

Gay liberation in Brazil: speeches and confrontations of the *Lampião da Esquina* newspaper during the political opening (1978-1981)

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Abstract

This work aims to analyze the contents related to the gay liberation in Brazil published in the *Lampião da Esquina* newspaper, which circulated from 1978 to 1981. Through three thematic axes, we sought to understand the relationship established with other communication vehicles; the denunciations against homosexuals reported in the periodicals, and the political coverage carried out by *Lampião*. The axes were defined based on the relevance that they presented in the systematized reading, intentionally directed to the theme of gay liberation. The excerpts were selected according to pertinence and correlation to the axes, composing a sample for convenience. As a main result, it was possible to identify the position of newspaper in comparison of political groups, independently of their party affiliation, besides the articulating role in the Brazilian homosexual movement.

Keywords: *Lampião da Esquina*. Gay Press. Journalism. Communication. Political Opening.

As a consequence of various movements taking place in the world, the 1960s were transformative when we looked at the issues of customs and freedoms. The Counterculture, born in the United States and at its height during this period, had as its flags the fight for nuclear disarmament, the end of the technocratic life model, the withdrawal of the American armies of Vietnam, strategic Asian territory for which the US and the USSR had interest at the time, and also the freedom of the most varied expressions, among them, the sexual one.

Young rebels who acclaimed peace, delivered flowers with the appeal of “Make love and not war”, used drugs and listened to music representing the rebellious spirit, Rock and Roll, through their unconventional manifestations, made the society of arms and of the bombs to hear them. Roszak (1972), the creator of the term “Counterculture”, tells that the expressions of these young people have transformed the time that they were inserted.

This context was essential for the free expression of homosexuality, previously seen and treated as a disease. Influenced and favored by the feminist movement, the free interaction among gays in the United States, especially in the city of San Francisco, brought reflexes to the homosexual population: in 1961, in San Francisco, drag queen

José Sarria became the first homosexual to apply in an election to an official post; in 1963, the Society for Individual Rights, an entity also from the state of San Francisco, founded a community center to assist homosexuals; 1966 was the year in which the National Planning Conference of Homophile Organizations launched a campaign of protest against the exclusion of gay soldiers from the US Army. This campaign featured several homosexual organizations that joined and founded NACHO, the North American Conference of Homophile Organizations; Gay Pride was set up in 1970, organized by Morris Kight and Troy Perry, held in Hollywood. It was the first gay parade, one of its flags being the replacement of the term “homosexual”, linked to medical issues, by “gay”; in 1977, was elected the first openly gay politician of the country, Harvey Milk¹ that later would be tragically assassinated.

Like a butterfly effect, one of these manifestations arrived in Brazil. In 1978, Winston Leyland, editor of the American magazine *Gay Sunshine*, came to visit the country and encouraged a group of intellectuals to publish a newspaper for Brazilian gays (MACRAE, 1990). When Winston Leyland proposes to create the newspaper, Brazil, although still living in a dictatorial regime, went through a period of less repression in relation to the years of implementation of the AI-5 (Institutional Act 5), which imposed censorship in several publications and sought to control freedom of expression in the country. The 1970s and 1980s were made up of very peculiar moments; this passage is called “political openness” because of the weakening of the Military Regime, which was installed in 1964. At that time, the so-called “Alternative Press” was in full development. The most diverse newspaper possible fought the government of the military, both by the political and cultural bias. Usually run by journalists, the “nanicos”² went into circulation without the distribution structure that the big commercial newspapers held and profit was not the main purpose of these publications, they were more willing to divulge a cause. Kucinski (1991) recounts that the creation and evolution of the alternative press were due to the mutual desires of expression of social groups and journalists, who wanted to write in places other than the big newspapers and universities.

Lampião da Esquina was one of those vehicles, born in April of 1978, had a total of 37 numbers, in addition to the number zero of restricted circulation and three other extra editions. Initially, the eleven founding members were the ones of the Editorial Board of the publication, including Darcy Penteadó, Adão Costa, Aguinaldo Silva, Antônio Chrysostomo, Clóvis Marques, Francisco Bittencourt, Gasparino Damata, Jean Claude Bernardet, João Antônio Mascarenhas, João Silvério Trevisan and Peter Fry (FERREIRA, 2010).

Lampião da Esquina emerged as a homosexual newspaper that had the goal of removing gays from the ghetto and showing society and homosexuals that disengagement

1 Harvey Milk, after contact with the counterculture movement, assumed homosexuality, participated in three elections and, in 1977, was elected as a supervisor of the city of Castro, in San Francisco.

2 The “nanicos” newspapers were thus known for their size, usually in tabloid format; and on account of its circulation, which was smaller than that of the great newspapers.

from the traditional image of the gay as being effeminate and rejecting their own sexuality was possible. (SAINDO..., 1978). For this reason, when we talk about *Lampião da Esquina*, we also need to talk about Gay Liberation too. The main content of the newspaper was aimed at homosexual men, who obtained information about the “gay world” and the struggle for their rights.³

Gay liberation refers to this particular moment in world history, which occurred between the 1960s and 1980s, in which homosexuals came together to fight for their rights as individuals and as human beings. It was during this period that several movements focused on homosexual rights appeared in several parts of the globe, forming a front for the rights of its members. The expression came to be known by the movement made by American homosexuals after the event of Stonewall Inn, in 1969:

The traditional birthday of Gay Liberation is June 1969, when gay people fought back against a police raid at the Stonewall Inn. The police invaded the bar, forcing people out onto the street. But, instead of running away, the gay people, led by transvestites, locked the police inside the bar, set the place afire, and then threw coins and bottles when the police worked their way out of the place. Participants in the incident, along with others in the gay community, got together to plan an on-going political group for gay people. The gay militants chose the name Gay Liberation Front, in homage to the Vietnamese guerrillas. The group has never been a “front”, in the real sense of the term (a collection of groups), but the name stuck and was picked up in dozens of other cities (JAY; YOUNG, 1992, p. 25).

With this, we can affirm that gay liberation is the manifestation of homosexuals themselves in favor of their rights, in this work, we define it as any journalistic content that can be considered in favor of obtaining these rights, favorable to the social group. Questions about conservative actions against the emancipation of gay as a human being and worthy of rights; individual or joint attitudes aimed at the full enjoyment of life; among other cultural, social or political manifestations related to the free expression of sexuality.

The social movements of this period and *Lampião da Esquina* addressed the other expressions of gender in their claims. Lesbians, transsexuals, transvestites, bisexuals, and several other groups were part of the social discourse and the pages of *Lampião* at the time. In this work, however, we will only address the image of the gay male homosexual, due to the greater profusion of contents produced and disseminated in the vehicle, leaving for our future studies the relationship of the newspaper with other social groups.

³ For more information on the processes of production, circulation and distribution of the *Lampião da Esquina* newspaper, see article “Imprensa homossexual, surge o *Lampião da Esquina*” Available at: <http://www.revistas.usp.br/alterjor/article/viewFile/88195/91073>. Accessed on: 10 apr. 2018.

For our analysis, through excerpts extracted from the 37 editions of *Lampião* and its number zero - we did not include in our sample the extra editions -, we tried to understand three thematic axes: the relation established with the other communication vehicles; the denunciations against homosexuals reported in the periodical; and, finally, the political coverage carried out by *Lampião*. The axes were defined based on the relevance that they presented in the systematized reading and intentionally directed to the theme of gay liberation and the selected excerpts according to pertinence and correlation to the axes, composing a sample for convenience. There were used reports dedicated, exclusively, to the prioritized axes. In total, 24 newspaper articles published in the newspaper between 1978 and 1981 were analyzed. All editions consulted are part of the scanned collection and made available by the Documentation Center Prof. Dr. Luiz Mott, an initiative of “Grupo Dignidade” in partnership with the Paranaense Association of the Parade of Diversity (APPAD).

Lampião and his relationship with the other vehicles of communication

The critique of how the media portrayed homosexuality was widely discussed in the pages of *Lampião da Esquina*. The so-called mainstream media and alternative press magazines had their stories analyzed, criticized, and reported when they were considered unsuitable for the promotion of homosexual rights, or even when they propagated a standardized, stereotyped image of gays.

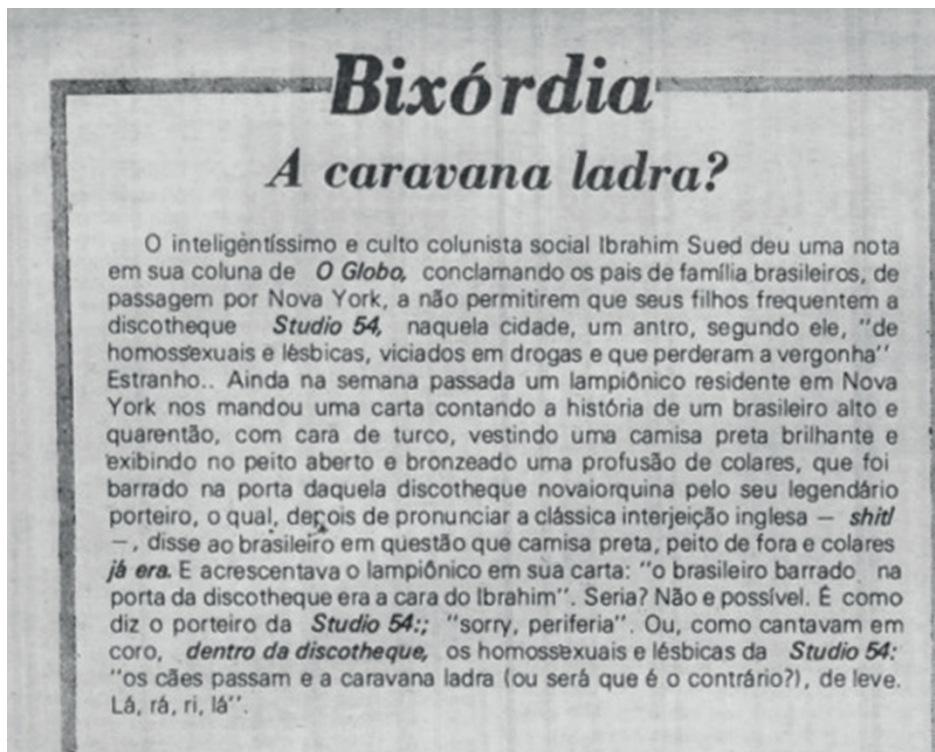
In the sixth issue of *Lampião*, we can see one of these manifestations, harsh criticism of the vehicle of communication and the brown press in general. The tabloid newspaper “*Notícias Populares*” had published series of reports, in which it accused homosexuals of diverse crimes and affirmed that the police were being negligent with respect to the criminals. According to Glauco Matoso, who was responsible for the report, the coverage of homosexual-related crimes served only to carry out a campaign to foment prejudice against gays:

In a recent series of reports on crimes committed by homosexuals, the newspaper “*Notícias Populares*” of São Paulo suggests that the police were being negligent about the persecution of criminals. That is, in denouncing what would be an “omission of the authorities”, the newspaper intends to charge an attitude (or at least a position), if not the authorities themselves, the people in general. As if to say: since the police do not take action ... This so-called “monitoring role” is only one aspect (perhaps the most serious) that constitutes a true anti-homosexual “campaign” by the brown press. Even if such a “campaign” is not a conscious moralistic crusade and is no more than a factory of salable headlines, it is real insofar as it produces its reflections on a certain range of public opinion (MATOSO, 1978, p. 7 – Our translation).

This position, of opposing the news that did not interest the homosexual movement, is repeated several times in the *Lampião*. The “nanicos” were also criticized, among them the newspaper *O Pasquim*, famous for its humor and opposition during the period of the Military Regime of 1964.

Critics and jokes would become more common with the publication of the social column *Bixórdia*, which had a more informal language, approaching more of the language spoken in the homosexual ghetto. In addition to telling “gossip” from the gay world, the debauchery against the press, journalists and high society people who questioned the actions of homosexuals was frequent. The commentary directed to social columnist Ibrahim Sued, of the newspaper *O Globo* (Figure 1), serves as an example:

Figure 1 – Excerpt from the *Bixórdia* column



Source: Centro de documentação Prof. Dr. Luiz Mott

Despite these frictions with journalists from the small and large press, *Lampião da Esquina* maintained a stable relationship with vehicles that were favorable to homosexual rights. The alternative American press was one of the sources of information of the journalists of *Lampião*, causing, sometimes, the translation and publication of the articles in the vehicle.

The publication of these translations was a way of offering international news to Brazilian readers who would hardly have access through traditional vehicles or would not read them in the original publications due to lack of language skills or difficulty of access.

This is what happened, for example, with an article by Pier Paolo Pasolini, an Italian filmmaker and film critic who, despite being written in 1974, had not yet been translated into Portuguese until 1978. In this article, the author talks about theoretical discussions opened by French scientists and argues against some points of the work (PASOLINI, 1978).

Until the circulation of *Lampião da Esquina*, only a few small newspapers, of restricted production and circulation, had the public as homosexuals. *Jornal do Gay*, *Snob*, *Peteca Magazine* were some of these publications (GREEN, POLITO, 2004). Therefore, the access to the theoretical and more in-depth discussions on homosexuality, mainly foreign, was scarce, thus becoming a possibility for the newspaper to translate and make content available to a larger number of people.

Unlike the treatment given to the aforementioned vehicles, *Lampião da Esquina* has a friendly relationship with its direct competitors, even announcing the launch of gay-oriented magazines and newspapers. The speech presented by the newspaper alluded to recognition and support for new publications. Fry (1978, p. 4 – Our translation) traces the history of several newspapers made by Waldeilton di Paula, a Bahian banker and journalist who, through his craft newspapers, told the social life of the Bahian gays:

Di Paula was born in Alagoinhas in 1942 and moved to Salvador 13 years later. Soon he entered the banking profession that continues until today. “In those days we lived with shame because we could not have freedom of expression, live publicly and be accepted by society. That all forced us to create bonds. Then we met in apartments, on the beaches, had no bars, nightclubs, and other things. We used nature as a leisure spot in the evenings.’ There were several well-established groups such as the VIDs (Very Important Dolls), Carimbós and Os intocáveis (The Untouchables). ‘With this whole thing, I started making the murals with the drawings. Everyone reads and satirizes events and characters. I liked it a lot. So I started making a precariously limited newspaper to talk about the gay society of our group and gaining an economic structure. I started working. And so, I have been holding meetings at my house and at friends’ houses. The newspaper was growing”.

Newspapers with more expressive circulation, aimed at the gay public also had their highlights in the pages of *Lampião*, as was the case of the launch of *Gay News*. The publication, derived from *Jornal do Gay*, quotes *Lampião da Esquina* in its pages, just as *Lampião* does, showing a union, in general, of vehicles aimed at homosexual rights in the name of gay discourse:

The former *Jornal do Gay*, a Sao Paulo publication intended for the “entendidos” (educated gays), has changed its name: it is now called *Gay News*, and it presents itself to its readers with more agile, nicer pagination and as representative of “an international gay group” (NAS BANCAS..., 1979, p. 4 – Our translation).

The relationship that the *Lampião da Esquina* established with the press varies according to the treatment given to the social group, regardless of whether they are linked to the large-scale commercial press or to the “nanicos”. The publication harshly criticized the coverage of the traditional press on the subject of homosexuality, in addition to making sporadic attacks on some of its members. Already with its competitors, or publications that follow an editorial line similar to yours, the newspaper adopted a kinder discourse and sometimes even promoted some of these vehicles, emphasizing their importance for the debate of ideas before the society. These positions put *Lampião da Esquina* as a vehicle that, in fact, was in favor of the gay affirmation, placing it, for example, in front of possible commercial interests or of the so-called “luta maior”, the one that defended the redemocratization of the country and had in the vehicles “nanicos”, like *O Pasquim*, one of its main representatives. The relationship with the press was essentially marked by the way in which individuals, or vehicles, faced the demands of the homosexual movement.

Violence against homosexuals and complaints

An attitude adopted by *Lampião da Esquina*, which is presented in almost all editions, was the reporting of crimes against homosexuals.

Already in its number zero, *Lampião* put in its cover the headline “Celso Curi processed. But what is this boy’s crime?”. This can be considered the first complaint made by the newspaper and also the one that presented to the public how would be the approach of the journal with respect to the abuses suffered by the homosexuals against the daily violence.

Inside the newspaper, the material keeps the tone of complaint. In his headline, the lawsuit against the journalist is cited as “just another stage of the campaign against the journalist who dared to make a daily taboo subject: homosexuality” (TREVISAN, 1978, p. 7 – Our translation). In the course of the text, the discussion about the persecution of the journalist Celso Curi, because of the column on gay topics he kept in the newspaper *Última Hora*, the “Coluna do Meio” (Column of the Middle), the first of its kind in a newspaper of great circulation, becomes more incisive.

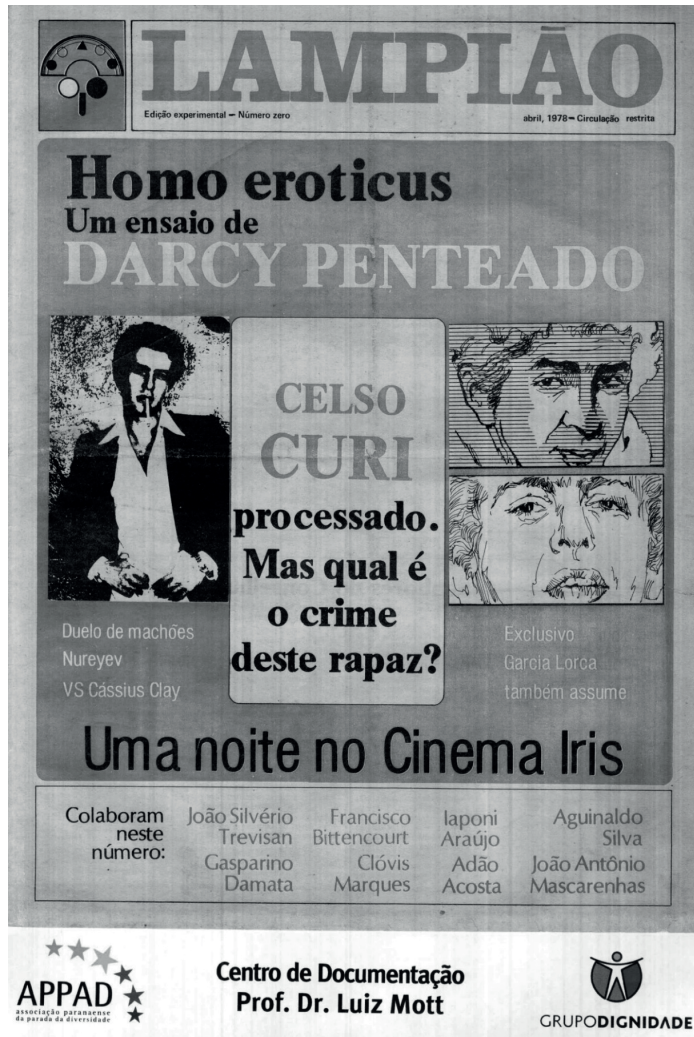
These denunciations, at the same time that they spoke of the abuses, demonstrated the daily life of homosexuals. During the 1970s and 1980s, the repression suffered by gays made many public places a point of encounter. The erotic cinemas in the capitals, for example, were meeting places for many who could not relate and looked for fun during the nights, as was the case of *Cinema Iris*, in Rio de Janeiro (GATTI, 2000).

In another report, also of the number zero of the newspaper, Lampião denounces exactly the abuse of policemen, who were waiting at the door of places known and considered as spaces frequented by homosexuals in order to arrest them, on charges of being unemployed:

The first to leave, when they see the car stopped at the door – police car, according to the police, a **big car**, according to the prisoner - hesitate and use the last moments of security that the cinema provides. Go to the drinking fountain where you have not seen a drop of water for years, look at the posters, examine the less dark corners. And then, clearly distressed, they decide to face the worst of the exit “Your documents” - law enforcement officers say, looking tired, not even displaying their own IDs (Cinema Iris patrons know how to recognize a police officer from afar). And the explanations come. One cop or a fireman hears “let it go, mate”. A shopkeeper at a nearby store hears a harsh sentence, after having his (signed) professional card undergoes a long examination: “Go home, boy. That’s not the time to be on the street”. Then, the first **unoccupied** person leaves the theater. Surrounded by the police, he says that he is a self-employed worker, paints walls. But he can not display the Service Tax card, in fact, he has not yet signed up. The protest, says he has a wife and children, gives a vague address where they can prove that he works. Even so, he is taken to the car and locked up. (...) A boy, whose gestures function as a kind of flag - he is a homosexual - informs that he is a lawyer. It shows the Bar Association card, which the police inspect for a longer time. “As it is possible, a lawyer”, one of them says, making a direct reference to the boy’s sexual behavior. The lawyer, undaunted, faces the sequence of humiliations without none of the answers he has certainly learned to give in court (CINEMA..., 1978, p. 9).

The humiliation suffered by these homosexuals found space in Lampião da Esquina, the only space available for this kind of content at the time. Reports of this genre show us how the mechanism for the discrimination of gays could gain other contours, such as economic. The speech of the policeman mentioned in the article makes clear the sexuality of the users of the cinema, but to be arrested, a crime was necessary and the mark of unemployed while serving as an element for the arrest of homosexuals, reinforced the affirmation of the capitalist logic.

Figure 2 – Issue number zero of “Lampião da Esquina”



Source: Centro de documentação Prof. Dr. Luiz Mott

The denunciations were not limited to the national territory. In the published information on other Latin American countries, abuses and negligence of the authorities were the most frequent. As in Brazil, many Latin American countries had authoritarian regimes that consequently brought more violence to the homosexual community. In the translation of José Silvério Trevisan of Carlos Manuel's article "Chile: denounces of the slaughter", originally published in the American magazine Vector, in 1973, the prejudice and cruelty of the Chilean Military Dictator, commanded by Pinochet against the homosexuals is brought to the Brazilian public:

On the phone, a friend asked me if I knew what the military was doing with the fags. I said I did not know. Then my friend told me: “They’re in the mood to get all queers into the concentration camp. I was told that the other day three guys got some soldiers and went to a bar to talk. The soldiers left addresses and left: the usual, of course. When the queers left the bar, they ran into a squad outside. The three soldiers pointed to the rows, who were seized and taken away. Until today there is no news about them. Therefore, be careful” (MANUEL, 1978, p. 7 – Our translation).

These reports were important in *Lampião da Esquina* both to expose society to what was happening to homosexuals and to show guys themselves the need to unite to guarantee their rights, of the 38 covers of *Lampião*, 20 bring denunciations of abuse in the justice or acts of violence against homosexuals, being a relevant subject for publication. As Green and Polito (2004) demonstrate, if at first, the reports by doctors and specialists aimed to treat homosexuals in search of a cure, in a second, the gay newspapers that emerged during the 1960s and 1970s, before *Lampião*, dealt more with subjects related to homosexual behavior. Therefore, for the first time, homosexuals make denunciations against the crimes that were carried out against them, following their logic and version of the facts. The reports published in *Lampião da Esquina*, as well as the material produced on the denunciations, act as exclamations against the actions that were carried out, disregarding the homosexual as a being imbued with rights.

Political coverage and the positioning as an articulator of the homosexual movement

The political coverage made by *Lampião da Esquina* is highlighted in the printed spot, most probably due to the period in which it was edited. In the pages of *Lampião*, several questions were raised by the politician who displayed his breastplate in Congress as a way of protesting criticism of the military dictatorship.

The national context was more exploited, but international associations that acted in a prejudiced or ineffective way also received the attention and comments of the publication. This was the case of the Council for Amnesty International. After the organization considered that adult persons could not be arrested because of their sexual behavior, even having a discourse indirectly favorable to homosexuals, received the critics of *Lampião*. In its number zero, the newspaper pointed out the lack of effective action for the protection of homosexual prisoners, saying that the organization’s action could sometimes worsen the prisoners’ situation:

In the case of homosexuals (detained, for example, because of an attack on good manners, according to one of the euphemisms of Brazilian law), a more concrete

rescue of the Organization cannot be expected soon. It fears, above all, to be embroiled in the lack of definition of customs and laws about the issue, to make an initiative that, without concrete support, would even worsen the situation of its “adoptees” (this is Amnesty’s own term for referring to the victims of unjust imprisonment that you care for) (MARQUES, 1978, p. 5 – Our translation).

The link with international politics was not only criticized by government agencies. Popular manifestations of the gay community were also explored by the journal, including the polemics that existed within the movement itself. One of the reported cases was the struggle of US homosexuals for Congress to pass specific laws for the inclusion of this group in the labor market. While highlighting the organization of the gay movement in the United States and showing the mobilization power they possessed, it questioned the position of gays in the face of other social groups that were beginning to feel threatened by male hegemony within the movement itself aimed at the rights of all to freely express their sexuality as they wished (DANTAS, 1979).

Still, in the international spotlight, the murder of Harvey Milk, the first homosexual politician to be elected in the United States, was prominently published in the periodicals in which the editorials were usually placed. In an article written by José Silvério Trevisan, the topics that motivated the murder and its political consequences were addressed:

City Councilman Dan White of San Francisco resigned his seat in the House in protest of low wages. A few weeks later he decided to go back and resume his position. But both the Justice and the voters objected to it, disapproving of the former councilman’s irresponsible gesture. Annoyed at the confirmation that there would already be a replacement for his chair, Dan White went to the City Hall building and killed the mayor, George Moscone, and then Deputy City Councilman Harvey Milk with several gunshots. This double murder in California does not seem to have the resounding motives that would please the major press. It came to the point, for example, which this crime was linked to the Angels of Death (of the sect Temple of the People) that would have justified the Prefect as revenge. (...) On the night of the crime, 30,000 people walked in procession through San Francisco, carrying candles lit, while drums beat funeral sounds and Joan Baez appeared, singing their old songs of protest. None of this will prevent any further political assassinations, which are already part of the “Democratic game” in the United States, at any moment. For US homosexual activists, the result of the crimes is politically unpredictable (TREVISAN, 1979, p. 2 – Our translation).

On the same page, the vehicle brought information about a trial that occurred in England and could be characterized, even if indirectly, favorable to the homosexual cause.

A former British Liberal Party leader was being charged for the death of a suspect who was allegedly his undeclared boyfriend.

Brazilian activism also had room in *Lampião da Esquina*. Demands, political reflections, and congresses by the movement's leaders were published, or commented, in the newspaper. The publication also served as a space for brainstorming. The materials destined to this type of approach gained more repercussion when the vehicle approached its last editions.

It is important to note that at the beginning the homosexual movement was formed by a small group and maintained an intimate atmosphere in its meetings. Many were members of *Lampião da Esquina* (MACRAE, 1990). As the years went by, several entities were created, together with this external structuring, a parallel group to the one that edited the *Lampião* was structured internally and attracted more members, it began to be called SOMOS Group, in reference to the extinct Argentine movement, and was a central group for gay discussions, becoming a large representative body. However, as the group grew, the members of the movement began to take different ideological paths, non-partisanship was one of them.

Part of the members of the SOMOS Group, which included many of the members of *Lampião da Esquina*, argued that homosexual manifestations should not have any involvement with political parties, while another part of the group believed that with the affiliations and active participation in the associations, homosexuals would have more visibility and their claims would be answered. Over time, this has become a crisis within the homosexual movement and small actions of political demands, or aid to the homosexual community, have come to be more emphasized in the last editions of *Lampião da Esquina* (MACRAE, 1990).

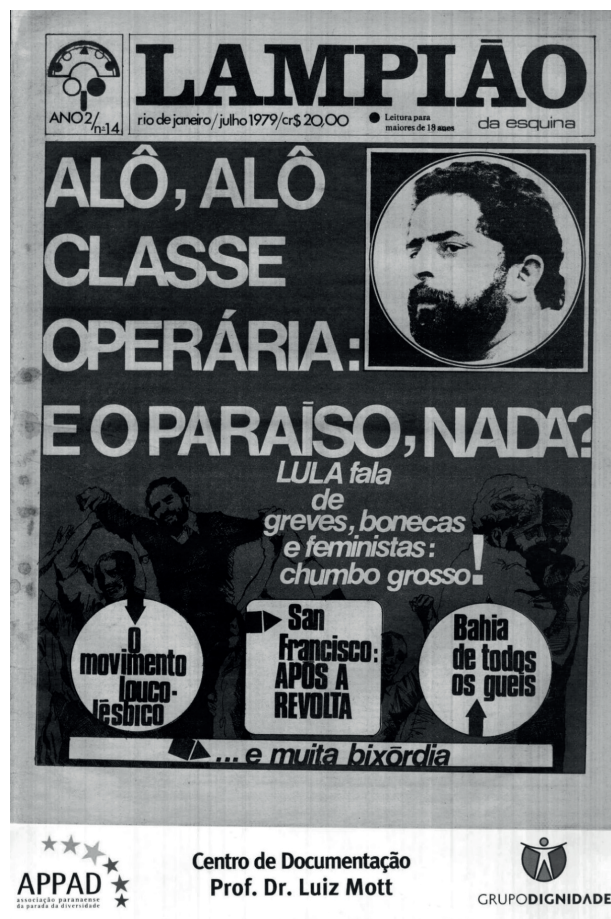
That's what happened at number 34 in the newspaper. In the article "Bahia: the activists go to the fight", *Lampião* praised the attitude of the Bahian homosexuals to help the gays of the region and connected it to a possible exit of the political crisis that the movement passed:

There is a crisis in the homosexual movement. To deny it serves only to postpone the discussion longer in search of a way out. Assign it to *Lampião*, as do the leaders of the groups *Somos/Piauí* and *Aué/Rio*, or it is dishonesty or stupidity. Attempting to overcome it by resorting to practical action to replace sterile theoretical debates deserves applause. (...) Well, the GGB people decided to see it for granted. *Pelourinho*, you know, is a kind of zone of *Salvador*, a very heavy bar where prostitutes and "xibungos" live at their worst, completely oblivious to *Jorge Amado/Caribé* folklore. The GGB staff (and they deserve applause as well) is the one that has been making the most of the trombone, lately - street signs and news in the newspapers, have yielded good results (SILVA, 1981, p. 3 – Our translation).

In addition to the internal disagreements of the fledgling homosexual movement, differences with political parties and leftist movements were so discrepant that in one issue of the newspaper, the *Lampião da Esquina* team went to the doors of the Paulista ABC factories to find out if there had been homosexuals working and participating in the political demonstrations for the redemocratization of the country and in the improvement of the working conditions of the metallurgists.

In the interviews, many workers denied, or were reluctant, about homosexuals in the workers' movement. One of the covers of the publication, issue no. 14, July 1979, brings an interview with Luiz Inácio da Silva, Lula, the leadership of the labor movement. In the matter of "Hello, Hello, working class: what about the Heaven, nothing yet?", the situation of the homosexual workers is portrayed by the workers themselves and show the prejudice of the time, even within the social movements willing to fight for the redemocratization of the country:

Figure 3 – Headline of “*Lampião*” with Luiz Inácio da Silva, “Lula”, the metallurgist who later became president of Brazil



Source: Centro de documentação Prof. Dr. Luiz Mott.

“Look, in my section, there’s a girl like that, she wears men’s clothes, she does not wear makeup. Once she came in with a bit strange conversation, but I did not talk much, did I? But, besides that, she’s a nice person, right? Well, even the boss has respect for her. They say that she fights very well” (Marinete de Moraes, editor). (...) “- Queer? Look, this queer thing is in Sao Paulo. Here, I never saw it. Yeah, maybe there is, but do not put your nose out the door, no” (Jorge Luís da Silva, toolmaker). (...) “What, girl? Queer? Look, queer, with me, it’s a fight thing! No, they never did anything to me, but it’s good they do not even try!” (Luís Duarte da Rocha, factory worker) (ALÔ..., 1979, p. 9 – Our translation).

The discussion of the ideals of the left and its indifference to homosexual rights were discussed in another cover of *Lampião*. Issue number 33 was published with a cartoon on the cover in which Fidel Castro appeared dressed as Carmem Miranda with the phrase “I do not believe in queers. But there are, there are”.

In the article “Cuba: ten years of hunting the queens”, *Lampião da Esquina* brought a series of information related to the way the Caribbean country treated homosexuals. This report served to intensify the battle of *Lampião* with the movements of left. The attitudes of the Cuban government were considered a “witch hunt”, created persecution of the public machine to the gays of Cuba:

In certain vaguely progressive sectors, it is very common to consider that any criticism of the so-called socialist regimes would only serve to encourage reaction and obscurantism. According to this reasoning, it is preferable to shut up. Thus, for a whole generation, the mantle of silence was created around the crimes committed by Stalin. But it is interesting to note how this same cloak of silence becomes even thicker when the repression falls on social groups traditionally condemned to derision. Thus, there is no ideological justification to avoid denouncing the persecution of homosexuals in Cuba, where Fidel Castro himself launched an anti-genocide campaign around 1966. In a speech on the anniversary of the death of the hero of the Cuban Revolution Echeverria, Fidel launched an attack on homosexuals, comparing them to delinquents and pimps. Soon after, the state bureaucracy set up a true “witch hunt” in various sectors, especially in universities, where [there are] professors and students admittedly homosexuals through supposed popular tribunals, actually run by government officials. The anti-homosexual fury has gone so far as to organize true medieval self-beliefs. Such is the case of the well-known writer Virgílio Piñera who, along with other homosexuals, was taken along the streets of Havana with a P on his back - P of another word for homosexual, in Cuban slang ... In his *Memories*, Simone de Beauvoir makes references to this case without mentioning the name of Piñera (CUBA..., 1981, p. 10 – Our translation).

The newspaper served as political writer of the Brazilian homosexual movement, besides discussing the problems of the gay movement, showed the importance of the militancy to its readers. In one of his stories, the newspaper explained how the main groups (SOMOS, Auê, and Bando de Cá) worked and showed some of their weaknesses, many who attended the meetings of the movements were not interested in military. In this regard, “What is an organized homosexual group?”, There is an information box with the addresses of the various homosexual groups that existed in the country (NUNES, 1981). Although his positions were not unanimous within the various specters that arose along with the most varied sexual demands, *Lampião* was an important meeting point for the debate of these opinions, is often a reference, even for the construction of thoughts contrary to the ones divulged in the publication.

Therefore, we can affirm that the political coverage of *Lampião da Esquina* was intense and always sought to bring information to the position of homosexuals in front of society. It was widely used as a tactic of affirmation and as a way of giving visibility to the rights that were denied to the group. It is important to remember that the newspaper served as an organ of integration among readers spread throughout the country and therefore became a pole of distribution of homosexual ideals of the period.

The divergent relations with other groups linked to the homosexual cause and the problems faced with the established political movements brought some wear and tear on the publication, which underwent reformulations during the years of 1980 and 1981. The newspaper was no longer published in São Paulo, with only Rio de Janeiro becoming the host city of the vehicle.

Just as the protests served to vindicate homosexual rights, they served to unite and articulate the gay movement in the country, divulging some guidelines and thoughts that were directly linked to the ideals of the vehicle and consecutively the homosexual claim.

Considerations

Lampião da Esquina represented a milestone in the Brazilian press. First, because of its production and distribution - it was the first vehicle written by and for gays that had a professional production, in addition to reaching the national territory, despite the meager means available at the time, with reference to vehicles linked to the alternative press. Second, because of its representativeness within the gay movement itself - no matter how many perspectives were being put on the table, the journal functioned as a kind of catalyst for these different demands, whether through its subjects or the letters of complaint that were published in your issues.

It is possible to say that the newspaper combated the main organizations opposed to gays or those attitudes that contributed to the creation of a negative image of homosexuals while publishing the speeches of the minority groups that were beginning to organize in the period of Political Openness. It is worth emphasizing that the theme of prejudice was addressed on the

various fronts that the journal was willing to deal with. Not only gays but lesbians, feminists, transsexuals, transvestites, blacks, natives, among other groups, were part of the questions and the search for freedom that the members of the publication were interested in. *Lampião da Esquina* used as its main discourse the criticism of conservative customs, causing several sectors to be affected by this attitude, regardless of its political spectrum.

The excerpts analyzed showed that, through its guidelines and content, *Lampião da Esquina* addressed a number of themes that pervaded the lives of gays in this period, using as a differential approach and approaches, which sought to pass on to readers the perspective of gay as a citizen full of rights, unlike the stereotyped visions present in the press of the time and highlights in our topics of analysis.

It is possible to establish parallels between the axes highlighted in our study. Both the positioning of other vehicles and journalists, as well as their political coverage and the dissemination of denunciations against homosexual violence within a context of political and social repression, can be seen as reflections of the abuses by which the subjects passed to the time. Despite the beginning of the movement for democracy, the discontent of these individuals with respect to their representation on the national scene is visible. It seems, then, a path of independence, in which the priority discourse is that one linked to gay rights. Regardless of where prejudice begins, he ends up being questioned by the publication, demonstrating the search for an autonomous position in front of the other social groups.

The notes that we bring in this study show that in addition to reporting a situation of precariousness, the members of *Lampião* were active in the construction of a new reality and had as the north the respect for human rights, especially those linked to issues of freedom and sexuality, values are seen as fundamental for the enjoyment of a lifeless captive and therefore more liberated. More outlined and less contained and delimited by heteronormative patterns, stamping in their pages the meaning of what we can call “Brazilian Gay Liberation”, the beginning of the struggle for LGBTI+ Brazilian rights that began to shine in that period.

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