

Post-mortem violence against travestis in Santa Maria, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil

Violência pós-morte contra travestis de Santa Maria, Rio Grande do Sul, Brasil

Violencia *post mortem* contra travestis de Santa María, Río Grande do Sul, Brasil

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Abstract

This article aims to describe and analyze the violence experienced by transvestites in their trajectories (often ending in their murder), focusing particularly on the violence that continues even after their death. The idea is to understand a type of violence that manifests in post-mortem gender normalization that attempts to erase the history and traces of crossdressing existence. The study is based on a qualitative methodology through ethnographic research. The article's ethnographic stage took place from September 2019 to February 2020, responding to the assassination of five transvestites. The results indicate the existence of a post-mortem normalization that acts against the final wishes of transvestites, denying them a decent death.

Violence; Transvestism; Ethnography

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Introduction

The repercussions of violence on health for the Brazilian and world populations have been studied by several authors ^{1,2,3,4}. Violence is defined as the possibility or potential threat of using physical force; abuse in the relationships between social groups; the oppression and abandonment of population segments; and the shock caused by physical and emotional torture ⁵. Violence is a phenomenon of complex causality that involves several dimensions of the human experience and that, although not a problem specific to the area of health, directly affects it ^{5,6}. Accompanying the movement of these authors, this article aims to discuss violence against travestis.

Homicide is an extreme version of several manifestations of violence that trans people and travestis suffer throughout their lives ^{7,8,9}. In addition to being subjected to violence, travestis are also socially vulnerable. Most of them are semi-illiterate or illiterate ^{10,11}, black ¹², and perform informal unskilled manual labor or work in prostitution. For these reasons, the Brazilian National Policy for Comprehensive LGBT Healthcare advocates expanding access to health for this population ¹³.

Some authors dedicated their studies to the various aspects of the life of travestis, among which the following stand out: gender self-understanding ^{14,15,16}; perception concerning the preventive model of sexually transmitted infections and AIDS ¹²; links with institutions ¹⁷; the relations between space and violence ¹⁸, and the conditions of access to health ¹⁹. A study by Souza et al. ⁹ revealed the exposure to situations of physical violence was a constant in the daily lives of travestis, who find, in health services and police stations, an extension of that same violence. Despite these contributions, gaps remain, including the scant literature on situations of violence that extend after their deaths ^{20,21}.

Thus, in addition to the violence experienced by travestis in their trajectories (which often culminate in their homicides), this article aims to describe and analyse the intricate processes through which violence continues even after death. The intention was to assiduously understand a type of violence that manifests itself, among other aspects, in the post-mortem normalization of gender, which seeks to erase the history and traces of travesti existence.

Methodology

This article is based on qualitative methodology, involving ethnographic research in which participant observation procedures, in-depth interviews and the monitoring of the interlocutors' daily lives were adopted, in addition to a complementary survey of quantitative data on gender violence and, specifically, on travesti murders. The choice of ethnographic research was due, in part, to its relevance and topicality in health research ^{22,23,24}. Ethnography is defined as a particular type of intellectual effort that seeks to approach the theories of the interlocutors, their own perceptions and interpretations of what they experience. To achieve this, it is necessary to immerse yourself in the daily life of the group being researched, focusing on the details and underlying information, aspiring to understand ways of life and describing social actions.

Contact with the field of study dates back to 2011, when ethnographic research was initiated with travestis from Santa Maria (located at the interior of the Rio Grande do Sul State) ^{9,25}. As Peirano ²⁶ affirmed, ethnography is not only a method, because, in addition to being a theory, it implies a way of being in the world ²⁷. It was with this in mind that we returned to the field between the months of September 2019 and February 2020, with the purpose of systematically monitoring a wave of violence that resulted in the murder of five travestis.

We collected data through daily observations and conducted interviews. We recorded the narratives and, shortly afterwards, transcribed them to provide critical reflection of the data collected. Twenty-six travestis participated in this stage of the research, for which the inclusion criterion was being aged 18 years old or over. Travestis who moved to other municipalities and/or states during data collection were excluded. After exhaustive reading of the transcripts, we grouped the data into categories, and these were analyzed thematically according to the study objectives. Anthropological analysis resulted from all stages of knowledge production ²⁸. We informed all interlocutors about the objectives of the study and they signed a free and informed consent form. The project was approved by the Ethics Research Committee of the Federal University of São Paulo (Unifesp; protocol n.

1937/11). We respected the voluntary decision of whether or not to participate in the research, as well as guaranteeing anonymity by using pseudonyms to refer to the participants.

Results and discussion

The writing of this article was instigated by the sequence of five travesti murders that occurred over a short period in the municipality of Santa Maria. A medium-sized city, with approximately 280,000 inhabitants, Santa Maria presents fairly unique sociodemographic data: more than 30,000 university students, a large number of inhabitants with university and doctoral degrees, in addition to a strong military presence; it is the second largest municipality in the country regarding the number of military personnel based there, surpassed only by Rio de Janeiro.

The murdered travestis had been circulating in the same places where we had previously conducted research and some had been our interlocutors since 2011^{9,25}. Nilda (a 27-year-old brown woman), Ísis (a 42-year-old black woman), Inês (a 39-year-old white woman), Ana (a 39-year-old white woman), and Marilene (a 46-year-old brown woman) each carried out different professional activities and none of them had completed high school. Nilda and Inês worked as sex workers on an important avenue in the city. Ísis worked as a cleaner and, despite not performing sex work as her main occupation, she sporadically provided sexual services. Ana and Marilene were *mães de santo* [in Afro Brazilian religions, the *mãe de santo* (mother-of-a-saint), or the *pai de santo* (father-of-a-saint), is the central authority figure].

To analyze the context of these murders, we divided the results into four parts: (1) *Trajectories of Violence*; (2) *The Murders in Santa Maria*; (3) *Violence Against Travestis Close to the Victims*; and (4) *Violence After Death*.

Trajectories of violence

The trajectories of travestis are permeated by violence that begins in their own homes, while they are young, with the violence of family members who do not accept their transition or bodily transformations⁹. Violence continues in school, since they do not conform to the dichotomous precepts of gender¹⁷, and persists in health services, in the formal labor market, and so on²⁹.

The destabilization caused by their gender performance, associated with negative stereotypes, makes travestis preferential victims of violence in different contexts¹⁴. There are issues like a person's birth name or legal name and their "*nome social*" (lit., social name; chosen name) that have a negative impact, limiting access to services, schools, formal work. Being identified as a travesti leads to prejudiced manifestations and discrimination³⁰. For many, prostitution is all that remains as a source of work and income³¹. Studies continue to show that people who do not fit heteronormative patterns die earlier³².

Such trajectories of violence are also reflected in the existing statistics. Consolidated data from the Brazilian Information System for Notifiable Diseases (SINAN) show that between 2015 and 2017 alone, there were 24,564 notifications of interpersonal and self-harm caused against the LGBTI+ population, with the largest number against transsexuals or travestis (46.6%). The increase in recorded episodes of violence against travestis was 78% between 2015 and 2017. Between 2008 and 2017, 1,052 murders of transgender people were reported in Brazil³³, while in 2017 alone, there were 169 murders of travestis³³. However, these data are underreported³⁴, according to Trans Network Brazil [Rede Trans Brasil], there were 150 murders cases in 2018 and 105 in 2019³⁵.

Given this context, we are faced with the murders of five travestis in late 2019 and early 2020. We began following some of these stories of suffering and uncovered new forms of violence. We will analyze this configuration in the following sections; first, however, we will describe the murders in Santa Maria.

The murders in Santa Maria

As we mentioned, five travestis were murdered. Nilda and Inês were killed at an intersection of important avenues in Santa Maria. Ísis was murdered in the neighborhood where she lived, in the West Zone; Ana, on the doorstep of her house, in a small, neighboring town. And Marilene was killed in her home, in the North Zone.

On September 7, 2019, Nilda refused to have sex in a public place. The client did not want to pay and tried to rape her; when she refused, she was fatally shot. Ísis' murder took place on the same day as Nilda's. The perpetration of the crime was attributed to that fact that she asked for the return of her helmet, on loan to two boys. She suffered 13 stab wounds. According to the police report, the motivation for the crime was the perpetrators were under the influence of drugs; according to the same report, they told her: *"we're gonna take a walk with you that you'll never forget"* and, while carrying out the ambush, they committed the murder.

Three months later, on December 12, Inês was killed by a lethal stabbing. This occurred while travestis negotiated with clients about the amounts they would be charged for the trick. Inês and her colleagues did not accept the amount stipulated by the client and refused the trick. When they turned their backs on the car, they heard the customer shout: *"I won't kill those queers because I don't want to"*. Inês turned back to the client and was stabbed.

The deaths of Nilda, Inês and Ísis had already made 2019 tense for travestis in the region. The apprehension increased on January 1, 2020, when they learned that Ana was shot to death in front of her house, in a small neighboring town. The local police arrested two suspects for the crime. The crime was motivated by debt. Ana maintained a terreiro and was well-known and respected in her neighborhood.

On January 21, Marilene was found dead inside her house. Marilene was a *mãe de santo*. At first, it was not possible to identify marks of violence on the victim's body. However, the following day, the report by the Rio Grande do Sul State General Institute of Forensics (IGP) confirmed that the cause of death was traumatic brain injury. A suspect for the crime was arrested the next day.

In five months, there were five murders of travestis. In reaction to these crimes, the city's LGBTI+ activists (led by travestis) had organized mobilizations since the first two murders had occurred. At the time, Inês stated: *"Just because we work at night, doesn't mean we can be forced to have sex with people we don't want to. So, it's time for us to say no and to fight for justice"*. Inês was a recognized leader in the city, running accommodation that welcomed travestis from the region. She was honored as a godmother at the city's LGBTI+ alternative parade, held on December 1st, whose rallying cry was *"Good to see you're alive!"*.

Inês' death, just 11 days after the alternative parade, exposes the character of hate crimes in this sequence of murders. This news led to repercussions in the city since it was published by local and state newspapers and broadcast by television stations.

Nilda, Inês, Ísis, Ana, and Marilene had experienced violence during their lives, as did others with whom they lived. Cases of stabbings, beatings and even shootings are frequently narrated in the environments they moved through. Travestis are commonly seen as disposable, as highlighted by Paula, a 24-year-old white girl who did not finish primary school and worked as a sex worker with travestis Inês and Carol: *"I've seen many girls being thrown into the woods by customers. After they finish, they leave them anywhere"*. Thus, violence is related to the perception of travestis as disposable beings. In relation to situations of violence, Inês, who had participated in part of this research before being murdered, had said *"we never know if we'll come home alive when we go out to work"*.

The brutal deaths of five travestis are an extreme expression of the violence they are subjected to throughout their lives. The sequence of murders, with extensive publicity in the press, generated commotion in the city and prompted the organization of protests. Few paid attention to the fact that the violence they are subjected to extends after their deaths, as we analyze in the next topic.

Violence against travestis close to the victims

The mobilization and media visibility of the brutal murders did not mean that there was a shared understanding that the presentation of the crimes occurred due to the travestis' gender identification. Indeed, official statements by the local police on the deaths denied their qualification as "hate crimes" and attributed futile motives to these crimes. This understanding fuelled the indifference and "naturalization" of these deaths. Thus, the first post-mortem violence was the failure to identify the gendered nature of the murders.

Violence after death also occurs due to the travestis' pain and indignation for not being supported by institutions that should care for, assist, and resolve the dilemmas caused by the murders of their neighbours. After death, violence is particularly directed at those who relate to the victim. The youngster Kati (a mixed-race, 26-year-old sex worker, who did not complete high school), who was accompanying Nilda when she was murdered, said she was very nervous because she had witnessed the murder scene: *"The guy was walking down the street and following behind Nilda. We heard the shot. We ran to help her. He ran away. That's when I saw loads of blood running down the asphalt. I tried to fix her clothes so her panties wouldn't show. A few people passed by on the street at the time, but no one stopped to help. We called the police, but they took a while to arrive. We stood there, shocked and incapable of doing a thing. We called the others [travestis] to help us"*.

When some travestis arrived at the murder site, other concerns emerged. Gloria (a white, 26-year-old sex worker who completed primary school), explained the reason: *"We were anxious about the arrival of the police, as we know it's difficult for them believe us. They'd think that we'd tried to rob the guy and a load of other stuff. It was a relief when we learned there was a camera that recorded everything on the street, as it would prove that she hadn't done anything"*.

Travestis, on occasions when they need to go to the police, face attempts to discredit their narratives. There is even the possibility of turning them into the aggressors. For this reason, it is common not to denounce the offenses and crimes to which they are subjected, since even though they are the victims, they are often transformed into assailants in police reports⁹.

Regarding this aspect, Paula reinforced: *"Most travestis will not complain when they are beaten, because, beside the humiliation, they don't even believe us. Just look at the case of Nilda and Inês which happened right now. The guy is already saying it was self-defense. If there were no cameras on the street that recorded the scene, who would believe us?"*

Failure to recognize their stories ensures travestis avoid reporting situations of violence that then become a naturalized part of everyday life. Even when they suffer violence, travestis have to prove that they are not the aggressors. Thus, the institutions that should support them, end up corroborating or amplifying the violence, insofar as they prevent travestis from registering complaints or make it difficult for them.

That day, Tina (a 24-year-old black woman, who did not finish secondary school and also earned a living as a sex worker), clarified yet another concern: *"I was shaking with fear inside, they asked for her documents and we insisted on her female name the whole time, because she was super feminine and we didn't want them to call her by her previous name"*.

In Brazil, the "social name" is the name by which travestis and transsexuals prefer to be identified, as opposed to their registered birth names, guaranteeing the fundamental right to respect regarding how the person wants to be recognised³¹. Apprehensive at the possibility of the police using a male name, the travestis followed the route to the morgue to accompany the body of their friend. During the interrogation, they insisted that the police respect her female name.

Furthermore, they dedicated themselves to caring for the body: they got a new dress, which belonged to one of them, and beautiful shoes, also donated. They delicately constructed this alternative so that Nilda could remain feminine until her final moment, as she would certainly have liked. During the proceedings, Paula stressed that *"another concern of ours was how to warn the family, as we knew almost nothing about them. We knew that she spoke sporadically to her mother and a brother"*.

Nilda was from another state and they had no idea how to contact family members. At the time of the incident, Inês herself, now also murdered, recalled that she kept records on the girls who lived in the boarding house, collecting some personal information: *"I ran into the boarding house looking for old records and found her mother's phone number. All this in the midst of nervousness and the back and forth*

between the police station and the morgue. I passed the news on anyway, over the phone. I spoke to the brother who said they would come and get the body. We started a collection to save money to help the family to transport her, since it was far away”.

In a way, they were relieved, because the family would take some time to arrange transport. When they arrived, they could no longer open the coffin. Due to the difficulty of transport and the time required, Nilda could be at her funeral adorned in one of the dresses she most liked.

The first concern when the death of a travestis occurs is that the family recognizes them as feminine, wearing women’s clothing and accessories. At the time of Nilda’s murder, Inês pointed out: *“Burying a travestis in women’s clothing is part of the struggle. To ensure that Nilda was buried as a woman, we ran to the morgue, carrying a beautiful dress, as yet unused, and a new pair of shoes. At least she would be buried as she would have liked to live forever, beautiful and female”.*

The murder of Inês, after what happened with Nilda and Ísis, impacted not only her acquaintances, but the entire city. For days, this matter circulated in conversation circles. Among travestis, this agenda was discussed full time. They all commented on how they would like their burial to be.

Rita, a 24-year-old brown woman, who did not finish primary school and who earned a living as a sex worker, stated: *“All the glamour that she had asked for her death is essential. She wanted a lot of flowers, sparkles and, above all, a banner on top of the coffin, so that they would remember all her struggles throughout her life. A fight for respect and a less violent life. May her death teach us something, but, above all, teach this society that we also exist”.*

Narratives like these, which point to violence against travestis close to the victims, led us to consider the violence after death against the deceased herself, as we analyze below.

Violence after death

The violence against deceased travestis themselves can be listed as follows: not respecting their social name (in documents, such as death certificates, death reports by the police or health service and even news in the media); dressing the corpse in men’s clothing; cutting their hair to give it a masculine look; burying them (including the headstone) with the male name. When the victim has some material property (e.g. a house, like Inês), there is often a struggle by the family, who were frequently prior aggressors, to obtain the deceased’s property (property violence). Ultimately, death does reconcile a series of violences, which continue for the surviving friends, and are directed towards the dead person.

In the case of Inês’ murder, it was necessary to demand the use of her female name at different times: first, at the coroner service; the indignity persisted in the chapel where the vigil was held. In the chapel, they had to demand that her name be modified on the glossy sign that announced where “his” body would receive its last homage from friends and the few family members. The fact that she was recognised as a local leader prevented a discussion about how her body would be prepared. Promptly, a group of travestis appeared with a makeup box, an embroidered dress, and a crown. Rosa (a 25-year-old, white sex worker, who did not complete primary school), who lived in Inês’ boarding house, said: *“I always helped Inês to get ready. I know how she liked her hair, makeup, shoes, dress, everything. Let me do this and she’ll look beautiful, as always. Our queen will shine even in death. The crown on the head, like she wore at parties”.*

The registration of her “social name” on the police report, at the morgue and on the death certificate, was achieved through the persistence of the travestis who followed the cases diligently. Here, it is important to highlight the forms of agency of travestis that fight for the right to dignity following the death of those who were murdered, as well as the forms of dealing with (and weaving) the death, which appear in narratives as always imminent – a task that we propose to develop, for the sake of space, in a later text. Indeed, since the onset of the 1990s, Brazilian travestis have formed activist groups and demanded recognition and rights.

On September 23, due to the repercussion of the cases in the region, the police held a press conference to divulge details of the investigation, though only concerning the first two murders. When reporting what might have motivated the crimes, the police insisted on using the masculine pronoun, even when using the female names of the victims. The official position was to refuse to consider any link between the cases. The regional commissioner, present on the occasion, affirmed in his public

statement ³⁶: “*The only relationship that exists is that they happened on the same day. This should calm people’s thoughts, because there will be no other similar crimes, since it had been thought that someone could be committing the crimes based on discrimination, on homophobia*”.

In addition to the non-recognition of the female gender – which also appeared in the trajectories of the morgue, the notary public and even in the burial – the position of the police was clear in denying any recognition of motives of hate crimes in relation to the murders. This denial made it difficult to link them to their gendered character, as well as eluding responsibility by local government to provide answers to the problem. Here, it is interesting to see how institutions actuate through a normalisation device against recognising the gender of trans people and travestis ³⁷.

However, even prior to this, when the crime was recorded, at the time the act of violence was characterized, in almost every case, the police reports wrote down the male name, adding later that the case dealt with a “travesti” or “transsexual”. In the case of Ana, for example, after writing down her full name, as recorded on her identity card, the phrase “*transsexual, known as Ana*” was added. We questioned a member of the local police on the matter, he responded that “*it’s standard procedure, we have to follow the rules*”.

Another point worthy of note: when the travestis were killed, the cases were referred to the Homicide and Personal Protection Department, which specializes in investigating murders. Had the travestis been properly recognized as women, their cases could have been directed to a specialized police station, which would provide the conditions for better reception and an investigation more committed to observing the structural gender dimensions materialized in the murders.

Two female police officers even took a stance on the matter. The police chief of the Specialized Women’s Police Station, acknowledged that travestis frequently search out the section where she works. However, she highlighted the fact, as a failure of the public security institution, that when some protective measure is required, the police station’s crime reporting system fails to execute any action because the record is made using the victim’s masculine birth name ³⁷. A few weeks after Inês’ murder, the city’s Police Station for Older Adult Protection changed its name to the Police Station for Older Adult Protection and Combating Intolerance. At the beginning of 2020, the police chief who had worked for 18 years in the Women’s Police Station took charge of this station. The institution has since become responsible for, among other matters, occurrences of intolerance towards the LGBTI+ population. The new police chief took the position that Inês’ murder was a hate crime and argued that the deaths of travestis should be counted as femicides ³⁸. Thus, in addition to renaming the police station as the Police Station for Older Adult Protection and Combating Intolerance, it resulted in the vindication of counting the murders of travestis as femicides.

Data provided by the Specialized Women’s Police Station for 2019 showed that, in the same year as the first three murders of travestis, femicides doubled in the city. Even so, the deaths of the travestis were not (and are not) counted as femicides, which exposes the growing dimension of gender violence in the city and simultaneously reveals another facet of violence following the death of travestis. Their deaths are made invisible, forgotten by the public authorities, since they are not counted.

Berenice Bento ³⁹ defended the use of the category trans-femicide when addressing what she characterized as a decimation of the trans population in Brazil, reinforcing that the motive for violence against travestis and transsexuals stems from gender. Speaking of trans-femicide, she stressed that the deaths of trans women represent a hyperbolic expression of the subordinate place of women in our society. In other words, violence against women is expressed in more radically in relation to women who dared to break the social norms that reaffirm the biological determinism of identities.

Among the recurrent characteristics of trans-femicide, Bento ³⁹ highlighted the death marked by hyperbolic violence (as in the case of Ísis, stabbed 13 times) and the murder in the streets of travestis (as in the cases of Nilda and Inês), in addition to disrespecting the gender options after death. The absence of a precise language to understand what happened in Santa Maria is part of the device that urges silence concerning their deaths and restores the gender order. However, there are other dimensions to discuss.

After facing difficulties regarding respect for their female name at the morgue, the police station and the notary public, the time came to identify, with great sadness, the male name on Ísis and Nilda’s headstones. Despite all the effort to bury them with women’s clothing on their bodies, the male names persist on the tombstones. When inquiring about the documents, Inês explained the difficulties of

the process: *“Myself, since I managed to get the document with my name change, I haven’t even managed to change everything yet, because there are so many papers. I got depressed during the process. Now that I’m better, I’ll get on it. Due to the bureaucracy, it’s better to leave it like this, with the male name, because she had a little money saved and if the name is changed on the document, the family may not even be able to pick up what she accumulated in life. If you mess with the death certificate, it could harm something else”*.

Inês’ concern was valid. Shortly after the death of her friend Nilda, she got all her documents in order, as if predicting what would happen to her days later. Following these measures, Inês got her female name engraved on the headstone. After death, everything seems to work to reinstate the male who had been smeared by the travestis, as Rita pointed out: *“We have seen other cases like this. At the time of death, they take advantage that the person can no longer complain and dress them like a man and identify them as a man. (...) They put the male name on the stone. I’ve already warned everyone not to let them do this to me”*. Thus, the male name that had ceased to exist, when engraved on the headstone, acts as the reiteration of social norms that act against the wishes of the dead person.

“Nobody dominates dead people”, Butler said ⁴⁰ (p. 39). However, as the queer philosopher also stated that murder radically eliminates the possibility of equality and, in the case at hand, the crimes tend to go unpunished. The series of violences marks the collective desire to dominate the dead, normalizing their gender and hierarchizing the mode of dying, according to a scale of recognition that allocates the extreme negative for those who die on the street in the context of prostitution or similar forms of social marginalization. After the murder, the institutions of the police, health, and even the victim’s family, tend to trigger a kind of post-mortem normalization device that begins with the non-recognition of the hate crime, the report of what happened, the transfer and preparation from the body to the funeral, and even the burial. The name engraved on the headstone is, probably, the mark of this device.

Thus, the gender device that marked the lives of travestis continues to act post-mortem, activating and articulating institutions that interpellate survivors who surround the victim and herself. Despite having lived, with difficulty and resistance, in the feminine, this device restores the social imperative: they will die a man! Thus, the bodies of travestis are reassigned within the norms: from the erasure of the character of hate crime of the murder, in the recording of the legal name in the police report and on the death certificate, to the presentation of the corpse based on controlling the appearance which involves cutting their hair and dressing the body in men’s clothes, so that they are held in vigil and buried, reinstating the gender assigned at birth and, therefore, erasing what they constructed and how they lived in their short lives.

Faced with this post-mortem normalization device, travestis in Santa Maria seek to raise awareness at several instances, while challenging non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the police and society in general, so that violences against travestis in the region, including post-mortem violence, are made visible. They seek to act in each case, neutralizing or minimizing the action of a device that denies them a dignified death.

Final notes

In this article, we sought to describe how travestis experience various forms of violence throughout their lives, and after their deaths. Between September 2019 and February 2020, we followed the murder of five travestis and their social consequences among survivors, their families, and the local community. In our attempts to understand this scenario, we began to perceive that the violence extended after the death of the travestis. Thus, we recorded the social reactions to the deaths, the State procedures in the reporting and investigating the murders, as well as in the obstacles to a dignified burial. The name on the headstone seems to be the crudest metaphor for this process.

Thus, there are multiple manifestations of violence to which travestis are subjected, and which continue even after their deaths. We call this social phenomenon “post-mortem violence”. We perceived a post-mortem normalization device, triggering and articulating institutions that interpellate survivors who surround the victim and the dead. Thus, acting in the context of this device, the public authorities resisted recognizing that it was a wave of violence against travestis that required specialised care. However, the struggles of travestis and other LGBTI+ people ended up inciting change in

the region: the transformation of the Police Station for Older Adult Protection into the Police Station for Older Adult Protection and Combating Intolerance. A small, but substantial achievement.

Perhaps this article can contribute, first, by highlighting the context of violence in which travestis live, but, above all, by describing and analysing a device that acts against the final wishes of travestis. Such wishes indicate that, after their deaths, the institutions involved in reporting, investigating, and burying the victims recognize their previous existence with dignity. Dignity that embraces respect for the memory of their lives as they wanted to live, in the gender with which they identified and to have the right to die as such.

Contributors

M. H. T. Souza contributed to the study conception and reviewed the article. R. Miskolci, M. C. Signorelli, F. F. Balieiro, and P. P. G. Pereira contributed to the study conception, writing, and final review of the article.

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Resumo

Este artigo busca descrever e analisar as violências vivenciadas pelas travestis em suas trajetórias (que, muitas vezes, culminaram em seus homicídios), direcionando o olhar para as violências que continuam mesmo após a morte. A intenção é compreender um tipo de violência que se manifesta na normalização de gênero pós-morte que busca apagar a história e os rastros da existência travesti. Trata-se de estudo baseado em metodologia qualitativa, por meio de pesquisa etnográfica. A etapa etnográfica deste artigo ocorreu entre os meses de setembro de 2019 e fevereiro de 2020, sendo decorrente do assassinato de cinco travestis. Os resultados indicaram a existência de um dispositivo de normalização pós-morte que atua contra o desejo final das travestis, negando-lhes uma morte digna.

Violência; Travestilidade; Etnografia

Resumen

Este artículo busca describir y analizar las violencias vividas por las travestis en sus trayectorias (que, muchas veces, culminaron en sus homicidios), dirigiendo la mirada hacia la violencia que se continúa perpetrando incluso tras la muerte. La intención es comprender un tipo de violencia que se manifiesta en la normalización de género post mortem, que busca borrar la historia y los rastros de la existencia travesti. Se trata de un estudio basado en metodología cualitativa, mediante investigación etnográfica. La etapa etnográfica de este artículo se produjo entre los meses de setiembre de 2019 y febrero de 2020, tras el asesinato de cinco travestis. Los resultados indicaron la existencia de un dispositivo de normalización post mortem que actúa contra el deseo final de las travestis, negándoles una muerte digna.

Violencia; Travestismo; Etnografía

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