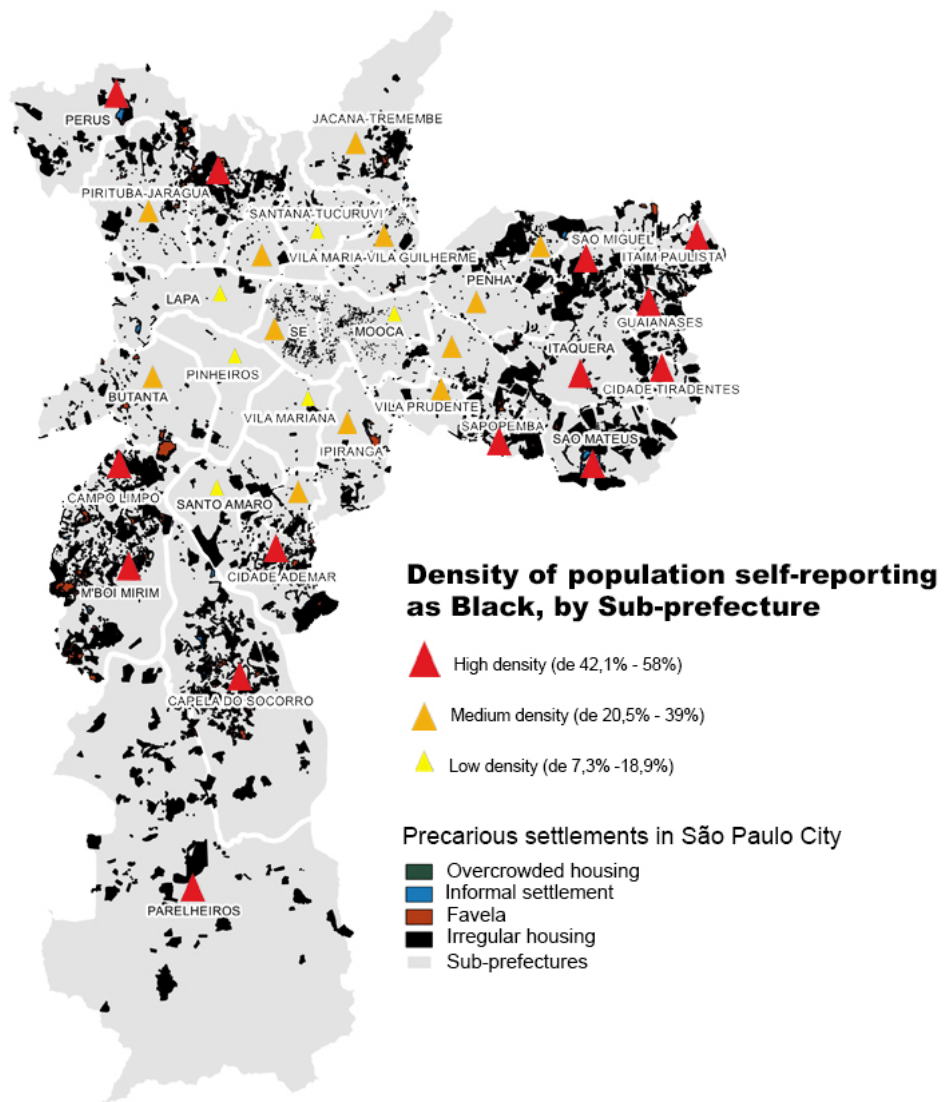


Fig. 1: Map of the density of black people by Sub-prefecture and housing conditions in São Paulo city. Source: Produced by the authors, 2021, based on CENSO IBGE census 2010, the GeoSampa Platform, and a survey carried out by the Municipal Secretariat for the Promotion of Racial Equality of São Paulo City Hall (2015)

This spatial distribution of the city population, together with the location of precarious settlements (overcrowded housing, informal settlements, and irregular housing), reveals major socio-spatial inequality. This mapping process shows that the greater the percentage of black people, the greater the number of precarious settlements. This scenario is mirrored by the Sub-prefecture of Parelheiros, comprising the districts of Marsilac and Parelheiros with a density of 57.1% self-reported black population in a context of conflicts between urban inequality and environmental protection. This sub-prefecture constitutes the largest in terms of land area in São Paulo city, with an area measuring 353.5 Km², or 23.68% of the city, and a local population numbering 150,000 inhabitants.

Situated in the Southern tip of the city and predominantly rural in nature, as consolidated by the last Strategic Master Plan for São Paulo of 2014 (Municipal Law 16.054/2014), the sub-prefecture of Parelheiros nestles between Guarapiranga and Billings reservoirs, 10 km away from the Serra do Mar mountain chain. The land contains important Areas of Environmental Protection (APA), such as the Capivari-Monos APA and Bororé-Colônia APA conservation zones, in addition to the indigenous Guarani villages of Krukutu and Barragem. The population density of its constituent districts is low, at 825 inhabitants/km² for Parelheiros and 41 inhabitants/km² for Marsilac, relative to high-density districts, e.g. those situated in the Sé sub-prefecture such as Bela Vista with 26,715 inhabitants/km². Given its status as an area of environmental protection, the region has a marked concentration of precarious sites, particularly in the district of Parelheiros, which has a medium-high level of social vulnerability according to the Índice Paulista de Vulnerabilidade Social (IPVS - São Paulo City Social Vulnerability Index) produced by the Fundação Seade (Seade Foundation) (São Paulo, 2010). These data illustrate, through the mix of demographic and socioeconomic conditions, the specific factors which lead to a deterioration in living conditions, such as low levels of average income, education, family life cycle, ability to join the job market, and access to goods and public services.

In terms of mobility, the district has a longer than average commuting time to the city of over 1 hour, with the most commonly used mode of travel being public transport, followed by private vehicle or on foot (São Paulo, 2016). According to Nunes (2019), in 2018, only six bus lines served the district and, of these, only three

traveled as far as the city center, involving a journey time of up to three hours. The substandard public services also have repercussions on gender-based statistics. The district ranks amongst the highest in cases of teenage pregnancy — 17% of live births were to mothers aged 19 years or younger (SEADE, 2014) —, has a shortage of hospitals and beds; and numbers among the forty worst for poor prenatal care (Rede Nossa São Paulo, 2018).

3 Voices and experiences of the Afro-Brazilian women and girls of Parelheiros: the essential data for urban policy-making

The voices and experiences of the Afro-Brazilian women and girls of Parelheiros find in the collective websites a means of gaining visibility, expanding support and collaboration networks, and attaining recognition and credibility. In the present study, the following groups in Parelheiros were found via their social media networks: the collectives *Escritureiros* and *Sementeiras de Direitos*; the *Abayomi Aba* collective, an initiative which brings together a number of other black collectives from the São Paulo's Southern region, promoting actions through collaborations and partnerships; and the *Rusha Montsho* collective, which brings together protagonists who were previously engaged in individual actions or belonged to other collectives and, thus, already have experience in racial and gender issues. Rather than examining the array of thematic initiatives dealt with by these collectives, the goal was to select a sample that allowed identification of recurrent issues from the discourses, narratives, and experiences of the Afro-Brazilian women and girls from Parelheiros. The analysis of these narratives is underpinned by the recognition of their relevance in informing urban policies.

The first two websites analyzed were the *Escritureiros*⁶ and *Sementeiras de Direitos*⁷ collectives, respectively. Both these sites are hosted on the digital platform of the Instituto Brasileiro de Estudos e Apoio Comunitário (IBEAC – Brazilian Institute of Community Studies and Support), an NGO engaged in promoting human rights through community projects that strengthen citizenship. Their actions are guided by the principles of sustainability and replicability (IBEAC, 2021). In this respect, the page of the *Escritureiros* collective is dedicated to outlining the activities of the group, set up in 2008, and comprising adolescents and youths dedicated to education in human rights and exchange of knowledge. The collective runs literary projects and activities promoting local culture. The collective is also responsible for the management, mediation, and coordination of the *Caminhos da Leitura* (Reading Paths) Community Library, promoting activities of reading mediation in schools, crèches, and literary events. The group's activities are disseminated via the Facebook page called “*Escritureiros: Escrita, Aventureiros de Parelheiros*”. The main aim is to encourage writing and reading on the issues of gender, race, and life in the underserved outlying districts as a theme underlying the activities run.

The *Sementeiras de Direitos* collective is a group centered on raising awareness and providing support for women who are victims of gender-based violence. The main focus is the narrative and deconstruction of gender stereotypes and prejudice, with effort dedicated to educating women for social entrepreneurship in Parelheiros (IBEAC, 2021). The group's actions are disseminated on the Facebook page of the same name, often in partnership with the *Escritureiros* collective, which also carries news of local interest on the themes of gender, race, and life in the poor outlying districts. Annually, the collective holds editions of the *Sementeiras de Direitos* Week, conducting conversation circles and workshops on the issues of women's rights and safety.

The collective *Abayomi Aba Pela Juventude Negra Viva*⁸ (*Abayomi Aba for the Alive Black Youth*) works towards strengthening political coordination between collectives aimed at culture and promoting racial equality in Parelheiros, including the *Escritureiros* collective. It has a Facebook page with the same name⁹ which carried news on the events run and of local interest on the issues related to gender, race, and life in the underserved outlying suburbs, similar to the sites outlined above. The group celebrates African ancestry: The term “*Abayomi Aba*” stands for “pleasant meeting arising on a Thursday” in the Nigerian language Yoruba. The collective also includes the *Carolina de Jesus* Library, in CEU Parelheiros, the *Militantes Negros* (Black Militants) collective, the *Centro de Defesa dos Direitos da Criança e do Adolescente* (CEDECA - Center for the Defense of Children's and Adolescents' Rights) of Interlagos, the *Juventude Politizada de Parelheiros* (Politicized Youth of Parelheiros) group and the *Rusha Montsho* Collective. The *Rusha Montsho* Collective¹⁰ is made up of members from other collectives and is centered on issues related to sexuality, gender, and celebrating Afro-Brazilian identity and culture. The group's projects range from awareness actions on race and sexuality in schools to sports events on the streets of Parelheiros. The collective has a Facebook¹¹ page with the same name, where it announces events organized and publishes local news. It also holds events at the *Casa de Cultura* (Cultural Center) of Parelheiros and at the *Caminhos da Leitura* (Community Library).

4 Analysis of the scope of narratives of black collectives on the Internet from an intersectional perspective

The scope of activities and experiences described in the narratives and discourses from the sites and online pages of the collectives selected as the focus of this study were grouped into three categories for analysis, as depicted in Chart 1 (below): Infrastructure for Activities; Issues Addressed and Activities Run. The issues addressed were subdivided into four groups: a) racial issues, further broken down into topics related to African descent, Afro-Brazilian culture, and racism; b) gender issues, encompassing violence against black

women, and health and beauty of black women; c) issues involving life in the underserved suburbs: Violence against dwellers of underserved outlying districts; equipment and infrastructure in the outlying districts; and d) other issues related to education and culture, including African Literature; African History and Culture; African arts; and Commemorative dates for race and gender. With regard to the activities run, some of the event types organized by the collective to disseminate their activities include Conversation circles; Theme-based Workshops; Cultural urban interventions; Urban art interventions; Cultural presentations; Mediation in schools and crèches; Public readings of texts.

NAME OF COLLECTIVE/PROJECT	ESCRITUREIROS: ESCRITA, AVENTUREIROS DE PARELHEIROS/WRITERS: ADVENTURERS OF WRITING OF PARELHEIROS	ABAYOMI ABA	RUSHA MONTSHO COLLECTIVE	SEMENTEIRAS DE DIREITOS/SOWERS OF RIGHTS
ONLINE SITES:	http://www.ibeac.org.br/escritureiros/	https://abayomiabajnv.wordpress.com/sobre/inicio/	https://rushamontsho.wordpress.com/?fbclid=IwAR1XimCW61XPwnPHUFvKHk07wKTBGAMuky3tyvFferyuY3kdurupBWDmVgGQ	http://www.ibeac.org.br/semteira-s-de-direitos/
	https://www.facebook.com/Escritureiros-Escrita-Aventureiros-de-Parelheiros-131705787023161/	https://www.facebook.com/abayomiabajnv/	https://www.facebook.com/rushamontsho/	https://www.facebook.com/semteirasedireitos/
YEAR OF FOUNDATION	2008	2012	2016	2015
VENUES FOR ACTIVITIES:				
Buildings				
Public facilities (Libraries and Public Schools etc.)				
Own premises				
Urban spaces				
ISSUES ADDRESSED:				
Racial issues				
African descent				
Afro-Brazilian culture				
Racism				
Gender Issues:				
Violence against black women				
Beauty of the black woman				
Health of Black Women				
Black woman's adornments				
Issues related to outlying districts				
Violence against people from outlying districts				
Other issues				
African Literature				
African Culture and History				
African art				
Commemorative dates for race and gender				
ACTIVITIES HELD:				
Events involving various activities				
Conversation Circles				
Theme-based Workshops				
Cultural urban interventions				
Artistic urban interventions				
Cultural Presentations				
Mediation in schools and crèches				
Public readings of texts				

Table 1: Use of urban spaces, buildings x activities run by black collectives in Parelheiros. Source: The authors, 2021.

Three main aspects stand out with regard to the interfaces between the presence and action of Afro-Brazilian women on the Internet and the territories they occupy in Parelheiros, namely: the use of urban spaces; use of public education and culture facilities; the issues addressed — disseminated via pages online —, promoting educational, cultural and art projects associated with the call for public services and infrastructure for education, health, and safety. It is evident that the public urban spaces and equipment supporting these activities are not always located in Parelheiros itself or in other outlying districts. There are also cultural facilities for use by the public, such as Cultural Institutions and Centers situated in different places throughout the city, mainly in its Southern region, such as the SESC and CEDEC, both in Interlagos, and the Santo Amaro Cultural Center.

A large proportion of content on the sites and online pages of the collectives analyzed cite the problems stemming from the “silencing of the underserved outlying suburbs”, the result of a lack of studies and government recognition of the specific figures on and forms of violence faced by black people to a disproportionate degree. The issues are also promoted online through donation and awareness campaigns in swap meets, and also via announcements of upcoming events, cultural, art, and educational projects, plus other news related to the agenda outlined. The power of writing, whether in the form of literary, poetic, artistic expression, or posts on social networks, featured consistently as an important tool to confirm a presence, call for attention, engagement and credibility. To exemplify, the following text can be found on the Facebook page of the Sementeiras de Direitos collective, promoting the *Vozes Daqui: de Parelheiros para o Mundo* project (Voices From Here: from Parelheiros to the World):

Vozes Daqui is about making communication a right! A right that goes beyond the limited narrative on access to information! This involves amplifying the voice through written expression, making the word reverberate within the territory and beyond it, via this means of communication. It is to vociferate the territorial abundance that is Parelheiros by the living writing of the empowered from here! (*Sementeiras de Direitos*, 2020, our translation).

The underlying issues involve the contexts of the underserved urban outskirts with a lack of adequate outdoor public spaces, public facilities for education, culture, and health. The results of the analysis of the online pages illustrate the pivotal role played by the events run within and outside Parelheiros, particularly in São Paulo city’s Southern region. Consequently, one of the topics most commonly addressed is the limited access to services and infrastructure by dwellers of the outlying districts, while residents of the central regions are better served. More specifically in the case of Parelheiros, the inadequate public transport services render travel to other regions of the city difficult, slow and expensive, representing a major barrier for the local populace to accessing more central areas.

5 Final considerations

The spatial distribution of data on São Paulo's Afro-Brazilian population presented in this article highlights the major socio-spatial inequality in the urban land area, illustrating that the standards of housing are worse in regions occupied predominantly by individuals who self-report as black. In Parelheiros, these poor conditions have the greatest repercussions on women and young girls: the district has the highest rates of teenage pregnancy and violence against women. In this context, registering the voices of Afro-Brazilian women and girls from Parelheiros on the Internet constitutes a valuable source of knowledge on how the conditions, both social and territorial, interact and impact their daily lives and destinies.

Some recurrent topics evident on the four online sites surveyed — the *Escritureiros*, *Sementeiras de Direitos*, *Abayomi Aba*, and *Rusha Montsho* — show the importance of the intersectional perspective established from black feminism: discussions on race, African descent, and Afro-Brazilian culture; the particularities of the health of black women and the various forms of violence they suffer; the beauty and embellishment of black women; and African culture, art, and history. The backdrop of these narratives is always territorial, and hence the stigma of residing in the underserved outskirts remains front and center, almost protagonist. Violence against residents of the underserved outlying districts and the poor state and the lack of urban infrastructure and facilities are recurrent topics in these narratives. Could this be a local problem signaling a broader malaise? Perhaps. As Santos, Araújo, and Baumgarten pondered, the narrative of the Global South always appears to be subject to “the extenuating position of reaction” (2016, p. 18): the outskirts relative to the center, the alternative as opposed to the traditional.

The hegemonic circuits of University publications, publishing houses, and traditional journals adopt structured discursive forms in conformance with the recent requirements for internationalizing science. These standards require studies to report results that can be packaged for a presentation in English (Santos, Araujo and Baumgarten, 2016). This universe, however, is often far removed from the reality of women from the underserved outlying districts, whose knowledge, memories, cultures, and narratives take place, and are narrated, in other dimensions. From the epistemological perspective of the Global South, it is possible to gain a clearer picture, through the accounts disseminated on Internet sites, regarding the individual and community values of these women. This is because they provide information on their territory via perspectives and narratives which are visible and perceived only from their personal experiences. The knowledge they produce derives from the circumstances which are inherent to them: barriers and opportunities which confer meaning to their lives and experiences, and which call for the creation of ways of transforming the territories in which they live.

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