



## WALKING HISTORIES: NARRATIVES OF YOUNG URBAN DANCERS IN THE CITY OF RIO DE JANEIRO (BRAZIL)

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### Abstract

The aim of the study is to investigate the construction of street dances in the city of Rio de Janeiro, describing urban dancers and their daily 'art of doing', listening to their voices and observing their physical and virtual interactions. In this paper, a specific methodological approach is applied towards a tactical plan in order to understand the urban dance phenomenon within the universe of hip-hop culture. This particular approach includes the analysis of eleven narratives of young dancers and their everyday experiences, their personal life stories, interlinked with categories such as masculinity and business. The results reveal the complexity of hip-hop and street-dance culture in general, and specifically among young Brazilians. The narratives of these young men have provided an effective means for representing hip-hop dancers' concerns and bodily articulations in order to comprehend their dance practice and the construction of spaces, but also indicate aesthetic and commercial dimensions.

**Keywords:** Hip-hop; dance; urban; masculinity; Brazil.

### INTRODUCTION

The first manifestations of hip-hop culture are identified in Brazil between the late 1970s and early 1980s, revealing themselves as the aesthetic expression of the Black Atlantic diaspora (Gilroy, 1993)<sup>i</sup> recreated by young people living in the suburbs (Vianna, 1997; Herschmann 2000; Leal 2007; Buzo 2011; Weller, 2011). Already in the last decade of the twentieth century, there was an intensification of the cultural massification of symbols and emblems of hip-hop movement as a sign of transnational youth identification, being appropriated by the music, fashion, advertising and other industries (Herschmann, 2000; Thangaraj, 2010; Langnes and Fasting, 2014). Faced with this scenario, the phenomenon of street dance, widely known and recognized as urban dances, gains new visibility, which, along with rap, graffiti, and DJ manoeuvres, make up the founding elements of hip-hop culture.

Regarding Brazil, as well as other Latin American countries, in accordance with Alabarces (2016), studying popular cultures in this context requires to recognize subalternity, the ethnic heterogeneity of the population, the politicization of culture, and populisms in Latin American societies. This situation is also reflected in this research, placing popular culture within the framework of power relations in a class society, in which knowledge is where power is, in other words, the discourse of the literate subject is the only valid one.

In relation to hip-hop culture in Brazil in general, it emerged in the periphery of São Paulo and developed throughout the 1980s, and became popular in the 1990s. An important reference is the São Bento subway station, in downtown São Paulo, considered the birthplace of Brazilian hip-hop culture. However, today we can find an important presence of hip-hop movement in the suburbs of Brasília, Recife, Rio de Janeiro, Curitiba, Porto Alegre, Florianópolis, among other capitals. (Lourenço, 2010). In particular, Rio de Janeiro is often related to the cultural phenomenon of funk at the juncture of transition to democracy and the recovery of black consciousness in the 1980s (Yúdice, 2002).

To reinforce the importance of hip-hop in Rio de Janeiro, in our case study we present the narratives of eleven male dancers and their practices within the urban spaces of the North, West and Downtown.

This paper begins with a discussion of studies of Leal (2007) and Herschmann (2000), which give us keys to understand the urban dance phenomenon within the universe of hip-hop culture in Rio de Janeiro. Secondly, we tackle some questions that emerge from the construction of the relationship between dance and masculinity, since it is an art form initially and still predominantly practiced by men. Such discussion is made through some historical excerpts (Hanna, 1999), in perspective with conceptions developed by Badinter (1993) and Connell & Messerschmidt (2013).

### **Aim and research categories**

The aim of the study is to investigate the construction of street dances in the city of Rio de Janeiro, describing urban dancers and their daily 'art of doing', listening to their voices and observing their physical and virtual interactions. Connections will be drawn in order to describe how young people narrate their personal life stories and perspectives, and how they interpret and recreate the original street dance of the hip-hop movement from their contingencies. Starting the analysis process, four elements were observed a priori: dance, hip-hop, masculinity, and work. However, we left the categories to be constructed during the research process as these elements appeared in their lines, combining, moving away, or even generating new aspects to be observed.

### **Theory and methodological approach**

As general theoretical framework the ethnomethodological perspective of Garfinkel (1967) was applied, an approach interested in social action, intersubjectivity and linguistic communication, considering that people create their own pattern of social action, and do not necessarily follow established ones. Ethnomethodology focuses on explaining the social practices and experience of social actors, and how they make their decisions, in this case, urban dancers who construct their own social narrative based on their routines, the rules created by the group, and intersubjective relationships.

Furthermore, we include Berger and Luckman's (1966) sociological approach of social reality, that everyday life implies a world ordered through meanings shared by the community, and the phenomenological proposal of Schütz (1962) the theory of understanding or *verstehen* previously developed by Max Weber. This is important for this study, as the authors understand subjectivity as a phenomenon that reveals the universe of meanings collectively constructed through interaction, in this case dance articulation.

From the gender perspective, Butler (1988) provides the concept of performativity which is crucial. It involves the idea that the performed gender identity is instituted through the repetition of acts and gestures. This allows the phenomenological understanding of "acts" as "socially shared and historically constituted." (Butler, 1988, p. 530).

The research focuses on eleven sets of narratives analysed in order to gather stories of male dancers aged between 18 and 32, all presented under pseudonyms. They are mostly lower-middle-class young people who live in the neighbourhoods of the North, West, and Downtown areas of Rio de Janeiro. Most of them attended public schools, although some had stints in private schools. Only two of them mentioned slum communities, one in Morro de São Carlos, and one in the Guaratiba region. One of the informants has an incomplete high school, and the others completed this stage. Among these, five are in higher education, and one is already postgraduate, at the level of specialization.

Regarding the analysis process, at the beginning data were analysed mainly resorting to de Certeau (2008, 41), valuing what the author calls "ways of proceeding from everyday creativity". The dancers' common tactics and wiles gain importance in the face of strategies of the instances of power seeking to circumscribe them. As suggested by the author, the intention is to highlight the paths that shape the walk through the universe of dance and the street, giving centre stage to the new open spaces from this trajectory.

In addition, the models proposed by Deleuze and Guattari (2012) were also triggered in their metaphors about smooth space and striated space, from which analogies were sought with the experiences of these young people, who now flow more freely and creatively in the universe of arts, and undergo the procedures of the mainstream show business circuit. When applying the Deleuzian metaphor, the purpose is to show that these two forms of transit do not occur in an exclusive and isolated way, but are manifested precisely by the character of coexistence and transmutation between the striations and smoothing of space. Finally, throughout the discussion, the idea is to dialogue with research developed in similar contexts to this one, as they involve male youth, hip-hop and urban arts (Cechetto, 2004; Freire Filho, 2007; Almeida and Pais, 2012). Therefore, it is necessary to highlight the approach and the peculiarities that were found when tapering our focus towards the urban *carioca*<sup>ii</sup> dancers.

As general methodology, a qualitative approach was applied conducting semi-structured interviews, which will be described in the next paragraph.

### **Investigation tactics: following narratives and walks**

In an attempt to bring out the ways of making young urban dancers, the focus was placed on two concepts proposed by de Certeau (2008): ambulatory rhetoric and narrativization. De Certeau points out that there is a rhetoric of walking, which comes from the art of shaping pathways, in which everyday existence transforms a place into space (2008). Thus, entering the universe of young urban dancers, it is necessary to shift our analysis from a strategic plan to a tactical plan. On the one hand, there is the city instituted by subjects of power and occupied by social actors, and on the other, the city is lived by the actors, as their creativity, and the contingencies themselves make it possible. In this case, it implies observing spaces beyond the common sense of what is expected as 'street dance'. Following these actors' walking tracks, it clearly showed that the tacitly open spaces of 'original' hip-hop have shifted from the corner, the ghetto, and the periphery to gyms, stages, universities, and a plethora of virtual streets. The latter, spaces created by interaction via internet, which were decisive initially to locate the informants, since, according to readings and searches, it has turned out the non-existence of fixed hip-hop possessions in the city as a meeting point for dancers.

Following Deleuze & Guattari's (2011) concepts, hence it can be said that the experiences and transits provided by the internet are manifestations of space smoothing and generating a

rhizome-like configuration, in which it is impossible to establish an original root from which to depart. In this context, it was possible to locate the dancers not only gathered on sites and profiles of exclusive b-boy groups, but also from clues that one of them leaves on the social network. This draws attention to other dancers and events, which in turn, indicate other paths, forming a dense and chaotic morphological network that characterizes the rhizomatic organizations.

Therefore, the strategy was to register a personal profile on Facebook and start searching within this haptic space. It is a space that is not configured in a general panorama, capable of being apprehended in perspective. The researcher is required to grope, moving from one element to another without a pre-defined map. The next step was to switch between the dancers' profiles on the net until we gathered a group of 'friends' who were urban dancers. The used search terms were 'b-boy', 'street dance', 'urban dance', and 'crew'. From the first term, some profiles were found in which the dancers use the code name "b-boy so and so", who were residents of the metropolitan region of Rio de Janeiro. Following the clues of these b-boys and those obtained by the other terms, it led to group and event profiles where dancers were discovered who used their common names in the profiles on the net. Finally, numbers were lost of the quantity of friend requests, but accepted by about 50 dancers.

After this groping search, the posts were read, identifying those who most frequently used the network exchanging dance-related information, revealing that it was part of their routines, not limited to weekend events and parties. Following this criterion, messages have been sent to some dancers, asking if they would be available for an interview. The first to respond at this stage was a dancer who owns a small dance school in the *Bonsucesso* neighbourhood and promptly offered being interviewed in his establishment. The next focus was on a b-boy duo who had been Bradan's champion the year before, but only one of them was ready for an interview. The third contact was made via Facebook, the person used to attend a meeting that only happened at *Maracanã* and scheduled there for an interview. However, he did not show up on the agreed day, as he had been hired to perform with a famous funk singer, but was kind enough to send two dancers from his crew. One of them was already part of the virtual friend's network. In this operation, while waiting for the informants, four training dancers from another crew have been observed. Thus, 'pulling the subject', it was possible to conduct another unscheduled interview.

Subsequently, through the Arena Hybrid event profile, there was the opportunity to reach the dancers who made up the "Crew Hybrid" and split into a dance company, "Cia Hybrid". Three more interviews were conducted, including a dancer who is also the director of the company. The last two dancers were also chosen due to a strong interaction in the network, in which they often evoke hip-hop movement, but it was not observed as much in the other profiles. One of them attended a training space located in *Aterro do Flamengo*, unknown before, but where we conducted the interview. The other dancer arranged the interview in a space near Lapa's arches, where he usually gathers groups of b-boys.

By this time, a set of eleven interviews was recorded within the desired profile: male urban dancers who had urban dance as one of their primary life activities. Within this list, there was a diversity of styles: four dancers had a more independent trajectory, and the remaining seven were divided into four recognized crews in the universe of urban carioca dances. Hence, the stage of the empirical interviews has been completed with those.

At this point, and listening to the young people's voices, it was possible to understand how they structure the narratives of their life story. Identifying the tactics, these dancers reveal to live the dance, and, at the same time, survive it. As de Certeau (2008) points out, these paths are also narratives, or rather, outpatient rhetoric, which are being built by the movement of dancers through the city, giving places that were previously appropriated to specific uses, new ways to use and to enunciate them. Finally, the idea is to undertake the analysis of these statements from the 'inside', as suggested by the author. From this perspective, to work with narrativizations, exposing these actors' creations by telling their biographies. The aim is to allow each one to articulate their hierarchy in the appearance of the elements "dance", "hip-hop", "profession", and "masculinity." The related

questions were directly asked in the case that the informant did not address them within his narrative. The only fixed questions were regarding age, residence, and marital status at the beginning of the interviews, which also helped as icebreaker.

## FINDINGS

### **First of all, dancers**

As before mentioned, the process of inquiry started with the icebreaker questions, followed by asking the interviewees to tell their life stories, wondering how they would begin to write their autobiographies. Except for two dancers, all the others began their narrative with some dance-related fact in their early teens. Another fact that reinforces this predominantly dance-related identity construction is that, although these young people start their biographies talking about an adolescent character when motivated to remember, most of them mentioned that since childhood, they already drew attention to their abilities and taste. Dance, being featured in performances at school or the centre of attention at family parties.

Analysing the narrated facts related to the way of initiation in dance, it became clear that the paths moulded by the dancers have relationships with age-related contexts, considering that in this variation between 18 and 32 years, there is a concentration of seven dancers up to 22 years (Julio Cesar, Cabeção, Carlinhos, Juninho, Alan, Cleiton, and Armando). Moreover, the other four are older than 28 years (Chocolate, Andre Luz, Juliano, and BM). Within this group of the elders, three began dancing at matinee balls, where they gained prominence until they formed groups with friends from the neighbourhood and started to dance in exchange for free admission and a chance to perform prominently at a time of the ball. Important to mention is the component of socializing in the street and in the neighbourhood, something that enabled their entry into the world of urban dance. However, this experience is mediated by the dance language of prom charm, not by break or other dance manifestations, which have been established as more characteristic of hip-hop culture.

For those dancers, who began their journey in the mid-1990s, the applied tactic to keep dancing when they should have been working was to abandon matinee groups and join private academy dance groups. At that time, those private dance schools invested a lot in the dissemination due to winning festivals and contests in various modalities, such as jazz, ballet, tap dance, but also street dance, as a 'learned' mode of urban dance languages. Middle-class paying students and male scholarship students mostly made up the semi-professional groups of these academies. These boys were usually offered (or imposed) the opportunity to take classes of all kinds, and, in return, these dancers received prorated cash prizes when they won the festivals. Somehow, this was already a more professional activity for these young people, as unlike girls, they did not pay for registration or dance costumes, took free classes, and occasionally made money.

The younger ones reported that they started dancing by attending classes on social projects, taken by friends who were already taking street dance classes called "hip-hop class". These projects varied in objectives and dimensions. For some, the initiation took place in larger actions, such as those of the Xuxa Meneguel Foundation in partnership with the UNESCO project "Criança Esperança" or those developed by Central Única de Favelas (CUFA). Others began taking classes in small projects developed in squares, church halls, and schools. For these younger informants, virtual social networks were also decisive in their formation. They say that on YouTube, they could discover "cool videos", learned new steps, and met battle dancers that are international highlights today. Facebook was also used as a tactic to stop being a project student and to become a b-boy, because through the interactions on the web they could find out where "the people would come together to train", just as Juninho says, "b-boys learn why one passes the knowledge to the other".

This combination of social projects and the internet consistently influences the paths of these younger dancers because, unlike their older peers, they did not have to settle for dance schools



to learn and perform. Most had an initiation in their projects, from which they began their journey. The internet has become the main tool for exploring the dance universe, not only learning through videos but mainly getting to know new pairs and training places in different parts of the city. However, for some, the projects represented a more fixed belonging, an issue later discussed in the paper.

### **Street dance as a form of subordinate masculinity**

The relationship between dance and masculinity did not spontaneously appear in the dancers' speeches when asked if they had faced problems with family and friends when the dance began to become important in their daily routines, most of them mentioned the concern, especially of mothers' survival. Cabeção tells that his father even paid for his first dance classes at school before he went to the Xuxa Foundation's free project, and that his mother complained a lot because he devoted so little to his studies. Juninho says that his parents "at first thought it was cute after it got serious, the family always thinks that dancing is not a profession".

Minimizing parents' concerns, but also revealing their own beliefs about the importance of academic background, the dancers acknowledge that they could use higher education as a tactic. Carlinhos says that the Faculty of Physical Education is something he likes and that his parents think it will provide a better future. Armando is the son of an Angolan diplomat who charged him because they came to Brazil to study and not to dance. Therefore, he chose to study Business, stating that it could be a training, which is helpful for his projects as an artist. Finally, the issue of masculinity in most cases arises from what Connell and Messerschmidt (2013) call a relational perspective between hegemonic masculinities and one of the forms of subordinate masculinities. Even if sexual orientation has not been called into question, the discomfort of their families reflects a concern of these young people who live in a moment of relative rise of the lower middle-class to Higher Education and the world of consumption. They miss the opportunity to occupy what Badinter (1993) calls the "One" place, but remain in the "Other". However, over time they tend to accept and value their activities. Alan's case is a good example of this: his mother, a housekeeper, saved money from his childhood to pay for college and in his teens, she enrolled him in free language, computer, and other courses. When he learned by his choice for the dance college, at first, he got bored because he had other expectations. However, according to Alan, he soon realized that his chosen college would be less expensive than anticipated; she gave him the money he needed, and was happy to use the rest of the value to "do his thing".

The issue of sexual orientation as a problem came up in two narratives, however, only when asked directly about it. Luz says he was never the target of prejudice in this matter, but he refused to stay in ballet classes at the academy where he had a scholarship, because "I tried to put those pants on me and then did not work". Alan says that after his mother's discontent with the dance faculty, she had to live with her uncles' pet peeve, saying that the course was a 'little woman' college, and that the photos of her ballet classes, which she posted on Facebook were "bizarre". Then, it is clear that the issue of sexual orientation only comes up when these dancers approach the universe of classical dance, represented by ballet, with the entire symbolic network of feminization from their professionalization process reported by Hanna (1999). In Luz's case, the dancer himself saw in the ballet net a limit to his conception of masculinity. Already humorously, he recounts his uncles' prejudice, but neither he nor his parents saw problems attending college ballet classes and posting their images on the social network.

The other respondents state that they did not face prejudice regarding allusions to sexual orientation. For some, the subject's approach motivated them to highlight the manly aspects of street dance, as it would be "a very masculine dance" which "requires much strength", and many dancers who now begin to dance "to catch women", although not in their case. In this sense, they articulate similarly to what Santos (2009) comments about the rapprochement between the hip-hopper body

and hegemonic masculinity patterns since it is a dance based on reliable, fast movements, and mentions the dispute between the dancers.

The art of the dancers themselves can also address this issue. One of Juliano's company's contemporary dance works, Alan and Cleiton finish a scene where dancers strip off their typical hip-hop clothes and end up dancing in their underpants, in movements that intertwine and touch each other. As Juliano explains, "Many b-boys who came to watch were impacted and asked how courageous we were", but according to him, they were showing the bodies of street dancers like any other bodies". They complete: "[...] by chance everyone here today is male and also straight, however, the group has a girl who got injured and cannot dance and who does the same scene". A gay person, could or would have done, (the scene) in the same way. Here, the idea is to show that this hip-hop body stripped of all its stereotypes. Cabeção also pointed out the exciting division in social projects workshops: actually, boys and girls enrol in an equal number. However, the former are only interested in learning power moves, steep steps, and thus "end up out there", leaving soon for training and battles, besides those who leave the workshops. Girls end up predominating in class because only they "like to have patience", to learn the choreography, which boys think is "for women". Thus, when leaving the stronghold of more formal education and "going around", it becomes clear that the element 'street' remains a strong mark for these dancers, and it is even constitutive of their masculinity. They demonstrate reacting to the streaking of dance workshops with their rigid structure about the pedagogical progression of teaching, schedules, and choreographed dance. The training, marked by the internet in various locations around the city, revives the neighbourhood corner where the first dancers gathered to "crack". Instead of fixing themselves to the workshop classes' place, they prefer open spaces from their journeys in the city, temporarily occupying places that usually have other uses in the city, such as a stage of *Aterro do Flamengo*, corridors or the UERJ Acoustic Shell, a square in Duque de Caxias, among many others.

### **Solitary rhetoric and solidary rhetoric**

Through the analysis of Júlio Cesar's and Cabeção's lines, it turned out that, curiously, the two dancers build their narratives from the beginning of the dance in large social projects, giving them significant importance and even gratitude for their formation. Cabeção speaks of the presenter Xuxa as her godmother, and Vitor Hugo says that the most important thing in his performance is being a CUFA instructor, even without receiving remuneration. They thus reveal a greater belief in large institutions as responsible for leading their way.

It has been noticed that one of these two dream dancers' hallmarks is a more solitary and individualistic stance in this universe. His rhetorical constructions are based on a future ideal in international companies or show business; he seems to be consistent with his social networking post styles. Julio has little interaction, going to meetings, and Cabeção concentrates on sharing his stakes in commercial scenes and TV shows, especially the scene in which she was greeted by host Xuxa, who was posted three different times. Upon discovering the loners, it turned out that two other dancers also have this feature. One of them is Luz, who builds a walking rhetoric based entirely on the principle of individual effort. His posts are divided between the dissemination of his work. The configurations in the media, and a self-defensive discourse against envy, which does not recognize the value, building work for culture. His posture in approaching politicians and having achieved the position of street dance representative in the union seems to set him apart from other urban b-boys and dancers in general. In his modern discourse, in which he enunciates himself as a typical self-made man, he arouses antipathy and criticism from his peers.

Thus, also BM, he is well respected and present at the meetings, is solitary in his rhetoric. Despite composing the oldest carioca crew, his lines are always in the first person singular, in which he reveals his beliefs in real hip-hop that sometimes claims to exist outside Rio de Janeiro. He

promotes actions on the street, such as an alternative meeting to the international Red Bull BC One event, which would take place in simultaneously on a nearby corner. In his modern counterculture discourse, he arouses sympathy, admiration, and many 'likes' on Facebook, but there is no adherence to his proposals, to exchange an excellent show for a meeting on the street. These four lonely dancers are in the minority within a trend observed at the end of the interviews: Action from a creative collective. It turned out that this bias is a brand that permeates the speech of the artists/producers, who struggle to win edicts, sponsorships, and support to 'live art', and, at the same time, 'live from art'. Juliano's company operates under his leadership, he is a teacher for the others, and occupies the role of an artistic director. However, the discourse of the leadership and his dancers is always plural, marking the collective work where each one assumes technical functions, thus supplying expenses, which could not be afforded, such as production, dissemination, and sometimes lighting and sound. Such collectivity does not presuppose exclusivity. Armando always mentions his work as an action between partners. Sometimes this partnership happens in the battle crew, in which Juninho also takes part. At other times, he is more dedicated to his theatre group, in which he joined other dancers to create a play about the life of b-boys, with the partnership of renowned theatre actors who gave support and artistic supervision.

The Carlinhos and Chocolate crew has a more typical entrepreneurial profile in the market; however, this is also possible by this collective making. These two respondents focus more on organizing the events and publicizing the group. Another fellow, a famous professional company, is the teacher of the workshops that sells and gets the group a greater insertion in the most commercial circuits. Those with parallel professions contribute when they can, not always having to divide the caches since they have other sources of income. Among artist-producers and crew entrepreneurs, there is a tactic to collaborate for growth and survival in the dance world. Eugênio (2012, 214), developed an ethnographic study about forms of creative work among young people. Life within a contemporary creative collective takes place in a logic of horizontalization, where it is allowed to escape from a map of plans and goals, in favour of continuous manufacture of sketches, in which "[...] it is a cunning game, capable of conjuring up the competition, circumventing norms, generating in itself a strict immanent regulation". In the case of these groups, an immanent regulation process is perceived. Although conflicts cannot be left out and they certainly occur, however, it is possible to realize that this collective action is a result of processes where hierarchies are less important. Differences are tactically used as a tool to make sketches that trace, erase, rewrite, at the same time, divide and regroup in the face of the contingencies that are presenting themselves.

## CONCLUSIONS

Given the set of narratives of young urban dancers, it became clear what has already timidly stated in the literature. It was possible to infer from the posts analysed on Facebook in the preliminary phase of this research: A detachment between the universes of street dance and hip-hop as well as a rapprochement with the world of classical and professional dance. Both, among the older ones, who started dancing at charm dances and street dance learned at gyms and festivals, and, among the younger ones, who started social projects in the late 1990s. Dance is the first element to emerge in their life stories, and the condition of a dancer is what guides the whole script they create in their narratives.

The case of BM represents a singularity in this group, being a young man who privileges discovery of the street in a big city as a starting point, where he met hip-hop, only then to get to dance, his chosen language, and graffiti, within the culture. In the construction of his ambulatory rhetoric, this actor goes on telling how he left the condition of a wanderer and went looking for a place of a hip-hop militant. His choice, which is spelled out as radical by some peers, reveals a personal search for the roots of a movement, which does no longer exist in the same way, even in the New York Bronx. This raises the question of whether hip-hop culture is not important in the



history of other dancers. On their paths, the informants appropriate this universe, not the 'original' or 'true' form that BM dreams of, but they institute new ways in which dance, art, and hip-hop merge into different gradients, generating a multiplicity of experiences and conceptions. Although it is not perceived and rationalized, hip-hop culture has already provided a solid semantic base since the generation of Juliano, André, and Chocolate. Manifested through the street dance gesture and the socio-cultural context of the charm ball, which is even characterized by the bias more and leisure, has kinship networks with the hip-hop universe, as it evokes the cause of "black is beautiful", an idea that relates to the struggle of black Americans for their civil rights. The greater media visibility of hip-hop, and the outbreak of social projects in the following years, among which many began to announce "hip-hop classes" as synonym for "street dance classes", was decisive in the history of the youth, which influenced those who already danced. The dissemination of this culture by NGOs such as CUFA and the media will bring to light elements of urban dances that Rio de Janeiro has never highlighted. The 'native' break (which preserves the top rock-footwork-freezes /power moves), the duel-like presentation, and an imaginary that is beginning to be propagated by the instructors about the history of culture, and its five elements, including knowledge.

Considering the narratives of the other informants, and especially the metaphor proposed by Juliano, the initial idea, that Rio de Janeiro street dance would have detached itself from the original hip-hop movement, had to be revised towards a process of institutionalization and erudition. In his conception, based on own experience, "hiphopzação" was a phenomenon that occurred in Rio de Janeiro after an effective existence of urban dances in the semi-professional world of dance. Thus, it became clear that the dance of these actors is not tied to a single root. Returning to Deleuze and Guattari (2011), the proposal of the rhizomatic model is a more faithful illustration of what was evident for this study. In this network, there are no genuine relationships of ancestry, but of a continuously expanding horizontal parenting, where hip-hop may be the origin of some paths, or present at intersections with greater or lesser degrees of effect in the trajectories of these subjects.

Even though the term hip-hop hardly appears in interviews, its aesthetics are present in conversations and events broadcasted via social networks, along with other elements of dance. On the one hand, these actors are "brothers", the folders almost always depict walls and graffiti, on the other, they share typical codes of dancers spreading auditions, workshops, dance shows of different languages, especially personal videos in which they show their performances and ask their peers to rate them in order to 'share' them.

The issue of masculinity came up mainly as a parental concern about the fact that dance puts them in place within a subordinate masculinity, in which "dance is not even supported for women" as Cleiton says. Another form of subordinate masculinity, the dancer-man, is a ghost that can scare into an approach to the universe of ballet, such as the Light Mesh, or become a joke, like Alan's college postings, who approached the uncles' homophobic posture with good humour.

The topic can also be seen in relation to a street-dance language development from other perspectives, such as the work of contemporary dance in the company of Juliano and Alan. Considering the conceptions of work, profession and future, it has been noticed a shift from an ethos of modernity, –represented by the model of a TV or company job, from a thriving place built as an individual climb– to a postmodern perspective. It is not possible to plan, but continually sketch and use the possible cunning for each moment. Nevertheless, tactically conquered spaces are not guaranteed to remain. These groups sometimes approach the most strategic plans, but without having the power to found a place. As de Certeau suggests, these actors remain alert and shrewd like hunters, ready to shoot in the dark at a subtle sign of their target. Deleuze explains this "blind but insightful" action, which leads to the game of blind goat, and thus, to groping in the haptic space. In this plan, it is impossible to have a vision of the panorama, but sharpening the sense of touch in recognition of opportunities. Returning to de Certeau, it can be noticed that these dancers open spaces with their paths, but do not conquer places. Therefore, they cannot stop walking.

Armando shows us a way of life in which the sketch has been working. All right, why are you walking? If you weaken on this path, you can change course. Life drawn by continuous

sketches can only have confidence that the paths they draw significantly open spaces at that moment. In this constant ambulation scenario, there are also no contradictions between being an artist and being an entrepreneur, loving hip-hop culture, and marketing it simultaneously. There is no anguish about the future in their speeches. The very idea of future is dismantled in the face of the fluidity of social structures. We live in a time where discontinuities, reversibility, and the conditions of a cyclical time constitute the scenario that presents itself to young people in this contemporary moment. This idea is evident, considering that for these actors, the lack of a plan for the future does not mean a lack of focus.

B-boys means beat boys. It is a term assigned to the “Bronx boys” who danced to the beat of the music, marking the struggle of young blacks in tough times for the affirmation of their aesthetics and civil rights. Carioca b-boys replicate a lot of this way of dancing, but they brought to the street dance elements of capoeira and samba, which are also syncopated rhythms with a polymetric structure, where the strong rhythm is suspended and the weak one accentuated, in the setback between one beat and another. However, there are still those like BM, who prefer to dance in the rule of the active times, the beat of the native break, believing that one day they will drive away from the storm. Most have learned to dance in the rain, looking for new effects in their puddles and using water to glide over the streaks of professional dance and show business.

Finally, this paper has revealed the complexity of hip-hop and street-dance culture in general, and specifically among young Brazilians. The narratives of these young men have provided an effective means for representing hip-hop dancers’ concerns and bodily articulations in order to comprehend their dance practice and the construction of spaces, but also indicate aesthetic and commercial dimensions.

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- i Analysing dance movements in the Americas today, it must be pointed out that they are Atlantic movements, because elements of African, American (Amerindian), European and Caribbean cultures have been incorporated, and express the historical connection of contemporary black identities as proposed by Gilroy with the “Black Atlantic” paradigm.
- ii *Cariocas* are people born in the city of Rio de Janeiro, capital of the state of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.