Black lives matter: ethical acts answerable-responsible against structural racism

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Abstract: This text discusses how, from the Bakhtinian point of view, anti-racist acts reverberate in the film *Selma* (2014), used as an iconic expression of some of the struggles of American blacks, since discuss how the syncretic architecture (verbivocovisual) of the film reflects and refracts structural racism and anti-racist reactions of subjects situated historically and spatially. The concepts that underlie this discussion are: chronotope, subjects and social voices, of Bakhtin, Medviédev and Volóchinov; verbivocovisuality, of Paula and her Study Group; and cultural studies on racism and anti-racism. This paper is developed from a dialectical-dialogical (qualitative) interpretative approach. The analysis considers some scenes of the film, in relation to historical pictures of the three marches from Montgomery to Selma and pictures of the 2020 anti-racist demonstration in the USA, released by the media, in a syncretic cinematographic and photographic composition. Reflecting on the Bakhtin´s concept of chronotope of the road and chronotope of the bridge in the history´s Great Time, in view of the relationship between life and art is the objective of this chapter, which turns to the relationship betweenthe actual crossing from Montgomery to Selma (in 1965); how this act immortalizes itself in the film *Selma* (2014); and how, in 2020, several bridges across the country (USA) were used again as a time-space for anti-racist demonstrations, with the motto #blacklivesmatter. The social relevance and urgency of turning to the theme of racism/anti-racism justifies the theoretical-analytical reflection presented, which meets some of the UN'sSDGs. The results reveal how racism generates, through violent acts (exclusion/discrimination, stereotyped prejudiced judgment, physical aggression, rape and murder),the aggravation of inequalities, the belief in a fallacious ethnic hierarchy ("superiority" and "inferiority" of races),o genocide of peoples, languages and cultures and responses that move to places opposite to these, through demonstrations in defense of human rights, in a live clash between voices, values, linguistic registers and cultures. This writing is an ethical gesture decolonial, necessary to the racist hegemonic combat.
Keywords: Language; cultural studies; Bakhtin Circle; racism/anti-racism.

1 Introduction

Every discussion of racism implies epistemological and axiological decisions that direct a reflective theoretical and analytical bias about what /should be/ seen and what /should be/ discussed. Starting from this point of view, the act of analysis, by itself, constitutes, as the members of the Bakhtinian Circle (that underlie this reflection) assert, an ideological choice.

As in other countries, in Brazil, racism is a controversial issue, due to its denial by certain social groups and by public authorities, who blindly face it with government policies (municipal, state and federal) not always efficient or even null about equity, not only of race, but also of gender and class, always intersected, according to Davis (2016) or, as stated by Saffioti (1987), in this "knot" known as patriarchy-capitalism-racism.

In Brazil, an extremely unequal, racist, sexist and homophobic country, until today common sense denies the existence of racism and, at this historical moment, especially with a government of far-right in power, the political landscape is based on actions that stimulate even more racist acts (such as cuts in the budget of even minimal resources for ministries, organizations and official foundations responsible for affirmative policies on culture, education, persecuted groups - such as blacks, Indians, LGBTQIA+ community, among others; orders and trainings to police to exterminate peripheral communities and street dwellers; prison system composed, mostly, by peripheral black men and young, many, without trial; for example).

In other countries, which are openly racist, the social and even geographical structure shows a racial, social and generic division between blacks, poor people, women, LGBTQIA+ and whites, wealthy men in general, who are reportedly straight cis, as is the case in the United States (USA), divided in a polarized way in all directions: politically, the country has two main parties (Democrats and Republicans) which are the only ones released by mainstream press - , the regions of the country, with their states with independent legislations, also reveal social, economic, generic and racial inequalities; and even in a single city, the neighborhoods are

divided from this separatist binary logic (as occurs, for example, in New York, in which the Bronx, peripheral, is called "the neighborhood of blacks", considered ghetto, with its culture, linguistic record among other political-social elements; while Manhattan, economic, political and cultural center of the city, is affluent, hegemonically white and symbol of capital).Whether in one case or another, racism is embedded in the prevailing social structure, no matter the system of government (presidential, parliamentarism, monarchy, communism etc), the political and economic power of the country (richer or poorer) or even the culture (West or East).

The distortion of political orientation and authoritarian approach is today promoted by far-right political movements in the USA (with their supremacist networks) and spread across many other countries, including Brazil. According to Dias (2018), in Brazil can be found the second largest concentration of neo-Nazi cells in the world, implanted since World War II, in the mainstay of the USA, which, from the 1920s, legitimately until 1960, was structured by the eugenics that inspired Italian fascism, of Mussolini and Hitler's German Nazism, based on social Darwinism, which stimulated a permissive mentality, confirmed by the ideological and repressive apparatus of the State (ALTHUSSER, 1992) - legislative system, clinics, among others - , responsible for the execution of many deaths of people considered "inferior", in order to "purify the race" and "improve society" (PAULA & LOPES, 2020; PAULA & SIANI, 2020).

In this context, the issue of structural racism, which is still urgent today, is striking and, during the Barack Obama administration in the USA, was released in the United Kingdom under the direction of an African-American female director Ava Duvernay, a film that presents an insight into the civil rights claims of blacks in the 1960s: *Selma*: a struggle for equality. This film was produced in 2014 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the marches, completed in 2015 and focuses on the march of blacks from the Montgomery to Selma, Alabama, USA.

This film was released at a historic moment of rise of far-right movements in the USA (which is consolidated with the election, a year later, of Donald Trump). The situation in Brazil is not so different, with the far-right in power (Jair Bolsonaro, former federal deputy with thirty years of parliamentary life dedicated to defending racist, misogynist and homophobic positions, with campaign orchestrated by Steve Banon – former planner of Donald Trump´s presidential campaign and far-right activist – and mirrored political practices in Trump, since 2018).

In this text, we discuss how, from the Bakhtinian point of view, anti-racist acts reverberate in the film *Selma* (2014), used as an iconic expression of some of the struggles against racism, since we intend to discuss how the syncretic architectonics (verbivocovisual) of the film reflects and refracts structural racism and anti-racist reactions, understood as iconic, from acts of people (subjects) situated historically and spatially, are immortalized in time by the filmic aesthetic work. The concepts that underlie our discussion are: chronotope, subjects and social voices, of Bakhtin, Medviédev and Volóchinov. We are also guided by the concept of verbivocovisuality (PAULA, 2017; PAULA and SERNI, 2017; PAULA and LUCIANO, 2020a, 2020b, 2020c, 2020d) and studies on racism and anti-racism.

Such discussion is developed from a dialectical-dialogical (qualitative) interpretative approach. The analysis considers some scenes of the film, by exploring color palette and theme song, in relation to historical pictures of the three marches from Montgomery to Selma and pictures of the 2020 anti-racist demonstration in the USA, released by the media, in a syncretic cinematographic and photographic composition.

Reflecting on the Bakhtin´s concept of chronotope of the road and chronotope of the bridge in the history´s Great Time, in view of the relationship between life and art is the objective of this chapter, which turns to the relationship between the actual crossing from Montgomery to Selma (in 1965); how this act immortalizes itself in the film *Selma* (2014); and how, in 2020, several bridges across the country (USA) were used again as a time-space for anti-racist demonstrations, awakened by the violent death of George Floyd, with the motto #blacklivesmatter and its variations around the world (in Brazil, #vidasnegrasimportam, for example). In order to explore the theme, we divide this text, in addition to the Introduction and Final Considerations, into two items: 1) theoretical-epistemological approach; 2) analysis of film and photographic scenes of the road and the bridge.

2   Theoretical-epistemological basements

The so-called Circle of Bakhtin or, as they call Medviédev and Medviédeva (2014), "thought collective " "B.M.V." (the expression "Circle B.M.V." was created by Vauthier, 2010, to think of "auctoriety" and the act of "becoming author" collectively), proposes a "philosophy of language and meaning in general" (2014, p. 12), in an integrated dialogic way, as a social and human unity. Based on what Volóchinov (2019) designates as "sociological method", which puts in dialectical movement voices of subjects (self and other), unsolved, situated in a time-space, the Bakhtinian dialogical proposition puts at stake the relationship between art and life, by understanding the first (art) as reflection and refraction of the second (life).

From the point of view of this "dialectical-dialogical" perspective (PAULA, FIGUEIREDO & PAULA, 2011), we use the categories subject (I-other), space-time (chronotope), responsible act (answerability) and interwoven voices, as guiding conceptions of our discussion, when we consider the film and the photographs as utterances that behave, as explicitly the scholars, as discursive links, each of them with its singularity (VOLÓCHINOV, 2013), because ethical-aesthetic acts that express social voices (in this case, racist/anti-racist) clashing in its small time that historically mark the great time of culture (BAKHTIN, 2018).

The crossing between the cities of Montgomery and Selma is fundamental historically because it characterizes, in the small time (1965), a symbolic revolutionary act that perpetuates itself in the great time of the culture (in 2020), marked by the intersection of the chronotope (BAKHTIN, 2018) specifically the one of the road, marked by the meeting, on the bridge. The bridge is the space-time open to social transformation, in which the anti-racist voice expresses itself as a manifestation of resistance. After all, as Bakhtin states,

> On the road ("the high road"), the spatial and a temporal paths of the most varied people – representatives of all social classes, estates, religions, nationalities, ages – intersect at one spatial and temporal point. People who are normally kept separate by social and spatial distance can accidentally meet; any contrast may crop up, the most various fates may collide and interweave with one another. (2004, p. 243 - Translation by the *authors*[1])

In the mainstay of Bakhtin, Amorim (2004, p. 223 and 224) explains that

> On the road, unexpected encounters happen. These encounters place at stake, precisely, the possibility of a change of road or course, and therein lies, in our view, the most interesting aspect of this chronotope. It is the place par excellence of alterity: the encounter with the other brings in itself the possibility of misleading me.
> (...)
> The road is open and, despite a layout and a direction, it is infinite in its possibilities of bifurcation, of detour and return. The meeting with the other is then entirely left to chance, just as the effects of that meeting are totally unpredictable. The time of the road is also random: can obey a cycle and suddenly see the whole periodization be broken.

The crossing from Montgomery to Selma has this representation of the street (BAKHTIN, 2004) as open collective space, occupied by all, in a level way, without exclusions and where acts of varied nature happen as unique events. Political and festive demonstrations take place in the street, in the squares and on the road. Different from the living room, studied by Bakhtin (1999) from and in Dostoyevsky as space-time deprived of hierarchical political-economic negotiations decided by a closed summit, usually invited wealthy; the street, the square and the road are space-popular times, insubordinate, taken by all for varied purposes.

In the squares occur political rallies and popular shows; excluded people live, ask for help and also steal to survive; in the streets, traffic fights and collective political clashes between excluded, dissatisfied and revolted subjects happen with police, state repression agency, buses are set on fire, commercial establishments are broken, barricades are built, shock troops and cavalry advance with pepper spray, tear gas bombs, in a war of values and social voices; on the road, access route and transition to meetings and disagreements, protesters paralyze transport to draw attention to a cause; as well as, in other settings, celebrations, politics, festive days, among others, also occur in the streets.

The bridge represents the crossing for meetings or disagreements. According to Bakhtin (2004, p. 246), the bridge is "(...) the place where encounters occur (emphasizing their specifically random nature as did meetings "on the road" or "in an alien world". At the same time it connects, it separates geographical and political places, which express heterogeneous social voices. By connecting these spaces and subjects, the bridge opens to dialogue between different social voices. By separating them, it becomes a frontier closed to the clash by barricades of intolerance, in the service of structural hegemony that is wanted homogeneous, to achieve its goal, acts with exclusionary, unequal and violent separatist hatred (symbolic violence - verbal, mental and behavioral; and physical violence - aggression and homicide). The city of Selma iconized the supremacist voice in the USA. Its bridge was selective, as it connected it to whites and separated it from blacks

In capitalism, the hierarchy among classes, races and genders structure society(ies) and neoliberal competitive ideology, reiterated in the most varied social spheres (religious, media, educational, everyday, among others), naturalizes hierarchies, violence and inequalities. As Fernandes states (2006, p. 168), we confuse

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[1] The theoretical works used in this chapter were the Brazilian versions. As we did not have access to correspondence published in English and as some authors do not have their manuscripts in English, we chose to do all the translations of the quotes, as well as the transcription of an excerpt from the film *Selma* (2014).

> (...) racial tolerance with racial democracy. For the latter to exist it is not sufficient that there be some harmony in the racial relations of persons belonging to different racial stocks or belonging to different "races". Democracy means, fundamentally, racial[2], economic and political equality.

Inequality is historical, as Fernandes (1978) explains, because nations, over the time, compete with each other, exploit and overlap, by force, in the name of a colonizing God who allows genocide, violent chains and decimation of entire peoples, "pacified" (or, as Foucault would say, 1997, "docilized"), forced by capture to submit to other men and their political-economic-social logic, which assumed (and, for data groups, even today, assumes) certain groups as free men (men, whites and wealthy) and other groups such as inferior "savages", animal-objects (black women and men, indigenous and from other ethnicities, poor and of different origins), treated by the possession acquired by force, marked by violence and by the economy. This logic did not hold up in a wide-open way. It has created masks (FANON, 2008) sustained by a myth. The "myth of racial democratization" (FERNANDES, 2007), responsible for the naturalization of racism in its base, denied as existing, so much its incorporation.

The idea of race has no record before the colonization of the American continent (QUIJANO, 2009). If, before, peoples were characterized by their place of origin, after, racial "classification" of peoples came to be described by race and separatist designations were created cultural, social, political and economic. Indians, blacks, mestizos, creoles, among other signs, appeared to designate the human being ideologically for its phenotypy and justify a supremacist conception based on biology. Thus, the human subject, time and space intertwine in the idea of society and culture. Based on this logic, structural racism emerges as a pillar of inequality and differences. For Bonilla-Silva:

> That is, that racism is above anything, about practices and behaviors that produce a *racial structure*—a network of social relations at social, political, economic, and ideological levels that shapes the life chances of the various races. This structure is responsible for the production and reproduction of systemic racial advantages for some (the dominant racial group) and disadvantages for others (the subordinated races). Thus, racism as a form of social organization places subjects in common social locations. As subjects face similar experiences, They develop a consciousness, a sense of "us" versus "them". (2015, p. 1360)

This racial structure is also capital, since it was born together with colonialism (QUIJANO, 2009) and this is one of the world's constitutive elements of capitalist power, since it impositively establishes a racial pattern, a standard of power, in all scopes and spheres, founded in capital. Therefore, racism is structural and intertwines subjects, times and spaces in this great systemic logic. From this point of view is that chronotopy is essential for the understanding of social hegemony and resistance, because time-space is what allows to condition or to transform this pattern among subjects and social voices.

As we said before, the road iconizes this historical path. The importance of the revolutionary ethical act of resistance and manifestation through the crossing of the bridge from Montgomery to Selma held in favor of American civil rights to blacks and against structural racism, in 1965. This act in the small time of history, at the same time, is characterized as a unique event of American history, eternalized in the great time, as a cultural event immortalized in the manifestations of 2020, as participants march to the bridges of several American cities and occupy them, including lying on them, alluding to Floyd. The 2014 film aestheticizes this ethics from the point of view of black people (given the position of the camera, often placed besides or behind Martin Luther King, for the viewer to march with him to Selma). The filmic importance is to semioticize the visibility to the world of an ethical act, with aesthetic finish, existing in life, concomitantly, punctual and historical, imbued of marked relevance culturally.

The bridge, in the US, since 1965, with the marches to Selma, is established as a space-time of clash/historical struggle that does not segregate, but combines subjects and heterogeneous voices in defense of equity and against inequalities.

For Bakhtin, the "importance of the chronotope of the road (...) is immense: it´s a rare work that does not contain a variation of this motif, and many words are directly constructed on the road chronotope, and on road meetings and adventures." (2004, p. 98).

The film *Selma* (2014), to mark the revolutionary act of the marches of 1965, has its construction on the chronotope of the road, the meeting and the bridge as enunciation of unique ethical event and, at the same time, a link historical event in the discursive chain and this is the relevance and justification of his study as an anti-racist aesthetic icon.

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[2] We add gender equality too.

3   Anti-racist acts on US bridges: 1965, 2014, 2020, today and forever

Bakhtin (2011, p. 271) states that "the understanding of a living speech, of a living utterance is always accompanied by an active responsive attitude", since "every understanding is pregnant with a response and, in one way or another, necessarily produces it". According to the Russian philosopher, answerability is constitutive of discourse and characterizes the ethical act (BAKHTIN, 1993) of subjects, always dialogic. The responsive act is also responsible because the subject is "without alibi of existence". In this sense, this concept, according to Pereira (2015, p. 55), "brings together the ideas of responding and taking responsibility".

Answerability as a link refers to past and future events. The marches to Selma respond responsibly to the structural racism that exists throughout history and the acts of occupation of the streets and bridges in the USA in 2020 refer to the marches to Selma, as acts that, in the small time, reiterate a social voice of resistance, in defense of equality and against supremacy. In the same way that the first march to Selma happened in response to the violent death of Jackson by police officers, the anti-racist demonstrations in 2020, not only in the USA, but around the world, each configured in its own way, were a response to Floyd's death by police officers. As the racist act remains throughout history, acts of resistance are also repeated.

Selma (2014) is the intersection of the chronotope of the road, composed by the chronotope of the meeting (open and collective), which reveals itself in the bridge among all (blacks, whites, women, men, adults, elderly, children etc.)in an attempt of being levelled by the clash of differences that horizontalize themselves; with the chronotope of the staircase, also composed of the chronotope of the meeting, where the hierarchical clashes materialize and where there is the verticalization of social relations, which catch the differences, inequalities and the social pyramid. In the case of *Selma*, this is explained by the position of the subjects (at the top, the white men, representatives of the US government; and, at the base of the stairs, blacks and women); by the colors of the floors (checkered in white and black or the asphalt of the street); and by the environment itself, that also reveals the clash of forces and social voices: the closed environment (private, at home); and the public (collective, church, government places, streets and bridge); and the colors (the use of the black and white extremes, with the predominance of golden sepia/earthy, which suggests not only the glamour of Martin Luther King's journey, but also that of a great historical time-space in/from the USA).

This chronotopic configuration is fundamental to the construction of the ethical acts *Pravda*, both expressed in the film, with aesthetic finish that glamorizes, especially, the acts of Martin Luther King, as heroic, as in the marches of 1965 and the demonstrations of 2020, as ethical acts of anti-racist resistance. On the stairs, in the film, the superstructural vertical hierarchization (based on the centripetal forces) screams; while, both in the film and in the pictures, on the bridge, the infrastructural horizontalization (based on centrifugal forces) reigns as space-time resistance, recurrent and iconic of the Americans.

The three marches that immortalized the crossing and occupation of the bridge between Montgomery and Selma are characterized as:

1a - 07/03/65: known as "Bloody Sunday", given the violence of police with protesters in Alabama. The death of Jimmie Lee Jackson was the trigger for Montgomery's march to Selma. With an average of 600 participants, the march failed to cross the bridge, but was characterized as an inaugural gesture of demonstrations against exclusion, inequality and violence against blacks, due to prejudice and discrimination;

2a - 09/03/65: with more activists, direct clash between police and protesters, face to face, at each end of the bridge (blacks on one side and police on the other). When the troops move, in an act of defiance for the participants, Luther King retreats by kneeling and guiding the protesters back to the church, fearing violent rebuke;

3a - 03/16/65: with adherence of intellectuals, artists, white civilians in general, with a gigantic proportion, to the point of being assured by the American Army, the Alabama National Guard under federal command, FBI agents and federal marshals. It was in this third attempt that the demonstrators managed to cross the bridge.

These episodes were caught in documentary photographs that make up a collection on the American Black Civil Rights movement. In a comparative work, the film semioticizes the three marches to Selma and the ethical-aesthetic work between art and life can be visualized by figure 1, composed of three iconic documentary photos and three screen prints of three scenes corresponding to the marches, of the film:

Figure1:The three marches from Montgomery to Selma[3]

Through the chromatic work, captured with the help of the programs Adobe Color, Canva and Colordot, we noticed the sepia tone used in the film to refer to a heroic (golden) time of the struggle for civil rights to black Americans. The dark filter used with warm colors (yellow, orange and red, reaching the earthy brown) and cold, depending on the moment of the film, reveals the analogous tones of the production, in agreement with the set of cameras and the speeches of King and in complementary disagreement with the voices supremacists, cold (phlegmatic blue and concrete ash), hard and inflexible, as spotted in figure 2:

Figure2:Chromatic extraction of the marches scenes from the film Selma (2014)[4]

According to the studies of Goethe (2013), Graham-Dixon (2012), Guimarães (2001), Haynes (2008), Heller (2013) and Kandinsky (1970) on colors, planes, shapes, perspective, traces and points, the gradient worked semioticizes, in harmony with the intonation of the song-theme of the film, the clash of voices and social values that walk from white to black, from one side of the bridge to the other, from one city to the other, from right to left, from the back to the front, in a panoramic way to the portrait, from the general plane to close in the foreground. These extremes are not only polarized, but in verbal, vowel/sound and visual tonal gradation.

In Bakhtin´s view "Form and content in discourse are one, once we understand that verbal discourse is a social phenomenon – social throughout its entire range and in each and every of its factors, from the sound image to the furthest reaches of abstract meaning." (2004, p. 259) After all, "The problem of three-dimensional constructive totality, all the time, has been replaced by the superficial question of composition as a distribution of verbal masses and verbal themes, and sometimes simply as transmental verbal masses". (MEDVIÉDEV, 2012, p. 97). In the opposite way, the philosophy of the Circle proposes to understand "(...) the potential language of languages" (BAKHTIN, 2011, p. 311).

In this sense, thinking about the verbivocovisual configurations that constitute the film syncretic utterance is fundamental because the multimodal tridimensionality constitutes the architectonic unit of the work. Thus, when considering the relationship, for example, between the scenes of the marches, on the road and on the bridge, with the song *Glory*, discursive theme, the polarization presents harmonically between vocal/musical

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[3]Website (Civil Rights Movement Photographs. Available at: https://www.crmvet.org/images/imgmont.htm. Accessed on: September 27, 2021) and Film (Available at: https://assistirfilmes.life/filme/selma-uma-luta-pela-igualdade/. Accessed on: 27 Sep 2021) - Authors' elaboration
[4]Film – Prepared by the authors

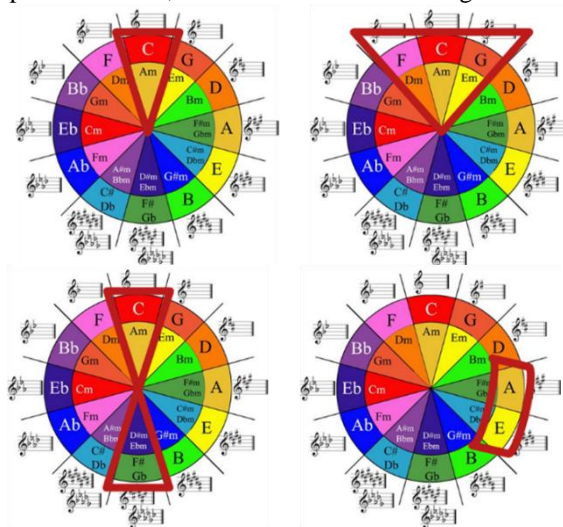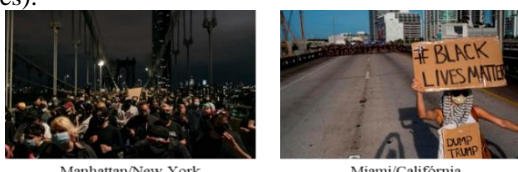tonal contrasts and the chromatic palette worked, how can we visualize in figure 3:

Figure3:Synchronization of overlaid tonal extractions (sound and chromatic)[5]

The song *Glory*, composed by John Legend Common and Che Smith, is a rap mixed with R&B (Rithm&Blues), sung with gospel choir, on a scale of C major (C), rhythm 4 x 4, a classic with tempo in A minor (Am) / F / C/E) / F / G. The major scale used does not admit accidents (neither sharp nor flat). Its relative tonality in A minor and its parallel in C minor lead to a solar construction (analogous with variations of shadows).

The slower rhythmic time, marked in the introduction, the chorus and the ending, with acute choral vocalize (in "Glory") refers to height (heavenly or, as it is said in the film, "the voice of God"). The notes, sound and chromatic tones and the complementary rhythm of RAP put the musical in the secondary plane (as a background) to the verbal (to the lyrics). This part has a typical speaking rhythm of the musical style, with low voice, cold colors and chord in F that characterizes the unity of the claim speech. This battle worked in chromatic tonal regions and analogous, complementary and dark sonorous compose the tensivearchitectonics of the film.

At the Academy Awards ceremony, when the theme song won the statuette as the best song of that year, John Legend stated in his speech that "Selma may have been 50 years ago, but it's now because the fight for justice is now. The right to vote for which they fought today is being compromised. We live in the country with the largest prison population in the world. There are more black men imprisoned than slaves at the time of slavery". This pronouncement of Legend intertwines the historical marchs of 1965, immortalized by the 2014 and anticipates the anti-racist manifestations of 2020, a time when, both in the USA and in the world. People took to the streets protesting the violent treatment of the police that led to the death of Floyd.

The demonstrations took place in the streets, this open and collective chronotope that semioticizes the voice and the acts of the people, in a path of clash between space-temporally marked social voices. If, in each country these manifestations occur in a unique way, depending on the socio-cultural and historical configuration, in the USA, the bridges perpetuate antiracist acts in the great time. The sense of Americans addressing and occupying bridges intensifies by considering these acts as historical events that reiterate equal civil rights protests and recall, again, from the violent death of a young black man, that "black lives matter". The pictures that went viral on social networks around the world (some examples make up figure 4) acquire value and strength intensified when considering the importance of the ethical acts performed in the space-time bridge. A very different meaning from other places, which do not have this historical experience (as in the case of Brazil, for example, in which the configurations of demonstrations take place on the streets, on the squares and on the roads, but not on the bridges).

Manhattan/New York   Miami/Califórnia

[5]Prepared by the authors.

Figure 4:Anti-racist demonstrations on bridges in various cities in the US, in 2020[6]

For this reason, the demonstrations at the bridges of several American cities in 2020 symbolize, at the same time, the reiteration of an unfinished and unresolved clash (the structural racism still in force) and the renewal of the importance and visibility of discussion on the theme of racial, social, economic and political inequality in a tone that recovers one of the speeches of King, uttered in the film, in response to the murder of Jackson, in which he states:

> Who killed Jimmie Lee Jackson? We know that a state trooper, acting on George Wallace's orders, pulled a gun and pulled the trigger, but how many other fingers were on that trigger? Who killed Jimmie Lee Jackson? Every cop who abuses the law to terrorize. Every white politician who feeds on prejudice and hatred. Every white preacher who preaches the Bible and remains silent in front of his entire congregation. Who killed Jimmie Lee Jackson? Every black man and woman who stands idly by without joining the fight, while their brothers and sisters are humiliated, brutalized and ripped from this Earth (Transcript by the authors)

Like Jackson, structural racism killed Floyd and so many others the blacks/the poor. Every day, still alive, the system kills them, of hunger, discrimination, inequalities, lack of opportunities, prejudice, exclusion, imprisonment and other types of violence, the most diverse.

4   Concluding Remarks

Our intention to think how racism lies in the systemic basis that structures society through a dialogic analysis between life and art has been reached as a responsive and responsible ethical act of researchers that, more than understand the socio-cultural manifestations, also position themselves, as hooks (2010, p. 11): "In order for this world to exist, we must end racism and all forms of domination. If I choose to dedicate my life to the fight against oppression, I am helping to transform the world into the place where I would like to live". After all, the discussion of race and racism is a political discussion. Not assuming this ethical position means, according to Gomes, falling "(...) into the fabric of racism and the myth of racial democracy" (2003, p. 78).

When we think about the link not only between life and art, but also the clash among voices and social forces of contrary orientation, which represent, in a way, super and infrastructure, we must not forget that the dialectical movement-dialogic historical-discursive occurs by the singularities of each act. Thus, as Sovik states, "Ideas only become effective if, at the end of the day, they are connected with a specific constellation of social forces" (2004, p. 44). Thus, the social voices do not respond to any voices and statements, but to certain values (always ideological), which crystallize or are renewed, situated in a historical time-space, with a certain configuration (of power or outside it). So, according to Sovik,

> White's silent overvaluation makes sense, not because hegemonic classes are uniformly white, but because it allows us to reconfirm that we are facing power (or "beauty"), in the form it took during the historical process that began with European colonization: (...) The more silenced the whiteness, the more difficult it is to combat outside the terrain in which it reigns (2004, p. 371)

Somehow, this reflexive gesture made by us engages as decolonial, necessary to the racist hegemonic combat, since in the American continent the valorization of the European colonizer led to a mindset and to a submissive behavior (especially in Central and South America, in general, with a New Latin language, the feeling of inferiority is even clearer: the European descent is applauded and the African peoples and matrices, as highlighted by Hall, 2003, are erased). The stereotyped models and patterns are white and, to modify them, we need to decolonize our minds, our discourses and our daily acts.

We occupy the bridges. We break through the borders. We travel on the roads with a cognitive awareness of the assumption of who we are. Write other stories. From other places of speech (RIBEIRO, 2019a). Or else, we will perish, murdered by our differences and heterogeneities, while reproducing without ceasing the models we learned, as Adichie declares, as a child: "All my characters were white with blue eyes. They played in the snow. They ate apples." (2019). This is precisely because racism is structural, because, as

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[6]G1 (Available at: https://g1.globo.com/mundo/noticia/2020/06/03/oitavo-dia-de-protestos-contra-o-racismo-nos-eua-e-mais-calmo.ghtml. Accessed on: September 27, 2021) - Editing prepared by the authors

hooks says: "In a society where white supremacy prevails, black people's lives are permeated by political issues that explain the internalization of racism and a feeling of inferiority." (2010, s/p).

In the white and black relationship, the white assumes the "I" and the black, the "other", treated as a "it". This dialogue is hierarchized and separated by non-recognition (FANON, 2008), by non-identity with otherness, by remoteness, by invisibility and by erasure of the other, different. Or, as Hall (2003) explains, by the game of difference and borders: the other, even left out, constitutes the self. Thus, like racism, according to Ribeiro (2019b), it is "a system of oppression that denies rights (...). Recognizing the structural character of racism can be paralyzing" and the first act of combating racism must be an internal step of self-awareness about the internalization of racism embedded in each of us and, later, daily, small perceptions and changes with us and with others, through loving-kindness.

The struggle for empathy as a political act is not confused with the acceptance of a certain hierarchy, but with the recognition (FANON, 2008) of the possibilities of existences, experiences and diverse, heterogeneous and plural configurations. This has been proposed. Our bridges open to the streets and roads real, photographic and cinematographic and are configured by the word that is born on the sheet of paper and, hopefully, scattered in the subjects, located in our historical-temporal space, in a construction, to many hands and voices of a *modus vivendi* and *operandi* consisting of collective cooperation. A world where all lives matter.

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