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STYLIZATION OF THE SELF AND RESISTANCE IN THE LGBTQ+ CONTEXT

Estilização de si e resistência no contexto LGBTQ+

Estilización de sí y resistencia en el contexto LGBTQ+

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ABSTRACT

This theoretical essay aims to reflect on the process of stylization of the self among LGBTQ+ bodies as a form of resistance. Inspired by two key post-modern authors, namely Nietzsche and Foucault, and based on the category of stylization of the self, we analyze the normalization of bodies and also processes of resistance. The discussions are directed at thinking about LGBTQ+ bodies from a non-identity, queer resistance perspective in terms of both will to power and care of the self, in a critical way, not with a view to radical social transformation, but to particular advances, especially at the individual and group/subculture levels, which can play a significant role in redirecting social relations. Queer pleasure thus emerges as an element that arranges the resistance category in the sphere of stylization of the self by establishing micro-transformations in the workplace as a way of tackling discipline and normalization.

Keywords: LGBTQ+ bodies, stylization of the self, care of the self, resistance, queer pleasure.

RESUMO

O objetivo deste ensaio teórico é o de refletir acerca do processo da estilização de si entre corpos LGBTQ+ como modalidade de resistência. Pretende-se analisar a normatização de corpos e os processos de resistência a partir da categoria de estilização de si, inspirando-se em dois autores-chave do pós-moderno: Nietzsche e Foucault. As discussões voltam-se para se pensarem corpos LGBTQ+ em uma perspectiva não identitária e de resistência queer em termos de vontade de potência e do cuidado de si, sob uma lógica crítica, não pensando em um processo radical de transformação social, mas de avanços pontuais, especialmente em nível individual e de grupo/subculturas, que podem ser significativos para o redirecionamento das relações sociais. O prazer queer, portanto, revela-se como ordenador, da categoria da resistência em âmbito da estetização de si ao estabelecer microtransformações no ambiente de trabalho, como um caminho que faça frente à disciplina e à normalização.

Palavras-chave: corpos LGBTQ+, estilização de si, cuidado de si, resistência, prazer queer.

RESUMEN

El objetivo de este ensayo es reflexionar sobre el proceso de autoestilización entre cuerpos LGBTQ+ como modo de resistencia. Este trabajo pretende analizar la normalización de los cuerpos y los procesos de resistencia desde la categoría de autoestilización, inspirándose en dos autores clave de la posmodernidad: Nietzsche y Foucault. Las discusiones se centran en pensar los cuerpos LGBTQ+ en una perspectiva no identitaria y de resistencia queer en términos de voluntad de poder y autocuidado, bajo una lógica crítica, no pensando en un proceso radical de transformación social, sino en avances específicos, especialmente a nivel individual y grupal/subculturas, lo que puede ser significativo para reorientar las relaciones sociales. El placer queer, por lo tanto, se revela como organizador de la categoría de la resistencia en el ámbito de la autoestetización al establecer microtransformaciones en la esfera profesional, como un camino que haga frente a la disciplina y a la normalización.

Palabras clave: cuerpos LGBTQ+, autoestilización, autocuidado, resistencia, placer queer.

INTRODUCTION

The objective of this theoretical essay is to reflect on the process of stylization of the self among LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transvestite, transsexual, queer and other) bodies as a form of resistance. We intend to analyze the normalization of bodies and also resistance processes based on the category of stylization of the self, inspired by two key post-modern authors: Nietzsche and Foucault. In terms of the former, it is essential to examine his analyses of bodies understood in their multiplicity and will to power, an essential concept to Nietzsche; and in terms of Foucault, we examine works related to the care of the self, one of his last reflections, along with discussions on sexuality as a device, and the effects it has on bodies.

Resistance is understood in this study within a context of power, in power relations that make it possible to find spaces to question norms that restrict discourse and of repositioning the “subject” within the game it is situated in, in perpetual spirals of power and pleasure (Foucault, 2001a), including in the organizational environment. This study considers a critical logic, not with a view to radical social transformation, but to particular advances, especially at the individual and group/subculture level, which can be significant for redirecting social relationships, even if these changes are not explicit.

Stylization of the self among LGBTQ+ bodies is to constitute oneself as an artwork and to establish new configurations, a new aesthetic in the relationship with the other, it is to turn to bodies which resist assimilation and remain true to their dissident desires and pleasures, not specifically extinguishing norms, but rather rearranging them. Norms which are reconfigured, as discussed by Perreau (2018), within the sphere of studies of queer theory (Rumens, 2016; Souza, 2017; Souza & Carrieri, 2010).

Within this context, we speak of trans, non-binary, intersexual, and effeminate bodies. These are bodies which challenge the standards of masculinity and femininity, thus breaking with heterosexual norms and destabilizing social values (Carrieri, Souza, & Aguiar, 2014). Bodies that are constantly being constructed (Butler, 2019b). Bodies that subvert and exist outside the sexual-social binary order. It is about retaking the body amid the explosion of discourse which, in the context of the body-mind duality of Cartesian thought, keeps them subordinate (Thanem, 2015). Thus, it is assumed that the individual can influence power games, not specifically as a self, a pretended subject committed to the search for self-knowledge, but as a body that is itself the great reason, as characterized by Nietzsche (2011).

Stylization of the self can be perceived as a form of resistance, also within the context of the political redirecting of the sexuality device, understood as a discourse, and also of the relationship with the Other, of the multiplicity of alternatives arising from the questioning of discipline and normalization. Due to the primary and unintentional questioning of their affection, and due to their own desire, the LGBTQ+ can become a singular object in this stylistic process, considering such individuals in becoming, as Foucault points out, always in a process of construction, of organization of desire, of the multiple forces struggling within oneself.

Importantly, this study is significant in terms of the intermediary groups between the individual and society, such as organizations. Individual and collective experiences and changes

which affect how the individual interacts within the organizational context, in terms of their relationships which maintain structures and control (Souza, 2014; Souza, Costa, & Pereira, 2015). Resistance as a category, and as part of Foucault's perspective on power relations, is significant to relativize and minimize the effects of domination and disciplinarian action within the organizational context. Resistances that exist in power itself and are assumed by it, but which also lead to change (Foucault, 1987, 2001a, 2019).

It should be noted that even though there have been few LGBTQ+ articles within the sphere of organizational studies, including regarding organizational diversity (Ng & Rumens, 2017), whether national or international, a number of researchers have made an effort to produce critical-theoretical knowledge in the field over the past 15 years (Carrieri et al., 2014; Irigaray & Freitas, 2011; Irigaray, Saraiva, & Carrieri, 2010; Pompeu & Souza, 2019; Saraiva & Irigaray, 2009; Siqueira, Saraiva, Carrieri, Lima, & Andrade, 2009; Siqueira & Zauli-Fellows, 2006), thus making queerer a field that is rather conservative (Rumens, 2016; Souza, 2017; Souza & Carrieri, 2010) under the hegemony of functional studies.

An example of this is the study of the body in organizational theories, from a theoretical-critical perspective, like the one proposed in this article, inasmuch as it examines the body as stylization of the self and resistance in the LGBTQ+ context with regard to abjection within organizations, or more precisely “zones that are unlivable” and “uninhabitable” by those who are not recognized as subjects (Butler, 2019a, p. 18). The stylization of LGBTQ+ bodies itself rethinks power relations, the domination by the heterosexual matrix, of combatting heteronormativity, thus creating conditions for organizations to become queerer as understood by Rumens (2016). It is in this sense that this article represents an advance in terms of previously established debates, such as those referred to by Thanem (2015) in their use of lenses of post-structuralism, feminist social philosophy, Marxism, phenomenology, among others. In addition, it is fundamental to work with studies that reflect on resistance, a theme not often addressed in LGBTQ+ studies, especially in the field of Administration. In this respect, we should note Castro and Siqueira's (2020) study on LGBT resistance within the context of soccer.

With these considerations, this theoretical essay consists of four sections in addition to this introduction. The first is a Nietzschean analysis of the body, which is significant for thinking in terms of LGBTQ+ bodies from a non-identity, queer resistance perspective. The second section looks into Foucault's discussion of the care of the self. Then we establish discussions, with queer pleasure as an arranging element, of the resistance category within the sphere of aestheticization of the self. Finally, we present our final considerations and suggestions for future research.

THE NIETZSCHEAN DEMYSTIFICATION OF THE BODY

Nietzsche is one of the main philosophical references in post-modern discussions within the context of post-structuralism. In the field of Organizational Studies, this philosopher is especially remembered with regard to his considerations about the subject, especially when analyzing themes such as individual autonomy, a Kantian postulate that Nietzsche leaves aside. A question

that is posed, for example, in the theoretical-critical context, is “Who emancipates oneself?”, if we consider that the I is a fiction and that this “dilution of the substantiality of the subject identified with the unity of consciousness” (Giacoina, 1998, p.113) suffers critical sanctions. Nietzsche (2005) says, “What gives me the right to speak of I as a cause, and finally I as a cause of thought?” (p. 21). And, if there is no I as substance that is even unified, if it is a fiction, then who resists, who emancipates oneself? Such questions are part of queer studies (Rumens, 2016; Souza, 2017; Souza & Carrieri, 2010), which are based on a constructionist approach and on gender performance, or in other words, “saying that gender is performative implies that it is culturally written and that it is naturalized in most subjects through psychological internalization and repetition” (Alegria, 2018, p. 14).

The configuration of the subject in Nietzsche and the abstract quality of its nature are in consonance with queer theory, especially in the relation with the body and of who is behind the act, behind the action, a subject who arises from the body. This is an anti-essentialist analysis that encompasses Nietzsche’s and Butler’s thought (2019b), about a subject who is not pre-discursive and who is closely related to the notion of body.

We start from the Nietzschean assumption that “the organization of the body in terms of drive is governed by values and preferences” (Salanskis, 2016, p. 160), in a close relationship with culture. These are the values and social norms that are problematized in a process of reappropriation of bodies, specifically LGBTQ+ bodies, resisting a given cultural construction and, we cannot omit it, of resumption of the will to power, one of Nietzsche’s basic concepts. The stylization of bodies is carried out in this context of resistance, a central theme in this article’s theoretical discussion, even against an “anti-sensualist metaphysic” (Nietzsche, 1998, p. 24), of understanding of the lived experience and of the stimulus to action, a reinvigoration of the individual in its relationship with social norms and values.

The perspective of the body in Nietzschean thought cannot be understood out of the context of one of its main philosophical contributions, the notion of will to power, this affection which is an affirmation of life, of its constant expansion, and of the endless struggle of forces, a network of dynamic impulses, without characterizing unity, but rather multiplicity, as expounded by Benoit (2011). Based on Nietzschean thought, Giacoina (1998) says that “the world reflected in the mirror of will to power is the world of multiplicities, of plural forces in the constant play of oppositions and alliances” (p. 117). The body, in all its plurality, not uniformity, is fundamental to sustain will to power.

Nietzsche (2011) says that “the body is me entirely, and nothing more; and the soul is just a word for a something in the body [...] a great reason, a [...] multiplicity [...]” (p. 34). A great reason which, Marton (2009) points out, is distinct from our consciousness, one of our instincts, which is the small reason. Barrenechea (2017) says that “reason constitutes a tyrant, a hypertrophied tyrant [...] which subjects others [...] and devalues everything that is not rational” (p. 65). Within the context of this great reason, affections, instincts and will become preponderant, even commanding the individual, with reason being left in the background and having to reposition itself. His critique of a metaphysics of the subject pervades his methodological hypothesis of will to power, one of his main concepts along with the superman, nihilism, and the eternal return of the same (Benoit, 2011).

Nietzsche criticizes the body-mind duality and the substantiality of the body – or rather “bodies” –, which is not a thing or entity. “The German philosopher strongly contests any concept that supports the supposed substantiality of man” (Barrenechea, 2017, p. 16). The critique is carried out in the domain of substantiality and of duality. He breaks with the mind-body metaphysical duality of Descartes and Plato, as well as the omnipotence of mind over body. To Nietzsche (2011), even though this is one of the impulses of man, it is not the central one, the one at the foundation; it is subjugated by the impulse of expansion of life, of connection with the earth, with life, with will to power. The body is resumed as preponderant in relation to the spirit, the soul, consciousness. The body is retaken from those who despised it and moved away from life; this opens space for the constitution of the superman. The body is thus not subordinate to the transcendent, a perspective which is left aside by the Nietzschean superman, affirming his affiliation to the earth, where even suffering, he remains, accepting life as it is. According to Nietzsche (2011), “it was the sick and the moribund who despised the body and the earth and invented these celestial things [...]” (p. 33). It is wanting nothingness, different from not wanting anything, “wanting to live in an ideal future in a hypothetical perfect world. Wanting nothingness is wanting what is beyond, an illusion, the utopian life” (Barrenechea, 2017, p. 35). On the other hand, not wanting anything is related to being open to life, the unknown, the new, while wanting nothingness is moving oneself away from life. The latter is inherent in the ascetic ideal contested by Nietzsche (1998).

Subjectivity defined by the body leads to this decentralization of the coherent and unitary perspective of the pretended subject, without individuals, which is significant for our study, especially in terms of the relationship of the body with this care of the self which Foucault (2001b) speaks of, and the possibility of discussing the stylization of the self. It begins to be “understood based on the ‘social structure of impulses and affections’, or as a ‘hierarchy of many souls’ conceived according to the guiding thread set by the body” (Giacoia, 1998, p. 129). This denies the subject through thought, the Cartesian principle, which reduces itself to the representation of deep impulses of oneself, of the body (Giacoia, 1998; Benoit, 2011).

In terms of this duality discussed in this study, “with modernity, there came the implosion of the human being – who was divided into reason and passions, intellect and senses, conscience and instincts” (Marton, 2009, p. 58). And always with domination of the former over the latter. Nietzsche (2011, p. 35) reinterprets this perspective, highlighting the domain of oneself which is in the body, it is the body, predominating over the fiction of a unified and stable individual, and being entirely based on our affections. Barrenechea (2017), in turn, says that “man denominates himself I because he believes that the succession of his psychological states demonstrates the existence of a subjective substrate: a substance which possesses continuity over time” (p. 48). And his critique of the subject continues, considering it “arrogant, the I believes that it knows everything that happens in the body” (Marton, 2009, p. 63).

However, we see, through Zarathustra, the body taking over space from the subject. This is what Barrenechea (2017) stresses: “the body is a thread that makes it possible to descend into the depths of man to detect unconscious impulses which are the basis of all thought” (p. 24). According to him, a relation of forces in continuous clash. In fact, Nietzsche takes the perspective

that behind thought there is affect, passions, which are deeper than thought – including will to power, which is externalized in terms of impulses by affection. In this way, he maintains his position against dualism – rationality and passion; it is not that the latter should be fanatically accepted, but neither can it be eliminated, in a contempt for the body, but rather be understood, interpreted and controlled (Wotling, 2003).

In this change of positions of thought and body, desire is also problematized. Nietzsche (2005) says that, in the context of desire, there is thought behind this wish, the affection of command. And because oneself is a multiplicity of affections, “a man who wants – commands something inside himself that obeys, or that he believes that it obeys” (p. 23). This is the context of the plurality of affections, of both domination and resistance.

It is in this sense that Nietzsche (2005) says that free will “is the expression of the multiform state of pleasure of one who desires, which orders and at the same time identifies himself as the executor of order – who, as such, enjoys the triumph over resistance, but thinks to himself that it was his will that overcame it” (p. 24). This Nietzschean aphorism is relevant because it reminds us that the organization of desires by the individual, in its search to become what it is (Butler, 2019b), which emerges in some specific action, such as showing the body in a way that is different from what is culturally and socially established, is not the fruit of free will, but rather of the advent of affection, which in that specific moment overflows and predominates.

Resistance is identified in two senses: the first in terms of affections which are dominated within the context of oneself, and the second in terms of institutionally established social constructions, including the contempt for the body. Resistance to repression, not that the latter is preponderant, according to Foucault’s critical analysis of the repressive hypothesis. There we have the care of the self (Foucault, 2001b), creating beings performatively, though without the presence of the agent, just the action is valued: and as developed by Nietzsche (1998), “[...] there is no being behind doing, behind acting, behind becoming; the ‘agent’ is a fiction added to the action. Action is everything” (p. 36).

STYLIZATION AND FOUCAULT’S CARE OF THE SELF

The body has in Foucault (1985, 1987, 2001a, 2001b) a unique political dimension, and it is analyzed within the context of the economy of power, in that this economy captures bodies in their materiality, forces, energies, sensations and pleasures. The body is not “a thing or substance, but the continuous creation of events or occurrences” (Souza et al., 2015, p. 735). It can be a tortured body, which needs to be exposed publicly, to demonstrate force and inhibit crimes which harm the sovereign, using a logic of truth. It only leaves the stage as the main character in the 18th and 19th centuries, when the punishment of crimes no longer needs to use the body, but its representation, in dealing with issues of dissident sexuality. The dimensions of the soul and passion enter this universe.

It is within this movement that bodies come to be understood as discursively produced and as the fruits of social construction. For Souza et al. (2015), the body is organized and constitutes

itself through organizing, it does not exist *a priori* or pre-discursively, but it is rather a truth that is socially constructed and propagated. Thus, there are no free bodies, because no performance is free, even LGBTQ+ bodies, which are constantly questioned within the social and organizational context. There are power relations that operate on the arrangement and constitution of bodies, subjectivities and senses, well beyond organizational boundaries, which encompasses the entire social body. Within the context of organizations, the potential of organizing tends to involve and attach bodies to cultural constructions pervaded by norms and values that seek to homogenize ways of being and acting in the organizational environment.

On the other hand, the body can be constructed to resist preestablished standards in the cultural sphere. These forms of resistance work together with the reappropriation of our bodies, in constructing them metaphorically like sculptures, based on the organization of desire and of the expectations of pleasure. These experiences of resistance can creatively inspire similar acts by other bodies in organizations. An stylization of bodies, which produce themselves whether or not being influenced in a more significant manner by the care of the self (Foucault, 2001b). This breaks with the mind-body duality in practice, leading to resignification, even in the organizational context. An example of this in organizations is a break with the functionality of heteronormativity, which according to Priola, Lasio, Serri, and Simone (2018), moderates processes of inclusion, recreates hierarchies and binary patterns among LGBTQ+ individuals by including and normalizing some LGBTQ+ workers, while others remain excluded for exhibiting diversity that does not conform with the norms.

Resistance opens possibilities for the subversion and discontinuity of norms. The body, produced by discourse and signified in discourse, is undone in the face of social prisons, of linguistic and normative coercion (Butler, 2019b; Foucault, 2001a). The intent of subversion is not to deny the materiality of bodies. That “which constitutes the fixity of the body, its contours and its movements,” and makes it material (Butler, 2019b), but realizing how discursive practices cause the body to become a definer of gender and sexuality. Bodies that transgress norms express alternatives of gender identity. This is part of the process of disinteriorization of a discourse which historically and socially has been assumed to be true. It is the reiteration of the body as a means of expressing identity and resistance (Thanem, 2015), in other words, as a part of the stylization process.

And one of the discussions that help us understand the stylization process concerns the analyses conducted by Foucault (1985, 2001b) regarding the care of the self in consonance with the use of pleasure, one of his last discussions. This problematization arises during the unstable Hellenistic socio-political scenario, in which turning to oneself could represent the way to deal with all of these transformations and constitute oneself as a singularity.

Halperin (2015), a commentator of Foucault’s work regarding the LGBTQ+ context, says that this art of living “was an ethical practice which consisted in freely imposing on one’s own life a distinctive individual style, transforming oneself, according to one’s own conception of beauty or value” (p. 91), far from a prohibiting law, including regarding the economy of pleasure. It should be emphasized, based on the Nietzschean perspective, that this aesthetic construction is not a self-reflection of the spirit, but rather a repositioning of the body and its affections and

impulses, without depreciating consciousness, but repositioning it as well in relation to the body, the great reason, and its drive complexes (Giacoia, 1998).

Analyzing the stylization of the self involves understanding, in genealogical terms, the analysis of the body and soul as objects which determine instances of power, which define, systematize, and produce forms deemed appropriate for maintaining the serenity of the soul and the health of the body, and mainly for personal autonomy. And, as Halperin reminds us (2015), this stylization is not something psychological or mystic, but rather a strategy to have greater mastery over oneself, a place of radical alterity. The focus is on pleasure, *jouissance*, and not on desire, serenity and mastery over oneself. Reappropriation and satisfaction of the self. 'Yes' to life is closely related with this this satisfaction with oneself (Nietzsche, 2012).

Foucault (1985) says that this art of taking care of the self is far from the negative perspective on sexual pleasure, and from the establishment of laws and norms which govern desire, but it is this reality that will be implemented during the centuries that follow. It should be stressed, however, that even in a dispersed way, we can identify codes of sexual conduct that might be used as basis regarding everyday social relationships. These are, therefore, elements of a morals of pleasures, much more of self-regulation than of the prohibition or normalization, which Foucault refers to (1985).

Halperin (2015) analyzes this period of Foucault's writings, in which the focus is on this relation with oneself, the background being the discussion of sexuality, especially gay sexuality. Within this context, homosexuality would be a "strategically situated marginal position from which it is possible to discern and develop new forms of relations with oneself and with others" (Halperin, 2015, p. 89). And this attitude could establish a subculture oriented to this stylization, not to moral normalizing systems of the contemporary world, but rather to the delineation of original ways of life. Bodies that resist and meet in a multiplicity of relations.

In fact, the body is open to alterity, the "I envisaged in a new way as a corporal self [...] capable of emerging as a collective individual, this open or structurally relational subject itself is thus only just leaving a metaphysically closed unity in which metaphysics, as an atomistic fury, had imprisoned him" (Benoit, 2011, p. 460). Based on the metaphysical analysis of the Nietzschean subject, Benoit (2011) says that "becoming is characterized as multiple drive games, which may, in the absence of something better, make one think of various types of will to power" (p. 454). In this sense, the homosexual person would be in a constant process of reorganization of drives and desires as analyzed by Butler (2019b), who also considers Nietzsche's philosophy to be one of her foundations.

It is in this sense that we speak, in terms of the queer view in social relations, of representative elements of queer theory, for the re-elaboration of social norms and the repositioning of the subject in relation to institutions (Perreau, 2018). This is not a shift towards disorder or disorganization, but towards resistance, based on openness to desire, challenging the organizational status that involves organized ways of life (Thanem, 2004), in other words, challenging organizing processes (Souza et al., 2015).

All this is so at least in theoretical terms; in everyday life, as regards the LGBTQ+ culture, there is the reproduction of mechanisms of subjection, prejudice and discrimination, such as

the presence of black or Muslim gay men in places mostly frequented by white gay men (Perreau, 2018). The same thing occurs with trans individuals or effeminate gay men or masculine lesbians (Carrieri et al., 2014; Irigaray & Freitas, 2011). Thus, the opportunity is missed to modify relations with the other, which is essential to the aestheticization process, which LGBTQ+ individuals would be able to build in a more compelling way. This also applies to homo-liberalism, understood here as the adoption of managerial logic and work relations that are exclusionary and can be thought of in the light of critical-theoretical elements, such as resistance, hegemony, power, subjection and emancipation (Siqueira, Medeiros, Silva, & Castro, 2020). These are practices that could be inspired by LGBTQ+ bodies.

It is therefore necessary to mention that LGBTQ+ bodies do not necessarily represent a new configuration of social norms and values; they often reinforce existing and eroded ones, and embody truculence and a lack of empathy, thus denying the differences that constitute them. We also should mention that resistance does not only occur in the individual, but above all in the collective arena, in a redirecting of social relations, in stimulating a taste for alterity and in valuing democracy. Non-classified bodies understood democratically, a multiplicity of bodies that is analogous to the multiple nature of the Nietzschean body (Nietzsche, 2011). Finally, it is also possible to return strongly to Preciado's concept (2011) of queer multitudes and all their richness of bodies.

Already beginning the next topic's more specific discussion of LGBTQ+ resistance and bodies, we have to mention the tensions inherent in terms of the contexts of the groups encompassed in this acronym as well as the identity and post-identity debate. First of all, we need to clarify that the agglomeration of various social groups under a single acronym does not make explicit the homogenization of these segments which are so diverse, even though there is a thread that joins them with regard to moral violence (Siqueira et al., 2009), which makes political action viable in organizations as well as within the social context. An example of this refers to the tensions between gay men and lesbian women in LGBTQ+ activist groups, which can lead to ruptures between them based on a lack of understanding of the specificities of each group. The reality of a trans person, for example, is so singular, that they often have difficulty in sharing experiences with gay individuals (Colling, 2015). Bisexual individuals are wary of gay prejudices that they are promiscuous or people who still have not accepted that they are gay (Köllen, 2013). The queers, with a post-identity perspective, have a sharp eye for social norms and regulations, while frequently omitting themselves as to the history of achievements in the gay identity movement, such as the fight against AIDS, staged by Act Up during the 1980s and 1990s (Perreau, 2018). There are even deeper tensions which go back to the very discussions regarding essentialism and social constructionism from various perspectives, and to discussions of intersectionality and political categorization and representation (Butler, 2019a, 2019b).

LGBTQ+ BODIES, RESISTANCE AND TRANSFORMATION OF THE SELF

This article assumes that resistance to the normalization or discipline of bodies makes it possible, based on its transformational potential, to expand the establishment of new relations with the

other beyond the domain of sexuality and gender expression. This resistance also resonates within the political sphere at various institutional levels. Of course, resistance is part of power and is situated in power relations that do not in fact exist without it, as Foucault (2004) puts it: “if there is no resistance, there are no power relations, because everything would simply be a matter of obedience” (p. 268). Thus, power itself requires resistance, as Souza (2014) reminds us, based on Foucault’s perspective, or in other words, a certain degree of freedom, as long as it is controlled and watched, is necessary for the development of this power, when the establishment of strategies or the intention of hegemony is not possible, as the author points out.

Halperin (2015) enumerates forms of resistance, in his readings of Foucault, such as: creative appropriation and resignification, appropriation, theatricalization, exposition, and demystification. The first refers to the reappropriation of language, such as the reappropriation of the term ‘queer’, as the origin of a way of thinking and living. The second has to do with parodies, for example. The third is a form of denaturalization, of the development of knowledge based on discourse deconstruction. This last element could also be viewed as the homosexual person’s repositioning from being an object to being a subject. The queer sex makes it possible to establish a new relation with the body, desexualizing it, letting pleasure not be centralized in the sexual organ, but rather in the entire body.

Foucault (2004) says: “I believe that we have a form of creation, a deposit of creativity, whose main characteristic is what I call the desexualization of pleasure” (p. 264). These practices allow resistance against sexual disciplines, as mentioned by Halperin (2015). To that end, it is necessary to understand *a priori* the very nature of this device. According to Foucault (2015), “there is a psychologism of sexuality, a biologism of sexuality and, therefore, the possible capture of sexuality by doctors, psychologists, by instances of normalization” (p. 5).

Within this context, Foucault (2004) says that “sex is not a fatality: it is a possibility of acceding to a creative life” (p. 260). Resistance is carried out not just at the individual, but also at the collective level, these are points that can configure a revolution (Foucault, 2001a, 2001b). And the LGBTQ+, in their continual process of construction, an incessant becoming, could constitute the privileged locus of these changes, especially in a society which has sex as its main discourse, producing bodies and sexualities. When sex is politicized, more space is open for questioning normalization and discipline, including in terms of sexuality.

Strange, queer bodies can be configured at these points of change, of rearrangement of social relations, also within the organizational context (Rumens, 2016; Souza, 2017; Souza & Carrieri, 2010). According to Foucault (1981, 2004), we create freedom, the concept of a new way of life, based on relational perspectives. We can use sexuality as non-fixity, as the fluidity of gender, to arrive at a multiplicity of relations. And further, reflecting in terms of the difficulty of the social acceptance of homosexuality which transcends the act itself and affects the way an individual establishes his or her life, Foucault (1981) says that “institutional codes cannot validate these relations of multiple intensities, of varied colors, of imperceptible movements, of forms which modify themselves [...]” (p. 39). It is, first of all, the difficulty dealing with the uncertainty, with the fragility of the relations and changes that are naturally established as a result.

It should be noted, however, that when Foucault problematized the categories of resistance, he did not want to fall into the same normative domain, which was the object of systematic criticism. As a result of this, as Halperin mentions (2015), he “refuses to codify resistance practices, and refuses even more to help with their institutionalization” (p. 135). Thus, we should beware not to enter, when we think of resistance practices, the same logic of the oppressor’s domination. The aestheticization of the self is intertwined with our understanding of resistance, both in individual and in collective terms. A cultivation of the self “which transcends the self” (Halperin, 2015, p. 126). We decenter and open up to the other, to the taste for alterity.

It is thus that resistance, understood from the perspective of a transformation of the self, problematizes social norms and repositions us in relation to them, thus rearranging them. It is a process characterized by creativity, joy, risk, the new and the exciting. This is the context of possible emancipation, not considered to an absolute or utopian extent, but making use of civilizing gaps. This is a rearrangement of power relations which cannot be restricted to the LGBTQ+ culture, and which inspires new ways of existence (Halperin, 2015, p. 123), beyond the expansion of relational ways. According to the author, “the future that Foucault imagined for us, is not exclusively or categorically gay. However, it is definitely queer.” Non-continuous, non-natural, non-essential, non-elementary, interrupting any possibility of coherence which binds bodies, genders, sexes and sexuality. After all, there are no limits in the identification process – in the way of being, acting and representing –, in relation to the organizing process which is not limited to just the boundaries of a company,” but rather directs minds and bodies in organized behavior (Souza et al., 2015, p. 733).

Thus, resistance ceases to emphasize the egalitarian political movement and directs itself toward the transformation of the self, having pleasure and decentralization of identity as a guide to be followed (Butler, 2019a, 2019b). We should stress, however, that this configuration coexists with the appropriation of the individual situated in the LGBTQ+ culture by the normalization of conducts and the homogenization of experiences, which reinforce ways of life, and do not just reinforce the production of laws which regulate pleasure, but also assume ideological perspectives that maintain the status quo of social relations within a context of economic exploitation, and in conformity regarding the power that produces the regulation of sexual pleasure. Resistance within the context of the body extrapolates the limits of sexuality and of gender expressions; it has transformational potential in other instances and in the relationship between the individual and institutions. It is abandoning oneself, launching oneself into uncertainty and the unknown, and in a certain way, it is being consistent with the multiplicity that is characteristic of bodies. A path opens up to creativity and new forms of affection. Resistance, in this manner, arises from the body and from all the relations of force that cross it. This is from a Nietzschean perspective. These are affections and feelings in the logic of pleasure, which supports the stylization process of LGBTQ+ individuals, breaking with the very concept of sexuality that is touted in its normalizing dimension (Foucault, 2015).

The stylization of the self represents the everyday work of social and psychic ruptures. It is the care of the self which Foucault (1985, 2001a) retrieves from the ancient Greeks, and which

comes to have significance within the modern context, without the proper transpositions or reductions. An exercise of freedom, as mentioned by Halperin (2015) in his analyses of Foucault, the aesthetic of existence. Forces which can be understood in the light of Nietzsche's will to power, the affirmation of life, of multiplicity, of contradictions experienced in bodies, which construct themselves creatively, as Foucault reminds us (2004).

It is seeking new ways of life, having pleasure as an ally, even to achieve new pleasures. And identity, even homosexual identity, cannot represent resistance, of the very resistance inherent in this stylization. In this post-identity context, spaces open up for the rearrangement of desire, of new organizations of impulses and affections, which, far from stabilizing us, make us dynamic and expand our desire to live and resist.

In organizations, the desiring body is capable of going beyond mechanisms of order, control, discipline and normality within a context of supposed organizational stability. It becomes powerful in the face of homogenization, proposing radical diversity in the workplace. Instead of considering the organization as powerful, resistance (not in the direction of disorder or disorganization) in the organizational field can encourage people to change their habits within and outside of the work environment (Thanem, 2004), to challenge discourse, knowledge and power orders (Foucault, 2001a), and to not express the aestheticization of the self within an original standard, of "normal" and "common" bodies.

As Butler says (2019b), "styles have a history, and their histories condition and limit their possibilities" (p. 240). The body is marked by history, and history ruins the body (Foucault, 2019). A resignification and reconstruction of history perhaps would be important for a new reading of the body, of organizational culture and practices, like the study presented by Flores-Pereira (2010), in which the body emerges as a symbol of sociocultural relations within a given organization.

A field of dispute opens up by putting into action, movement and functioning by means of a power network. After all, the body, according to Preciado (2014), is a place of resistance, it is not passive. It has a political condition, and speaks, is active, and can escape all the meanings which are imposed on it within the normative matrix preached by the hetero-centric system. Resistance, therefore, is in the field of counter-productivity, or in other words, the production of new forms of knowledge-pleasure alternative to modern sexuality and the plurality of gender expressions. It reinforces the power of deviations, derivations and discursive changes. And though organizations might provide fewer and fewer opportunities for doing so, Thanem (2015) affirms that we should make an effort to subvert these powers by exercising our corporal capacities together with others.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This work reflects on the stylization of the self and resistance within an LGBTQ+ context in the face of alienation by organizational cultures, which are not significantly open to diversity and differences. We have sought to expand knowledge of LGBTQ+ bodies within the context of organizing processes as they appropriate for themselves the potential of resistance.

Within the organizational universe, sexuality is avoided, and diverse gender expressions are censured. Discussing sexual diversity causes fear; it is something that is viewed as private. Bodies can be seen as masculine or feminine, as representations of virility or femininity, of boldness or sweetness, but not as sexualized bodies, not for eroticism, not for gender expressions which extend beyond binary norms. It is in this way that bodies are submitted to power, but they are not completely dominated, and there exists the possibility of change. Considering that resistance is present within the context of the very power which it helps construct, there is always the possibility of forces which resist and establish micro-transformations in the workplace, as imperceptible as they may be, but which may be filled with meaning.

This is the domain that LGBTQ+ bodies present in this scenario, transiting without fear in the domains of sexuality and gender expressions. Political bodies can move and break with socio-organizational expectations, in order to climb a path of resistance within the sphere of the aestheticization of the self, in the face of discipline and normalization, in search of establishing micro-transformations within the workplace. It is something that strikes fear in organizations, but at the same time attracts them.

Bodies desirous of queer pleasure. Committed to performatively create subjectivities in the search for knowledge of the self, stylization of the self, as a mode of resistance and of relation with the other. It is taking care of the self as an art of saying yes to (re)existence, in the face of all that seeks to impede possible emancipation. It is the right over oneself, which can inspire new forms of existence which are unstable even in their instability. A path opens up to a more creative life, with affection and alterity. Uncertainties grow in the act of taking care of the self as a reason to (re)exist.

To deepen this study, we suggest theoretical-empirical research encompassing the stylization of the self and the resistance of LGBTQ+ bodies within the context of organizing processes in various institutions of power, such as the school, church, and public, private and governmental organizations, in order to understand how the potential of queer resistance (joyful, detached, humorous), not just at the individual but also at the collective level, can rearrange processes, structures, norms and cultures based on a new aesthetic in our relations with others. It is recognizing the taste for alterity and the search for queer pleasure as arrangement ideas for dealing with all the possibilities of transformation. Thus, it is opportune not to restrict the research focus to LGBTQ+ bodies and culture, considering that this study encourages expanding the research perspective over a multiplicity of relational modalities within organizational practices, exercised not necessarily within the limits of companies, but through other groups, which are structured in a differentiated manner and deal with diverse human relations, especially with the different. It is also important to open spaces for studies with intersectional perspectives.

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AUTHOR'S CONTRIBUTION

Marcus Vinicius Soares Siqueira and Bárbara Novaes Medeiros worked on the conceptualization and theoretical approach of this study. The theoretical review was conducted by Marcus Vinicius Soares Siqueira. Marcus Vinicius Soares Siqueira and Bárbara Novaes participated in the writing and final revision of the manuscript.