Regimes of visibility and algorithmic surveillance on digital platforms: Operationalizing the thought through images in a collaborative perspective

Regimes de visibilidade e vigilância algorítmica nas plataformas digitais: operacionalizando o pensamento por imagens em perspectiva colaborativa

Regímenes de visibilidad y vigilancia algorítmica en plataformas digitales: operacionalizando el pensamiento a través de imágenes en una perspectiva colaborativa

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Abstract: In this article, I present and analyze the results obtained in the first interview for the ongoing thesis project, which investigates how visibility regimes interfere with the algorithmic surveillance regime of bodies in contemporary times. In an initiative stimulated by the exchanges carried out in the Thematic Group Digital and Popular Communication, promoted by the IX ALAIC Summer School, I propose to connect in a single interview the two methodological fronts addressed: the construction of a collaborative visual atlas in the theoretical wake of archeology of visual knowledge, inspired by Aby Warburg, and conducting semi-structured interviews with collective leaders who question aspects of the capitalist culture of surveillance. To this end, the interviewee was presented with a set of images of artistic works related to the themes of body visibility and algorithmic surveillance. The data obtained brought up three thematic nodes: 1) Historical struggles, 2) Countercolonial cosmovisions, and 3) Thinking of images in opposition, which will be analyzed in resonance with the reflections of the authors Antônio Bispo dos Santos, Tarcízio Silva, and Kate Crawford.

Keywords:

Methodology, thought through images, surveillance, visibility, digital platforms

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Resumo: Neste artigo, apresento e analiso os resultados obtidos na primeira entrevista realizada para o projeto de tese em curso, cujo objetivo é investigar de quais maneiras os regimes de visibilidade interferem no regime de vigilância algorítmica dos corpos na contemporaneidade. Numa iniciativa estimulada pelas trocas realizadas no Grupo Temático Comunicação Digital e Popular, promovido pela IX Escola de Verão da ALAIC, me proponho a conectar numa só entrevista as duas frentes metodológicas abordadas: a construção de um atlas visual colaborativo, na esteira teórica da arqueologia do saber visual, de inspiração warburguiana, e a realização de entrevistas semi-estruturadas com lideranças de coletivos que questionam aspectos da cultura capitalista de vigilância. Para tanto, foi apresentada à entrevistada um conjunto de imagens de obras artísticas relacionadas aos temas da visibilidade dos corpos e vigilância algorítmica. Os dados obtidos trouxeram à tona três nós temáticos: 1) Lutas históricas; 2) Cosmovisões contracoloniais e 3) Pensar as imagens por oposição, que serão analisados em ressonância com as reflexões dos autores/as Antônio Bispo dos Santos, Tarcízio Silva e Kate Crawford.

Palavras-chave:
Metodologia, pensamento por imagens, vigilância, visibilidade, plataformas digitais

Resumen: En este artículo presento y analizo los resultados obtenidos en la primera entrevista realizada para el proyecto de tesis en curso, que tiene como objetivo investigar de qué manera los regímenes de visibilidad interfieren en el régimen algorítmico de vigilancia de los cuerpos en la época contemporánea. En una iniciativa estimulada por los intercambios realizados en el Grupo Temático Comunicación Digital y Popular, impulsado por la IX Escuela de Verano de la ALAIC, propongo conectar en una sola entrevista los dos frentes metodológicos abordados: la construcción de un espacio colaborativo atlas visual, siguiendo la estela de la teoría de la arqueología del conocimiento visual, inspirada en Aby Warburg, y la realización de entrevistas semiestructuradas a líderes de colectivos que cuestionan aspectos de la cultura capitalista de la vigilancia. Para eso, se presentó a la entrevistada un conjunto de imágenes de obras artísticas relacionadas con los temas de visibilidad corporal y vigilancia algorítmica. Los datos obtenidos plantearon tres nodos temáticos: 1) Luchas históricas; 2) Cosmovisiones contracoloniales y 3) Pensar las imágenes por oposición, que serán analizadas en resonancia con las reflexiones de los autores Antônio Bispo dos Santos, Tarcízio Silva y Kate Crawford.

Palabras clave:

Metodología, pensamiento por imágenes, vigilância, visibilidade, plataformas digitales

1. Introductory notes

This work resulted from my participation in the IX Summer School, promoted by the Latin American Association of Communication Researchers (ALAIC) and based at the Universidad del Norte in Barranquilla, Colombia, in May 2023. I participated in the Digital and Popular Communication Group on that occasion, presenting the ongoing doctoral research project.

Among the feedback from colleagues and teachers on the work presented, the suggestion of collective resonance, that there was a greater connection between the two proposed methodological fronts, caught my attention: a) the construction of an atlas of images; b) conducting semi-structured interviews with leaders of collectives that question the current algorithmic surveillance regime or that present inclusive alternative to the contemporary scenario, taking into account intersectional aspects of race, gender, and class.

To make this undertaking more straightforward, I will briefly present my research problem, the objectives, and some authors and key concepts worked on in the thesis. Next, I focus on the debate about the methodological strategies adopted and the potential and points for improvement related to the interview conducted.

2. Visibility and surveillance: knowing the research

The interference of the surveillance regimes of each era in the aesthetic and visibility regimes of their time is a theme that has been and continues to be explored in academic literature. Based on authors such as Michel Foucault (2018), Fernanda Bruno (2013) and Paula Sibilia (2016), it is possible to reflect, for example, on the interrelationship between confessional technologies and the popularization of memories, intimate correspondence, personal diaries and other autobiographical narratives in modern culture and literature, or even about the influence that the proliferation of images captured by urban surveillance cameras have on broadcast journalism police coverage, pornography, reality shows and other audiovisual productions.

However, I also consider a different reflection pertinent, which allows us to think about how such aesthetics can expand and implement contemporary surveillance, which goes beyond

the panoptic surveillance carried out in disciplinary societies, as studied by Foucault (2014). In the current society of control (Deleuze, 2013), surveillance is presented in a distributed, algorithmic way, incorporated into digital platforms, spreading and confusing among the circuits of pleasure and entertainment (Bruno, 2013).

That said, I propose a movement of thought opposite to the one I identify most frequently. In other words, instead of observing the reflections or traces of surveillance culture in the production of meaning and communicational presentations, the research question I raise is: how the current surveillance regime is remodeled by the visibility regimes of bodies in digital social networks? Therefore, this investigation focuses on understanding how the dynamics of seeing and being seen are operationalized in contemporary times, now crossed by algorithmic technologies and digital platforms.

Thus, the notions of body and visibility are discussed and problematized in dialogue with current surveillance regimes, in which traditional panoptic models seem to coexist with more subtle algorithmic surveillance strategies but are no less effective and, indeed, with the power to penetrate the wider society. Strategies that channel political and economic interests in their public or private sphere and that find on digital platforms — spaces in which the image of bodies has strong appeal — fruitful environments for data collection, for the implementation of knowledge relations, and, consequently, of power and control over bodies.

The dynamics of invisibility, hypervisibility, and reinforcement of stereotypes, such as racial and gender, of historically subordinated groups are also debated, followed by an investigation into initiatives and collectives that propose lines of escape and spaces of resistance in the current "capitalist culture of surveillance, "a term adopted here as a way of articulating the conceptualizations of theorists David Lyon (2018) and Shoshana Zuboff (2020).

To this end, the thesis is structured around three main theoretical axes: archeology of visual knowledge, surveillance, and visibility. First, I carry out a theoretical debate about thinking through images. With this, I propose to intersperse the written work with the presentation of image boards I gathered and assembled throughout the first semesters of the research, operationalizing the theoretical-methodological commitment of an "archaeology of visual knowledge".

The term "archaeology of visual knowledge" is worked on based on a reading carried out by the philosopher Georges Didi-Huberman (2018) when he approaches the *Mnemosyne Atlas*,

prepared by the historian or from art Aby Warburg to the Foucauldian intellectual enterprise. In common, both in the Foucauldian history of science and in the Warburgian history of art, there is a refusal of crystallized and hegemonic understandings of what constitutes a work of art or scientific discourse, granting equivalent importance to popular or vernacular works, as well as to spaces of deviation. There is also a refusal of chronological linearity to understand the world in both.

The second theoretical axis focuses on creating an overview of the different understandings that the term surveillance accumulates in the Human Sciences, highlighting the precursor works of Foucault (2021) on the power-knowledge pair, fundamental for understanding the updates proposed by authors /as such as those already mentioned Deleuze (2013), Bruno (2013), Lyon (2018) and Zuboff (2020), but also Han (2018), Chamayou (2015), Birchall (2017), Beiguelman (2021), Crary (2016), among other contemporary thinkers who dedicate themselves to surveillance studies and to mobilizing, twisting or expanding Foucault's theoretical collection to think about recent phenomena, with an emphasis on the particularities of digital culture, the use of digital platforms, such as digital social networks, and in the current neoliberal political-economic context.

The third axis of theorization is dedicated to the dimension of visibility. Investigating the scopic and attentional extent of surveillance over bodies on digital social networks is central to the research. By scopic dimension, I understand the "devices and practices of seeing and being seen in contemporary culture" (Bruno, 2013, p. 85), involved in a "field of disputes in which more dominant models and a series of visual subcultures compete". The attentional dimension encompasses guiding and exercising attention, following Crary's (2016) thoughts on awareness in modern culture.

In this debate, the term "regime" deserves attention. Its choice is mainly, but not only, due to the centrality given to the body. For Foucault (2019), and in allusion to the dietary treatises of the Greek tradition, the regime allows us to think about human actions and their elaboration of rules of what can and cannot be done, a true art of living. Therefore, when I mention surveillance regimes, for example, I am referring to a whole group of guidelines — of political, economic, and cultural contours —which determine specific actions and behaviors as more or less healthy and moral and to which we are led or not to follow.

Historically variable regimes range from the formation of daily habits, such as how we eat and dress, to, as I argue here, broader scenarios, such as visibility and surveillance. However — and this point will be stressed throughout the thesis through the presentation of lines of flight (Deleuze, 2019) traced by counter-surveillance strategies — the author warns us to be careful not to crystallize these regimes as manuals of the only possible ways of we are in the world. At this point, the reflections of authors such as Tarcízio Silva (2022), Safiya Noble (2021), and Kate Crawford (2021) will be discussed on issues concerning algorithmic racism and questioning the myth of the neutrality of algorithmic dynamics.

3. Methodological fronts

The thesis under development unfolds from two main methodological fronts. The first focuses on working with images, relating to an episteme that understands images as a producer of knowledge. Here, it is worth highlighting that the understanding of episteme that covers this research shares an affinity with the definition and problematization outlined by Grada Kilomba (2019b). The philosopher and artist point out that epistemology defines the issues most deserving of attention as a science of knowledge acquisition: privileged forms of analysis and the methods considered most appropriate. In this way, a constant critical look is expected at what select questions are in academic spaces, who these questions are of interest to, where and to whom their answers go, and attention to what the methodological — and, I add, stylistic — procedures are. — managed in the conduct of the study.

Returning to the images, she points out that they will not be worked solely to exemplify ideas already exposed by the words but based on what they produce on their own – and in contact with others. In this sense, I return to the operationalization of the Atlas device – or Atlas principle, as proposed by Didi-Huberman (2018) in direct allusion to the work of Warburg (2010). In his *Mnemosyne Atlas*, the art historian materialized this understanding of the image, assembling an atlas of 63 plates of images that say less about the meanings individually inscribed in each figure than about the friction caused by the approaches and distances between them.

Due to the associative and non-hierarchical character in addition to this way of thinking with images, this strategy will help to understand the visibility regimes present in contemporary digital social networks, especially concerning the centrality of bodies, allowing the gathering of

photographs, moving image frames, paintings and other images that reflect the connections between visibility and surveillance.

The second methodological front reflects a more recent bet. It concerns the current stage of contact with leaders of initiatives, collectives, teaching and research institutions, and organizations that question or propose lines of escape from the current regime of algorithmic surveillance of bodies. The intention is for representatives of these groups to be interviewed to collect qualitative data through semi-structured interviews via Google Meet. Curating Brazilian collectives that question and take a critical stance in the face of algorithmic surveillance in the public and private spheres are groups such as *Data Privacy Brasil*[2], *O Panóptico*[3], *Coding Rights*[4], *Tire meu rosto da sua mira*[5] and *Coalizão Direito na Rede*[6].

The interview questions - which, at the time of the Summer School, were still in the evaluation phase - were initially divided into five groups: 1) *Presentation*, when contextualizing questions would be asked to the leadership, such as information about their trajectory and performance in the collective; 2) *Surveillance*, with comprehensive questions about whether or not surveillance exists on digital platforms. Still in this block, there was a specific moment with the display of the logo of the five big techs presented by Zuboff (2020) as representatives of current surveillance capitalism: Google, Microsoft, Apple, Meta and Amazon; 3) *Visibility/Body*, encompassing questions about whether or not people care about giving up their data to technology companies, and whether or not there are bodies that are more or less privileged or harmed in this dynamic; 4) *Social Networks*, with questions about the possibility of resistance on the digital platforms themselves, in addition to an exercise in speculative storytelling about how leadership imagines we will communicate in twenty years; 5) *Closing*, opening space for additional comments on digital activism, on how to participate in the collective, etc.

To evaluate this proposal, the "outside" look of the participants of the thematic group during the IX Summer School was valuable, as it pointed out the mismatch between the construction of the image atlases and the interviews, which were not connected in a direct mode, sounding islanded, disconnected. The possibility was then suggested that, in some way, I could

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[2] https://dataprivacy.com.br/
[3] https://opanoptico.com.br/
[4] https://www.instagram.com/codingrights/
[5] https://tiremeurostodasuamira.org.br/
[6] https://www.instagram.com/direitosnarede/

display the images of the atlas plates to the interviewees: an intriguing and challenging proposal that I was poring over in the months that immediately followed the event.

4. Images that call other images

Parallel to this, I validated some epistemological hypotheses about working with images during the 32nd CompósAnnual Meeting in July of the same year. At the congress, I presented the article *Feral Atlas e Projeto Selvagem: constelações e compostagens de imagens nas curvas do tempo espiralar* [Feral Atlas and Wild Project: Constellations and Compostings of Images in the Curves of the Spiral Time] (Assunção Oliveira, 2023). In the text, I argue that just as pertinent as thinking about the metaphor of constellations, a recurrent one in studies on the philosophy of image, and with a solid Benjaminian allusion, is thinking about the image of composting - or composting. By thinking of images as organic matter in decomposition and constant mixing, we can fertilize other ways of thinking about aesthetics and epistemology. In this sense, the metaphor appears to be particularly productive when dealing with collaborative, plurilingual, and multimedia projects, such as *Atlas Feral* and *Projeto Selvagem*, empirical objects of the work presented.

The first, *Feral Atlas* (Tsing et al., 2021), names the venture organized by anthropologist Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing (United States) and the collective formed by Jennifer Deger (Australia), Alder Keleman Saxena (United States) and Feifei Zhou (China). Available digitally in website format, *Feral Atlas* includes a cluster of texts and audiovisual images that revolve around the theme of the Anthropocene and the human and non-human interactions that emerge within it and shape new landscapes, sociability, and ways of existing globally. Designed to be accessed interactively, illustrations of insects, plants, bacteria, viruses, fungi, and elements such as fire, antibiotics, and induced earthquakes appear on the website's screen. By clicking on one of the images, with each new access floating in different positions, we are directed to an illustrated map that allows us to access subpages with videos, scientific articles, poems, photographs, and other artistic-scientific materials related to the theme.

The second, *Projeto Selvagem*, is organized by indigenous leader and Brazilian philosopher Ailton Krenak, Anna Dantes, and a collective of translators, artists, and researchers (Selvagem, 2021). This project also includes promoting debates, publishing books, and producing film pieces. The latter are brought together under the title *Flecha Selvagem* (Mapa das

flechas, 2021), totaling seven videos - the so-called arrows - which, through audiovisual editing, present a composite of the most diverse images: photographs, illustrations, artistic video frames or those available in the media, animations, drawings, and sculptures, among others - archive or original. On the project website, we read that the arrows juxtaposing various images side by side reveal "a radiant myriad of 'composed' images from various indigenous, artistic and scientific archives, as well as animations and original music" (Mapa das flechas, 2021). The videos, narrated by Krenak, raise discussions about the cosmology of indigenous peoples, philosophy, and science in an intertwined way, and their scripts are available in English and French, some even in Spanish and Italian.

I briefly present the two projects as a way of illustrating the power that working with the atlas has in preparing and disseminating works that are not only plurilingual, multimedia, and, often, with decolonial tones but also collaborative. This last quality seemed to be of great value to be implemented in my ongoing research, revealing a weakness I previously could not name: the production of boards based only on my sensibilities and criteria.

I was also inspired by the possibility of creating a collaborative atlas. I found a way to bring some of the work with the production of image boards that I have been putting together since the beginning of the research into the interviews. The intention is, therefore, less to present the images seeking explanations, understandings, and meanings to be identified by the leaders and more to make thinking through images based on the potential new associations that the gesture of displaying such images to the leaders stimulates.

With all these intentions as a backdrop, I chose to reformulate the previously prepared interview guide. This time, the questions were organized into six blocks, distributed as follows: 1) *Presentation*, now more objective, focusing on the relationship between leadership and the collective of which it is part; 2) *Surveillance*, maintaining broad questions about the existence or not of surveillance in digital spaces, but removing images of big tech logos from being displayed; 3) *Visibility*, maintaining questions about the reasons why the exposure of intimacy and the intrinsic transfer of data on digital platforms persist, as well as the question of whether or not there are more or less privileged bodies in this process; 4) *Lines of flight and speculative fable*, bringing together in a single block questions about the possibility of resistance to the current scenario of algorithmic surveillance; about whether and how it is possible to resist from within the digital platforms themselves and closing with an invitation to speculate on what

communication will be like in twenty years; 5) *Exercise of thinking through images*, a new block in which I display four images and, from them, ask what they make you think and what other images come to light; 6) *Closing*, leaving space for additional comments.

Regarding the fifth block, it is therefore worth further detailing. It starts with provocations: a) *I will show you four images/works, and I would like to hear what you think when you see each,* and b) *Does this image make you think of other image/s? If so, which one?* Interspersed with the display of the following four images: one per slide and, at the end, constellated into a single composition:
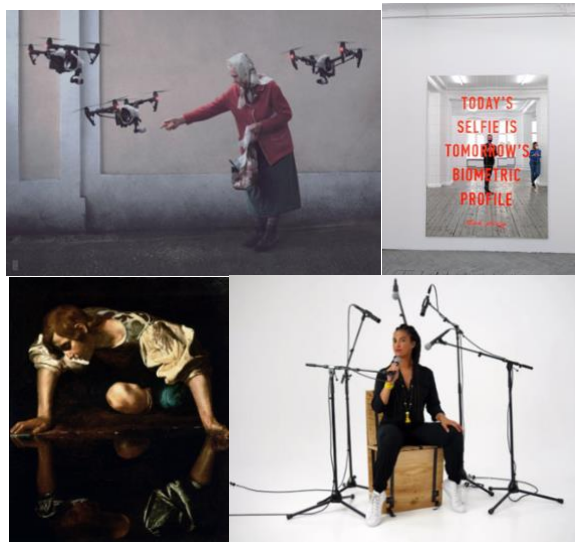
Images 01 to 04. Clockwise, starting from the top left corner: Russia 2016, by Evgeny Zubkov; Today's selfies are tomorrow's biometric profile, by Adam Harvey; Painting Narcissus (1597-1599), by Caravaggio; Performance Ilusões Vol. I, Narciso e Eco (2017). Sources: Zubkov (2018); Harvey (2016); Wikiart (2021); Kilomba (2019a).

The four images were collected from previously created boards, which, as already mentioned, somehow raise questions concerning the themes of seeing and being seen and watching and being watched, stitching together the pieces of visibility and surveillance. There are four images of artistic works, and each works in a different medium: digital art, installation, painting, and performance. As already investigated in a previous study, "art contributes to critical reflection on the current capitalist culture of surveillance, distributed between state and entertainment circuits, entangled by the fragile boundaries between public and private" (Assunção Oliveira e Soares Bezerra, 2023, pp. 13-14).

The first is the digital work *Russia 2016* by Russian artist and designer Evgeny Zubkov (2018). She retracts. There is a lady feeding food to three drones approaching her in a posture similar to someone feeding pigeons. I arrived at this image through the speculative fiction text published in the *Imagining Surveillance Futures* dossier of the journal *Surveillance & Society* (Koskela et al., 2021).

The second is *Today's Selfies is Tomorrow's Biometric Profile*, the installation by the Berlin-based American artist Adam Harvey (2016). With a trajectory of works critical of contemporary surveillance systems, in this work, Harvey opted for a minimalist approach, with the display of a mirror hanging on the wall with the words *Today's selfie is tomorrow's biometric profile*, in direct reference to the intertwining between exposure of oneself on digital platforms and collection of behavioral surplus, here understood as the engine of the business model of surveillance capitalist companies (Zuboff, 2020).

The third image is the painting *Narcissus* (1597-1599) by the Italian painter Caravaggio. It depicts a scene from the Hellenic mythological narrative that tells the story of Narcissus and Eco. Reclining on the ground at the edge of a lake, the painter depicts the male figure of Narcissus looking intently at his reflection in the water. The presence of this myth in the Western imagination is reflected, for example, in the idea of narcissism, a term soon embraced by psychoanalytic theory to characterize the love that an individual has for themselves, which can lead to disorder.

Finally, there is a photograph of the performance *Ilusões Vol. I, Narciso e Eco* (2017), created and starring Grada Kilomba (2019a). In the image, the artist and philosopher appear sitting on a wooden chair, with an upright posture and looking forward, with five microphones pointed at her, one of which she holds with one hand.

However, these explanations or captions of the images were not presented to the interviewee. Differently, I believe in contaminating as little as possible the reading and the sparks that the images, by themselves, awaken. In this sense, and to better understand how this methodological strategy operated, I detail the reflections raised in the interview on the following topic.

5. *"Se tiver erva pra tomar banho, pra mim, eu estou de boa."* [*If there's weed to take a bath with, I'm fine with it*]

With the interview redesign already in place, I contacted the first potential interviewers for a test interview. This group is the leadership of a Brazilian collective that, among other issues, defends banning facial recognition technologies in public surveillance. With their positive feedback for the meeting, the interview was scheduled remotely via Google Meet on August 17, 2023, at 8:30 am (Brasília time zone). The recording of the interview, which totals 50'20", had its audio transcribed with the aid of the *Transkriptor*[7] software and was subsequently reviewed manually. For this article, I point out three main thematic nodes that stood out in the interviewee's responses, which I will call 1) Historical struggles, 2) Counter-colonial worldviews, and 3) Thinking about images in opposition.

The first of them - Historical struggles - was revealed from the Presentation block, remaining in the background throughout the interview. In the first question, a request for a personal and professional introduction to the leadership, the interviewee - who we will generically call A. here to preserve her identity - praises the matriarchal aspect of her family, highlighting the role of articulator that her grandmother played in the neighborhood where lived. At another point, she highlights the connection between her current struggle in the collective and the struggles that have historically been fought in Brazil, in which the markers of racial and gender differences, for example, are central:

> So, as campaign coordinator, these are my concerns: Today, bringing to the center of the debate people who have historically been persecuted through these technologies. And then, I think to conclude, one thing that is important to say to me about how I understand my work with digital technology Today: I know that no fight I have Today concerning digital technologies, the uses of their impacts are necessarily new. It connects with historical struggles in our country, right? And digital technology, right, and these spaces that open up so that we can demand responsible use in some way or, as the campaign postulates, the banning of facial recognition, it happens due to a change in capitalism. When capitalism changes, right? It stops being market capitalism and becomes data capitalism, in which our information becomes, you know, the new commodity, the same bodies will be exploited in the same way, generating added value, with the same crossings

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[7] Available in: https://transkriptor.com/pt-br/.

of gender, race, of class, of territory, so geopolitics is also something very important in this process, in my reading now, right, as coordinator, So, that has been my reflection. (A., 2023, oral communication)

This way of understanding present phenomena aligns with the vision of researcher Tarcízio Silva (2022), for whom algorithmic racism manifests itself as a layer of structural racism that "shapes the future and horizons of power relations, adding more opacity to the global exploitation and oppression that had already occurred since the colonial project of the 16th century". In this way, it becomes unavoidable to confront the racializing logic of surveillance that has been embedded in body control strategies since the colonial period. These are revealed in processes in which, at the same time as they make subordinated bodies invisible to deny their rights, in other circumstances, they also hyper-monitor, order, classify, and punish them in a process that manifests itself from scientific racism -colonial to the current necropolitics of bodies, as investigated by Cameroonian philosopher Achille Mbembe (2018). Racism is understood, therefore, as a technology that enables biopower. In this scenario, technologies such as facial recognition, the focus of the activism carried out by the interviewee, intertwine with the culture of incarceration and predictive policing technologies, which are intrinsically and historically biased and racist. Using data made available by the National Penitentiary Information Survey - Jun. 2016, Tarcízio Silva (2022) highlights that:

> With more than 700 thousand people incarcerated, Brazil has the third-largest prison population in the world. [...] Among the people incarcerated, 64% are black, and 75% were unable to complete secondary education. When we cross this data with the reasons for prison, we come across the criminalization of blackness and poverty. Among men, 26% are arrested for trafficking and 12% for theft, while 62% of women are arrested for trafficking and 11% for theft.

These numbers reinforce the connection between the historical struggles waged by subaltern peoples and contemporary activism against the use of artificial intelligence for facial recognition in public security cameras, as argued by the interviewee. She further contends that surveillance operates on two fronts: from the State to bodies, controlling them and understood by the collective as "techno-authoritarianism," and, in the second, from the platforms, understood as companies, outlining consumption profiles.

I understand the two fronts connectedly, with the "advances" achieved in each being recurrently incorporated by the other. Australian researcher Kate Crawford (2021) illustrates this scenario of feedback between public and private surveillance when she presents the case of the *NIST Special Database 32 - Multiple Encounter Dataset*, a database maintained by the National Institute of Standards and Technology, part of the Department of Commerce from the United States. The collection contains many mugshots - the so-called identification portraits or, more informally, "prisoner photos." Based on the extractive logic that prevails Today that all data is in the world to be collected and used, the context of these photographs is disregarded, which begin to be used without the consent of those photographed to train artificial intelligence technologies and, as a consequence, refining an automated form of vision that evokes the eugenic theories and experiments of Francis Galton, who at the end of the 19th century worked with photographs of prisoners to determine what a "criminal type" would be (Crawford, 2021, p. 91). Once again, the historicity and continuity of these historical agendas in the present stand out.

The second thematic node she identifies in the interview concerns the recurrence of counter-colonial worldviews, understood by the interviewee as a counter-hegemonic philosophical perspective to consider the role of digital technologies and communication. In a direct allusion to the thinking of the quilombola leader Antônio Bispo dos Santos, the interviewee points to confluences, a central concept in her thought:

> *He [Antônio Bispo dos Santos] talks about worldviews and confluences, right? They are people who relate to the land, resources, and human needs respectfully, indicating a possible path for the continuity of human existence here on Earth. We are talking about digital, and we now face the most significant challenges of regulating new technologies. Still, we continue to be part of a world with a date so that our conditions, the existence of human life... They have an end date, in the way we relate. Platforms and digital are related to this end of the world. It is a narrative of capture in which nothing escapes. Our bodies do not escape, our subjectivity does not escape, and mineral resources used to create our devices do not escape, and this will generate conflict with the Earth, which will generate conflict with other worldviews. So, this capitalist worldview is doomed, and traditional people show us that there is another way.* (A., 2023, oral communication)

In the words of Nêgo Bispo himself (Bispo dos Santos, 2023, p. 15), as the intellectual is also known, "confluence is the energy that is moving us towards sharing, towards recognition,

towards respect [...], is a force that yields, that increases, that expands". From this, it may be possible to derive the idea of a confluence of knowledge, through which, the author points out (ibidem, p. 45), "we formed quilombos, invented by Afro-confluent people, in conversation with indigenous peoples." With this horizon in view, it becomes possible to think of ways out of the pessimistic scenario regarding algorithmic surveillance that is unfolding before our eyes. In A.'s statement: "I believe in a way out, a philosophical way out, a symbolic way out, because it is counter-hegemonic, it is counter-colonialist. I think this is the way I understand it" (A., 2023, oral communication).

This thread also connects the answer to the proposed speculative exercise, through which I asked the interviewee to talk about communication in two decades. From her response, I highlight the following excerpt:

Twenty years from now, I hope there will be a multiplicity, a diversity in the ways of communicating and communicating to resist this control and this domination, you know, of bodies and futures. That's what I hope exists like this. But, twenty years from now, I also understand that I will continue connecting and communicating with the same people and with the same values because quilombismo, for example, is something that has existed for over five hundred years in our country. And it will continue to exist. The sovereignty of indigenous peoples, their rights, the claim for territory, the claim for their autonomy, their rights, and their way of living in the world will continue to exist. And then I think the rest is just packaging. I believe that in twenty years, I will continue communicating with Exu and playing buzio, which are communication technologies in my way. I'm going to continue, anyway, going to the waterfall to make padê because that's also communication for me. I don't think that's going to change. Now, what the market will do, I don't think it's something that... I try not to worry about that; it's not my concern. (A., 2023, oral communication)

In his speech, his expanded and embodied understanding of communication draws attention, seen here not as a synonym for communication mediated by digital technologies - even with the theme of the interview gravitating around this issue. Differently, A. points to the resistance of communication that occurs through the contact of bodies, oral texts - and here I allude to Leda Maria Martins (2021) - and the connection with spirituality, with non-human and

ancestral beings. At one point, she summarizes: "If there's weed to take a bath with, for me, I'm fine" (A., 2023, oral communication).

The third and final knot emerged from how the exercise of thinking through images came to fruition in contact with the interviewee. When presented with the images, A. immediately presented a kind of discomfort, thinking about the images and feeling distressing, unsettling emotions and narratives. In her words, "These images, they tell a scorched earth narrative. They tell a Eurocentric or dominant narrative of the Global North. It's… Of capture. It's distressing, suffocating" (A., 2023, oral communication). Soon, she traces a reverse path and, when asked about other images, evokes the figure of the black farm mother sitting on a chair surrounded by plants. An image awakened in particular by the vision of the image *Russia 2016* (Zubkov, 2018), which shows a lady feeding drones as if they were pigeons, but also in solid resonance with Caravaggio's *Narcissus*. In her words:

> *A black mother would never be in the situation of the image of this lady feeding corn to the drone like a pigeon, understand? That's why I immediately thought of the black terreiro[8] mother. A black terreiro mother is surrounded by other things, priorities, and needs. The older person is placed in another place; am I wrong? This needs to look in the mirror, and I don't need to look in the mirror. I must look at the older one.* (A., 2023, oral communication)

The second and last image brought by the leadership was that of the orixá Ogum. Regarding this connection, I consider it worth reading/listening to the interviewee's words:

> *Ogun is the orixá of technology, right? I think… Why did I feel about the opposition? Because my whole time at work has been to contrast narratives. If we, if I cling to the images you brought, for me, there is anguish, there is pain, there is fear, there is loneliness, there is paralysis, there is... It's something that makes me sick, you know? It's something I don't... So, when I... You say: what did I think? The opposition comes, the black mother of the terreiro comes, and Ogum comes. Because technology is much more than that, I believe that what I try to do at each confluence, as Nego Bispo says, is that we do look: "You are looking here." Because we are here in the glass, on the screen, in this grip that fits in the palm of our hand, but that's the universe here. It's much broader.*

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[8] Terreiro refers both to the physical temple and the congregation of initiated and followers of Candomblé or macumba.

Technology is what Ogun brings. Metal casting, right? What opens the clearing in the forest, what finds a way, what gives way, what gives way, right? So, on the one hand, a sickle, on the other hand, a sword, right? The smelting of the metals of wealth, how we adorn ourselves, and how the mines were explored in our country, right? Minas Gerais is the knowledge that comes from Africa, and it is knowledge that comes from enslaved people here in Brazil. (A., 2023, oral communication)

Both images, therefore, appear in opposition to the pathos of the images displayed. Despite the questioning nature of the works of Adam Harvey and Grada Kilomba, it is sometimes through affinity, sometimes through denial, that all four pieces refer to the negative dimension of the current scenario of surveillance and visibility. Alternatively, in a radical and creative movement, the interviewee incorporates into the boards a pair of images that encapsulate actual gestures of resistance to the dynamics operated by the capitalist surveillance culture. Face with cyborg relationships, nature is in exuberance. In the front of self-absorption, connection with other beings, human and non-human.

6. Final considerations

Having made this brief presentation of the research, the redesign of the proposed methodological strategies, and, finally, the results obtained in the test interview, I consider the interview to be positive, as well as the application of the proposed collaborative construction of the atlas. I intend to maintain the format and layout of the questions. If, in the process of preparing the questions, I had doubts about carrying out the image thinking exercise before or after the more "theoretical" blocks of questions, I realized that it was the right choice after carrying out the test interview. As powerful as the proposal to present the images sound without the interviewee being contaminated by previous debates, the four images chosen have very different themes and supports, so I found it fruitful to process the thought with reflections on visibility, algorithmic surveillance, speculative fabulation and the possibility of lines of flight before moving on to images.

However, I identify that there could be an improvement in how the four images are presented. They were shown the four images together initially and, only in the following slides showed them individually. This way may be more fertile than the path adopted in the interview with A, which was the opposite: first, the images separately, and only then together. This process

highlighted the relationship between the pictures, and only then, focusing on each one of them will be able to highlight the quality of the atlas and assembly of the selection. I also point out that a series of other excerpts and discussions covered in the interview can and should be addressed in the thesis. Still, due to the limitations and intentions of this article, they were suppressed to highlight and exemplify in a synthetic way the themes discussed within the three primary thematic nodes identified.

I highlight, however, the value of collaborative work in constructing and expanding the atlas. In addition to the leadership enriching the research with its theoretical and practical knowledge about surveillance and surveillance, I highlight the potential of exercising thinking through images. By bringing new images to the atlas through opposition and not through simple plastic or thematic affinity, A. broadens practically the epistemic horizon towards which research must also aim.

Finally, I recall this research's ongoing and, therefore, still unfinished nature. The following steps, therefore, involve conducting interviews with new leaders. With this, I intend to add new perspectives, superimpose new speculative narratives, and add new images to the compost bin in a movement in continuous resonance with the lines of flight to the current scenario of body visibility and algorithmic surveillance.

7. References

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