

## Journalism, homeless population and international events: an analysis of reportages in the O Globo newspaper in 2017

Jornalismo, população em situação de rua e eventos internacionais: uma análise de reportagens do jornal O Globo em 2017

Periodismo, población en situación de calle y eventos internacionales: un análisis de reportajes del periódico O Globo en 2017

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### ABSTRACT

This article aims to analyze the representations of people experiencing homelessness and violence in four significant reportages in O Globo newspaper to determine whether they are portrayed as responsible for urban violence or as victims of violent groups. The selected stories to be examined were published in 2017, a year after the implementation of significant transformations in the city for the Olympic and Paralympic Games, including federal and State governments' investments in public security, urban space changes, and forced removal of the homeless population from tourist areas. The narrative analysis per the approaches of Bastos & Biar and Spink will be employed as methods to achieve the proposed objective. In short, the newspaper ranged from demonizing these individuals, reinforcing prejudice associated with them, and opening up, albeit to a lesser extent, to publicize the violence endured by this population segment.

**Keywords:** Homeless population; Urban violence; Journalistic narratives; Human rights; Citizenship.

### RESUMO

Este artigo tem o propósito de analisar as representações das pessoas em situação de rua e da violência em quatro reportagens expressivas do jornal O Globo, a fim de identificar se elas são retratadas como responsáveis pela violência urbana ou como vítimas de grupos violentos. Serão examinadas reportagens publicadas em 2017, um ano após a cidade ter passado por transformações significativas para os Jogos Olímpicos e Paralímpicos, incluindo investimentos em segurança pública por parte dos governos federal e estadual, alterações no espaço urbano e remoção forçada de pessoas em situação de rua das áreas turísticas.

Para atingir o objetivo proposto, será utilizada como metodologia a análise de narrativas conforme Bastos e Biar e Spink. Em resumo, o jornal oscilou entre a demonização dessas pessoas, reforçando preconceitos associados a elas, e a abertura, ainda que em menor medida, para a divulgação das violências enfrentadas por esse segmento da população.

**Palavras-chave:** Pessoas em situação de rua; Violência urbana; Narrativas jornalísticas; Direitos humanos; Cidadania.

## RESUMEN

Este artículo tiene como objetivo analizar las representaciones de las personas en situación de calle y de la violencia en cuatro reportajes significativos del periódico O Globo para determinar si él las retrata como responsables de la violencia urbana o como víctimas de grupos violentos. Serán examinados reportajes publicados en 2017, un año después de que la ciudad había pasado por transformaciones significativas debido a los Juegos Olímpicos y Paralímpicos, que incluyeron inversiones en seguridad pública por parte de los gobiernos federal y estatal, cambios en el espacio urbano y la remoción forzada de personas en situación de calle de las zonas turísticas. Se empleará el análisis narrativo como metodología de acuerdo con los enfoques de Bastos y Biar y Spink para lograr el objetivo propuesto. En resumen, el periódico osciló entre la demonización de estas personas, reforzando los prejuicios asociados a ellas, y la apertura, aunque en menor medida, a la divulgación de las violencias enfrentadas por este segmento de la población.

**Palabras clave:** Personas en situación de calle; Violencia urbana; Narrativas periodísticas; Derechos humanos; Ciudadanía.

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## INTRODUCTION

This article aims to analyze the meanings produced by the O Globo newspaper reportages on people experiencing homelessness and violence to determine whether they are portrayed as responsible for urban violence or as victims of violent groups. We shall examine stories published in 2017, one year after the city prepared for the Olympic and Paralympic Games, a period marked by high financial investments in public security by the federal and State governments (Lacerda, 2020), urban space changes (Fortuna, 2016), and forced removal of homeless people from tourist areas (Ferraz; Machado, 2014). The reportages to be analyzed (our free translation from Portuguese) are the following: “Wave of robberies on the sidewalk” (June 14, 2017); “Canals have drugs, mattresses, and even clotheslines” (October 9, 2017); “Fernanda’s silence” (November 16, 2017); and “Crime in Copacabana – siege of the massage gang” (November 17, 2017).

We hypothesize that the reportages tend to portray homeless people as urban violence perpetrators, perpetuating negative stereotypes, and reinforcing the historical exclusion of this social group. Furthermore, we believe that a different treatment in representing these people is in place, with less emphasis on their condition as victims of violent groups. In the context of major international events (Freitas; Lins; Santos, 2014), aligned with the institutional discourse of governments and businesspeople (Freitas; Gotardo; Sant’anna, 2015), the newspaper O Globo portrayed the homeless population as responsible for the violence, thus legitimizing government actions to remove these people from urban spaces forcefully. In order to improve the city’s image, an opportunity expanded by these international events, people experiencing homelessness were portrayed as outcasts and disorderly and harmed social and economic development. We should underscore that the O Globo newspaper is one of the most read and a reference in Rio de Janeiro (Rosa, 2019), which shows the influence of its representations in building public opinion.

Freitas, Gotardo, and Sant’Anna (2015) highlight that national and international market-related issues have always been identified in organizing significant events recognized worldwide, including the interest in promoting the country and the city. The authors argue that techniques such as **city, place, or destination branding** are often used to make the territory more competitive nationally and internationally. In general, cities and countries compete with each other and need to position themselves as unique and preferred in potential consumers’ minds to obtain advantages over their competitors when it comes to hosting major events (Vainer, 2013). Thus, they seek to attract international investments, companies, knowledge, tourists, and sales of local products and services to build a positive marketing reputation that can provide political and financial benefits for all involved (governments, businesspeople, and brands). Rio de Janeiro implemented marketing strategies to attract tourists and future profitable events (Sánchez, 2003) during the 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games. In this sense, Ferraz and Machado (2014) affirm that the city adopted “urban cleansing” measures that resulted in the removal of people experiencing homelessness from central and tourist areas to create the image of a “successful city”. These people were transferred to distant regions or shelters with substandard infrastructure conditions. The mainstream media, in turn, legitimized these actions, portraying them as urgent measures to readjust urban space or combat crime, feeding the dissemination of negative feelings towards this population.

A narrative analysis will be the method used to achieve the proposed objective. Bastos & Biar (2015) argue that the narrative corresponds to the action of telling stories in everyday contexts and supposedly unprompted situations, as is the case in journalism. It is, therefore, a qualitative, interpretative, and dialogical method to describe social life events and streamline the meanings that subjects produce when narrating them. The authors believe that the narrative analysis is a tool that promotes dialogue between multiple knowledge areas, investigates the statements of different social stakeholders in different contexts,

highlights the understanding of narrative as a social practice constitutive of reality, and underscores with specific interactive levels the resistance and reformulation of meanings during the historical process. Like Spink (2010), we think of the production of meaning through narrative as an interactive process. After all, one cannot produce meanings individually. “Meaning is always interactive: someone’s utterances are always in touch with or addressed to someone else and mutually uplift each other” (Spink, 2010, p. 35).

We should underscore that this work focuses on the homeless population as a diversified group, considering the research by Costa (2005). They cannot be categorized just by gender, race, schooling, or age group, and there is no single reason that leads them to be homeless. Some face family conflicts or deal with alcohol and drug use, while others are unemployed, as Costa (2005) explains. Although most consist of less-educated Black men aged 30-59, we also have women, older adults, children, Caucasians, and people with higher schooling levels (Natalino, 2016). However, we should stress that they all share the need to use the streets to survive and as housing and are subject to social exclusions, such as extreme poverty and lack of belonging, as Giorgetti (2014) mentioned. To cover other groups in this situation, such as waste pickers, drug users, sex workers, homeless itinerant workers, and street vendors, Rodrigues *et al.* (2020) suggest using the term people experiencing homelessness instead of expressions such as beggars, homeless, collectors, and homeless people. Furthermore, we should highlight that no one really lives on the street, as it is not a home. Therefore, it is more appropriate to use the expression people experiencing homelessness, as this condition can change at any time, especially if there is adequate support from the State for this part of the population, as argued by Rodrigues *et al.* (2020).

## **HISTORICAL MILESTONES ABOUT PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS IN BRAZIL AND RIO DE JANEIRO**

Brazil’s transition from the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the 20<sup>th</sup> century was marked by crucial events that influenced the country’s destiny, especially in Rio de Janeiro. The city faced several social problems arising from its rapid and disorderly growth. Rio’s population doubled from 274,000 to 522,000 residents from 1872 to 1890, including formerly enslaved people and immigrants. Such an increase in this impoverished population exacerbated the housing crisis. Three crucial events created a favorable context for the development and progress projects desired by the Republicans: the abolition of slavery in 1888, the 1890 Penal Code, and the 1891 Constitution (Rodrigues, 2020).

The abolition of slavery, which occurred in 1888, led to the emergence of the vagrant figure, characterized as someone unemployed and, thus, not contributing to the Republic’s progress. On the other hand, the Republican elite sought through the 1890 Penal Code and the 1891 Constitution to repress vagrants who did not want or did not have the opportunity to work. Throughout Brazil, mainly in Rio de Janeiro, the vagrant figure was the first to be sidelined in the urban context, not only for being on the city streets without labor but also for escaping the master-servant dyad. These individuals were not just destitute but people who did not own land or have employers, escaping somehow the slave structure to which society was accustomed. In other words, these vagrants were on the extreme edges of the then-social structure and neither masters nor servants (Rodrigues, 2020).

We should highlight that a distinction was made between vagrants and beggars: the former were considered undisciplined, a poorly utilized workforce, and people who chose to be outcasts; the latter were simply unhappy, unskilled for labor, and exempt from the penalties related to inadequate city occupation and the presence of diseases, but linked to the urban context, reinforcing the idea of marginality, increasing urban poverty and the differentiation between the more impoverished, explains Rodrigues (2020). Beggars were more tolerated than vagrants, but like the latter, they were also socially perceived as a waste of labor and not contributors to economic development. In this vagrancy repression

context – one of the main slogans of the Republicans – the first institutions were created to correct these individuals (Rodrigues, 2020).

Unable to control the so-called vagrants precisely because they did not have control over their bodies, the elite established the crime of vagrancy with the creation of the 1830 Criminal Code in Article 295, Chapter IV, entitled “Vagrants and Beggars”. As a result, vagrancy and begging became public and urban crimes since these activities were socially condemned. After being warned by a Justice of the Peace, people who did not have an “honest” and “useful” occupation that could generate their income would serve a prison sentence and work from eight to twenty-four days (Rodrigues, 2020). Could this be the first step towards criminalizing people experiencing homelessness?

Chalhoub (2012) clarifies that the transition from slave labor to free labor in Brazil, mainly in Rio de Janeiro, confused the minds of the Republican elite, who were used to owning enslaved people. From the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century onwards, enslavers were forced to address a world without servants, adjust their mental universe, adapt their societal views, and address the ongoing social and economic transformations. The author argues that the servant was the master’s property in the ancient world and, therefore, order in the world of work was established.

With the liberation of enslaved people, the former proprietary classes faced the challenge of ensuring the continuity of their economic enterprises. The problem that arose during this period was that former slaves, officially owners of their labor force, should become workers willing to sell their labor capacity to their former owners. On the one hand, the solution to this problem involved creating measures that would again force these individuals to take on new roles. On the other hand, it was necessary to establish concepts and values that could build a new work ethic. The author explains that the concept of work needed to stop being seen as humiliating and degrading, common characteristics in slave society, and start being considered positive and essential for the country’s social and economic development.

In 1888, politician Ferreira Vianna prepared a project to repress idleness, as there was a consensus among political representatives that ending slavery would bring disorder, as Chalhoub (2012) explains. Furthermore, this author mentions that, in the same period, Representative Lacerda Werneck, defending the interests of large landowners, questioned the Ministry of Justice, demanding measures that would guarantee the defense of private property and the individual security of citizens since they were increasingly exposed to the violence allegedly committed by formerly enslaved people who roamed the city, brutally committing thefts and robberies.

The elite understood that formerly enslaved people were unprepared for life in society since they had not mastered the codes of bourgeois civility. Landowners argued that slavery had not provided these men and women with the opportunity to learn notions of justice, respect for other people’s property, and freedom. According to the logic of the hegemonic group, the formerly enslaved people brought with them the vices of their previous state, as if they were less evolved, and, thus, had no ambition to act virtuously, achieve wealth of their own, obtain honest employment, and acquire politeness. Therefore, ensuring that the freed people did not compromise the established order was necessary. This led to the decision to impose work through repression and compulsory labor to educate the marginalized who circulated the city, as Chalhoub (2012) explained.

Still, according to this author, the transition from a formerly enslaved person to a worker could not occur only through pressure and violence, as it was not desired that the new political and labor system be in any way related to the institution of slavery. Therefore, in the political-administrative environment, there were constant discussions about ways to educate those who had stopped being captives to instill in their minds the appreciation of work and respect for other people’s property.

However, the transformation of the formerly enslaved person into a worker could not happen only through repression and explicit violence. After all, a return to some disguised form of the hideous institution of slavery was not desired. What to do, then? Well, it was necessary to educate the formerly enslaved people. Educating means instilling in the individual “those great qualities that make a citizen useful and make him understand his duties and rights”. What qualities make an individual a “useful” citizen with “character”? Love and religious respect for property are undoubtedly fundamental qualities of a good citizen. For the formerly enslaved person, becoming a good citizen must mean, above all, loving the work itself, regardless of the material advantages that may arise from it. Educating the formerly enslaved person means transmitting to him the notion that work is the supreme value of life in society; work is the characteristic element of “civilized” life (Chalhoub, 2012, p. 69)

Besides transmitting education to value professional occupation and respect for the heritage achieved by others, as pointed out by Chalhoub (2012), it was essential to establish a connection between work and morality. According to the author, the more dedicated the individual was to his job, giving up the pleasures of life, the greater his moral attributes would be. In this sense, government statements suggested that unemployed people should be sent to work colonies with a preference for agricultural activities, thus benefiting farmers, the prominent entrepreneurs at the time. If they did not agree to go to the colonies seeking a job, they would be sentenced to one to three years in prison. The author argues that the legislators’ moralistic rhetoric was aimed at punishment and moral reform, which could only be achieved through years of social isolation.

Considering that work was considered the supreme law of Republican society, the vagrant figure was constantly combated, as it represented a threat to order by refusing to contribute to society by engaging in honest labor activity, standing at the margin of social interests by not producing a good that was common to all, as highlighted by Chalhoub (2012). In other words, vagrancy was considered a supposedly preparatory crime act, which justified the need for repression. We should underscore that the problem was not vagrancy itself but rather the financial condition of those classified as vagrants, unable to pay for basic expenses such as housing, clothing, and food. Affluent individuals, for example, could afford to loiter as they had sufficient resources to ensure their subsistence. On the other hand, the poor vagrants were sentenced to prison or forced labor because they did not have wealth.

Another interesting aspect is the relationship established between idleness and poverty. The project recognized two elementary conditions to characterize the crime of vagrancy: habit and indigence, especially the latter. If an individual is idle but has the means to ensure his survival, he is not obviously dangerous to the social order. Only the association of vagrancy with indigence affects the moral sense, distorting men and engendering crime. It is clear, therefore, that we have bad and good idleness. Destructive idleness is a characteristic of the poor classes and must be promptly repressed. Good idleness is undoubtedly an attribute of noble Representatives and their equals (Chalhoub, 2012, p. 75).

In the Republic, as Chalhoub (2012) points out, the ideological universe of the dominant classes was divided into two distinct parts: on the one hand, those who valued work, and on the other, the underworld of vagrants, full of crimes against the bourgeoisie and its properties. In the opinion of the most privileged, vagabonds, also considered criminals, were on the margins of society established according to bourgeois ideals. On this margin, the vagabonds distanced themselves from the conception of virtue and morality outlined by those interested in exploiting their workforce.

Soon after the end of slavery, many foreigners were attracted to Rio de Janeiro, seeking to compete in the job market with Black people and biracial people who were living their first experiences as free workers, under contract with an employer, instead of being owned by somebody. According to Chalhoub (2012), the occupational structure of this period, based on 1890 data, reveals that non-whites were even more sidelined with the arrival of immigrants. More than half of the 89 thousand economically active foreigners worked



in commerce, industry, and artistic activities. In other words, these new workers occupied dynamic and profitable fields. On the other hand, 48% of economically active non-whites were employed in domestic services, 17% in industrial sectors, and 16% did not have a declared profession, with small side jobs without contract, or were considered vagrants.

Chalhoub (2012) reveals the persistent subordination of Africans in Rio de Janeiro throughout the historical process, from colonial times to the Republican period. Despite the end of slavery, these individuals faced obstacles in progressing in the job market due to the oppression of privileged groups. This oppression and marginalization were not limited to the imperial period but persisted to this day. Racist structures resisted even after abolition, perpetuating social exclusion through residential segregation, denial of civil and labor rights, and negative racial representations. These discrimination forms shaped and restricted the possibilities of social and economic advancement for Black people, preserving subordination throughout the centuries. Despite legal advances and affirmative policies, socioeconomic disparities between Black people and whites in Brazil are still evident, with the Black population facing more significant difficulties in accessing jobs, education, health, housing, and security, reinforcing this persistent historical subordination.

## **INHERITANCE OF SLAVERY: URBAN VIOLENCE AND THE HOMELESS POPULATION**

Ouchana (2017) published the reportage “Wave of robberies on the sidewalk” in the *O Globo*, explaining that several kiosks in Leme and Copacabana were allegedly looted by people experiencing homelessness. Referring to the era of slavery, Santos (2015) clarifies that the same enslaved people who were indispensable for the proper functioning of city and country tasks could engage in rebellious acts such as running away, failing to prevent theft, carrying out petty crimes, and leading insurrections. “The imperial State, in turn, created a series of control and repression mechanisms for slavery: even so, the night pass, municipal postures, and floggings were unable to put an end to slave rebellion acts” (Santos, 2015, p. 2). With the State’s disciplinary action, incarceration (temporary and perpetual galleys) and punishment (death penalty and floggings) emerged, explains the author.

Baltazar Francisco Júnior was shocked when he arrived on Saturday morning at his kiosk near Post 4 on Copacabana Beach. Drink bottles, cigarettes, frozen food, cutlery, plates, and glasses had been stolen. Devastated, he bought goods and spent the day working hard to try to recover the loss. At night, he went home thinking, “Tomorrow is another day”. However, he was wrong. – On Saturday, they took the products and utensils at the establishment’s top. I stored what was left underground to avoid further theft. As incredible as it may seem, it all happened again on Sunday. They emptied the refrigerator. They took meat and other frozen foods, besides the dishes and the device that receives images from security cameras. The most surprising thing is that the robberies took place in a famous place worldwide, in a Brazilian postcard city – lamented the merchant, who estimates that he lost more than R\$2,500 worth of products (Ouchana, 2017, p. 8).

Stories such as those from businessman Baltazar Francisco Júnior are repeated in the reportage. In general, they are owners of kiosks invaded at night, when neighborhood policing was reduced, or that lost work equipment and merchandise during robberies carried out by armed men. The article explains that these crimes also occurred in the Barra district but are more common in Copacabana and Leme. Regarding these neighborhoods, the newspaper clarifies the following: “Copacabana is the heart of the South Zone. It is the capital of Brazilian tourism, and we are scared, terrified, sad, and insecure. We no longer have a sense of security.” In the *O Globo*, there is also a concern about the weakening of tourist potential in these places: “As hosts of the Marvelous City, we cannot receive tourists well. There is no point in having a good structure, qualified professionals, and good cuisine if visitors and residents cannot enjoy tranquility.”

Orla Rio vice-president João Marcelo Barreto presented two solutions to the problems in Copacabana and Leme: more policing and greater camera surveillance. He believes that defending the marketing interests of

local businesspeople is evident, especially when he talks about “street vendors who sell caipirinha in front of the kiosks” (Ouchana, 2017, p. 8). In the excerpt below, people experiencing homelessness, whether drug users or not, are represented as the dirt on the sidewalk, which prevents the profitability of restaurant and kiosk owners, taking away the peace of mind of residents and tourists.

The vice-president of Orla Rio, João Marcelo Barreto, draws attention to two other problems: the excess of street vendors on the waterfront and the increased number of homeless people. He defends a specific security project for Copacabana. – We want to do something in partnership with public authorities to generate more security. We are talking about a tourist corridor, a significant place for the city. The waterfront has crack users, homeless people, and robbers walking around all the time, and we are concerned. Not to mention the street vendors who sell all types of products, such as caipirinhas, in front of the kiosks, who pay taxes – said Barreto, adding that he has participated in meetings with hotel sector representatives to try to facilitate the installation of security cameras integrated into the Rio Operations Center of the Municipality (Ouchana, 2017, p. 8)

An intriguing vision emerges in the reportage: people experiencing homelessness are portrayed as a nuisance as troubling as criminals stealing from kiosks. The bottom line message is clear – both groups must be subdued by police intervention. It is almost as if being on the streets is equated to a crime, just like stealing from kiosks. This relationship between being on the street and being suspected of a crime is not new, as, according to Chalhoub (1988), during the Empire period, Rio’s elite was afraid of public space, as it believed it could reveal the social contradictions between enslaved and free Black people. Control policies failed to distinguish free or enslaved people, resulting in widespread suspicion of all Black people. By establishing behavioral codes, urban administrators did their best to prevent the city from becoming a refuge. These regulations prohibited Black people from sitting in bars to gamble or drink, allowing only the time necessary for primary purchases. Public meetings between “suspicious people” were also prohibited, leading tavern owners to not host groups of more than four people. Those found on the streets after seven o’clock at night without authorization from their master dated the same day would be arrested.

The journalists went to the two neighborhoods in question to ascertain whether there was policing. As few police officers were seen on the waterfront, they pressured corporations for explanations. Military Police replied that Copacabana Beach has five military booths, and dynamic patrolling in the region is carried out by pairs using cars or motorcycles. “In a statement, the corporation stressed that, from January to May, the Battalion of the neighborhood, the 19<sup>th</sup> BPM, made 338 arrests and seized 133 children and adolescent offenders in its operational region” (Ouchana, 2017, p. 8). In turn, the Public Order Secretariat clarified that the Municipal Guard was patrolling Copacabana 24 hours a day and that it prepared a survey of occurrences to support the actions developed in the neighborhood. Santos (2015) clarifies that the desire of the middle and high classes for more punishments and security actions is not a novelty in contemporary times.

On the contrary, the slave elite believed that all enslaved people were criminals, as if it were inherent in Black people, and, for this reason, created laws and penalties to address disobediences, simple misdemeanors, and forced labor refusals. “[...] society’s drivers, the holders of political power from their relationships with the rest of society, defined all criminal Legislation. The criminalization of any action [...] stemmed from this elite’s interests for Brazil”(Santos, 2015, p. 03).

The reportage “Canals have drugs, mattresses and even clotheslines” by Rodrigues (2017), published by O Globo on October 9, 2017, specifically addresses the issue of people experiencing homelessness. Those who are homeless are represented as dirty, aggressive, and thieves, and to solve this problem, those interviewed call for more police repression and compulsory hospitalization. The article begins by describing the urban setting that haunts residents and visitors to the Leblon and Jardim Botânico districts, as seen in the excerpt below.



Used to seeing homeless people on the sidewalks and squares, residents and businesses in Leblon and Jardim Botânico are now surprised by the occupation of a new space: the canals that cross the districts. Every day, groups consume drugs, wash clothes, bathe, and even sleep in these places where the waterbed is almost dry. Furthermore, robberies near the banks of small rivers are reported. According to witnesses, people experiencing homelessness are responsible for the robberies (Rodrigues, 2017, p. 14).

According to Santos (2006), at the time of slavery, it was common for enslaved people who worked outside their homes to occupy the streets. However, the presence of trusted enslaved people in public spaces was frowned upon. While trusted enslaved people slept in small rooms in their masters' homes, those who worked outside had their homes in tenements or returned to large houses to sleep. Some masters did not care about enslaved people living outside, but others complained to the City Council and the police about the disorder, lack of hygiene, and dirt in the city. "More than potential insurrection centers, given the profile of their inhabitants, this collective housing started to be seen as a potential disease outbreak" (Santos, 2006, p. 11). According to the author, the Central Hygiene Board was created to control the tenements, as if the blame for the yellow fever (1850) and cholera (1855) epidemics fell solely on Black people and not on enslavers. However, the latter were later held responsible: "the medical consensus that held the slave trade responsible for the smallpox outbreak in the city" (Santos, 2006, p. 11).

The representation of violent homeless people is advocated due to the emphasis given to a resident's statement: "Those who live or work in the region have been suffering. Sometimes, the police appear at night and chase the groups away, but these groups return the next morning. They bother drivers and pedestrians because they are very aggressive" (Rodrigues, 2017, p. 14), referring to those who were in the canal on Rua Visconde de Albuquerque in Leblon. The president of the Association of Friends of Leblon and Surrounding Areas said: "our biggest concern is with robberies and thefts. Teams from the Municipal Secretariat of Social Assistance and Human Rights even operate in the region but cannot solve the problem of the growing homeless population" (Rodrigues, 2017, p. 14). He continues: "The law prevents a homeless person from being compulsorily taken to a shelter" (Rodrigues, 2017, p. 14). According to Azevedo (1996), the Brazilian elite tended to portray enslaved people, especially Black people, in two ways: as bestial beings, resigned as vegetables, or as violent enslaved people who could commit the most brutal crimes. The representations were anti-slavery and anti-slave, even in abolitionist campaigns in Brazil. According to the author, many Brazilian abolitionists considered slavery terrible not because they condemned it but because they were forced to live with violent and evil Black people, as they perceived them. It was a contradictory vision: they wanted to end slavery not because they considered it unbearable but because it forced them to live with people they could not stand. Also, according to the O Globo reportage, the representation of Black people as violent persists in our society, as evidenced by the opinions of the sources heard by the newspaper. This perception is perpetuated by journalism itself, which reproduces these representations without showing discordant perspectives. The president of the Association of Residents and Friends of Leblon (AmaLeblon) said that "we are living in a bizarre moment, without repression" (Rodrigues, 2017, p. 14) and that the profile of people experiencing homelessness in the district has changed, criticizing the lack of public policies. This statement is interesting because it demands more repression for them while criticizing the lack of public policies for these people.

We are living in a bizarre moment without repression. We realize today that most of the homeless population is not what we were used to seeing. They are not needy people requiring social assistance living on the district's streets. We have entire families coming here, people who work as car parkers and cleaners and who do not return home because they started using the canals to sleep, bathe, or wash clothes. Public authorities use Legislation as an excuse, which cannot develop efficient work on the issue (Rodrigues, 2017, p. 14).

Using the respondent's opinion, the newspaper does not recognize the diversity of reasons that lead someone to live on the streets. It is as if some groups deserve rights, and others do not. Given this issue, the Legislation would be inefficient because it does not allow these people to be compulsorily taken to shelters. It is a desire to clean up the city, not reaching the root of the problem: adequate and humane treatment, decent housing, and work must be provided.

Reinforcing the representation of dirty homeless people, we can note that the desire to cleanse urban space stems mainly from businesspeople, which becomes evident at the end of the reportage when a business person from the Jardim Botânico district clarifies that homeless people are sleeping on mattresses and even hanging clothes on clotheslines in front of his business. This scene, which occurred daily, scared away his customers and harmed the businessman, reinforced the newspaper. "Unfortunately, this scene is common here and has obviously impacted my business. Customers are uncomfortable. The Municipality needs to act so that the problem does not take on an even greater proportion" (Rodrigues, 2017, p. 14).

People experiencing homelessness also appear as victims of violence, which is the case of the reportage "Fernanda's silence", published on November 16, 2017, by Bottari and Araújo (2017). Fernanda, a homeless woman in Copacabana, was murdered on October 18, 2017, but was only portrayed with great prominence by the newspaper O Globo, with several pieces of news about the fact, almost a month after the crime. The first reportage, which will be analyzed, was published on November 16, 2017, when the two killers, a medical student and an MMA (Mixed Martial Arts) fighter, were identified by the police.

Fernanda Rodrigues dos Santos had made the streets of Copacabana her dormitory and place of subsistence for four years. She was known by her neighbors in the neighborhood for being an eccentric woman. Throughout the day, she was close to a square in the region where she tirelessly polished the neighborhood's pans, oblivious to what was happening around her. However, as the newspaper describes, "This particular universe, in which poverty borders on madness, did not protect her from human evil: on October 18, Fernanda was killed with a shot in the chest while asleep in the corner of Rua Duvivier at the age of 40" (Bottari; Araújo, 2017, p. 8). The Homicide Police Station chief officer says he is shocked by such violence and understands that the case is a hate crime. He reports that the two defendants acted coldly, and the police were investigating whether they were involved in the homicide of another homeless man whose body was burned inside a tunnel also in Copacabana.

On November 17, 2017, the reportage "Crime in Copacabana – Siege of the massage gang" written by Werneck and Merola (2017) reports that the Homicide Police Station is investigating a group suspected of taking justice into their hands and which targets beggars, street car parkers and cleaners, and other people living on the sidewalks. Another homeless woman says she fears for her life, "Everyone loved Fernanda: even rich people liked her. What happened shows that those who sleep on the sidewalk are at risk" (Werneck; Merola, 2017, p. 9).

Monsma (2013) highlights that Black individuals were subjected to terrible punishments during the slavery period, such as bodily mutilation, spanking, and whipping. Surprisingly, even after abolition, lynchings persisted as a form of violence directed at this portion of the population. According to the author, lynching can be understood as an act of collective violence in which someone is attacked, beaten, and even murdered by a group of individuals. This action is usually motivated by feelings of revenge, seeking justice at one's hands, and prejudice, such as racism. In this context, the crowd or group of people plays the role of judge and executioner, assuming responsibility for punishment without any legal process or guarantee of a fair trial.

As the case spread throughout the district, neighbors uncovered Fernanda's past, who had reportedly turned to the street out of disappointment after being abandoned by her husband, a Frenchman who left her with three children. With the repercussion of the case, a brother of Fernanda who lives in another state

was identified and reported that his sister has always suffered a lot since she was little and that the family's maladjustment is due to a system that does not offer a social and educational structure for poor people, stating that "our family has always been dysfunctional, largely because of my mother's problems with drinking. I thought Fernanda was living well in Rio" (Werneck and Merola, 2017, p. 9). The story reported, once again, highlights the issue of family breakdown as one of the factors that lead an individual to become homeless. Finally, so that Fernanda would not be buried as a pauper, a group of volunteers who support homeless people sought support from the Social Development Secretariat, which provided the necessary documentation for burial at the Caju Cemetery.

Also related to the case of the homeless population as victims of violence, the reportage of November 18, 2017, written by Ouchana (2017), states that "Five days later, homeless people are attacked in Leme". According to the Social Assistance Secretariat, five days after Fernanda's murder, people experiencing homelessness were beaten in a square in Leme. The Municipality became aware of the case when one of the victims sought out a Specialized Social Assistance Reference Center (CREAS) after the attack to ask for help due to a fractured jaw, reporting that his group was woken up violently in the early hours of the morning.

According to Ouchana (2017), data from the Secretariat of Social Assistance indicate that cases of violence against the homeless population were occurring in several parts of Rio de Janeiro and that at least eight cases of threat or aggression had been recorded in the last nine months, with male individuals as the main targets. Furthermore, people experiencing homelessness reported that public agents conducted some attacks. As mentioned by Fontella (2018), lynching victims are generally seen as deviant; that is, those who have less value in the eyes of bourgeois society, such as criminals, robbers, Black people, and homeless people. Even in the absence of evidence, these individuals are tried and convicted by the aggressors through lynchings. According to the author, this behavior is often "naturalized" by the media, as exemplified by the sentence: "he was beaten because he deserved it". However, the opposite occurred in the case of Fabiana Rodrigues dos Santos (Werneck; Merola, 2017): she aroused compassion among the residents of Copacabana. The author also clarifies that there is a strong connection between extreme poverty and lynching, as, in general, aggressors feel impunity when committing the crime, believing that they are doing society a "favor". Somehow, this specific report deconstructs the narrative link (Matheus, 2011) that the newspaper had been creating regarding people experiencing homelessness. They appear worthy of compassion, not just as potential criminals or urban space polluters, which reveals that the periodical shows some contradictions and different views on the homeless population. It is even possible to talk about sensationalist journalism since, according to Fortuna and Lacerda (2018, p. 47), "the imagery of fear causes sensations. The same sensations that can greatly boost newspaper sales. Large media organizations saw sensationalist journalism as an inexhaustible source of income." The authors argue that there is a sensationalist trait in current-day reference newspapers, such as the O Globo: "it is not intended for 'bloody' journalism, but still uses devices common to sensationalism to seduce readers. This is because we are morbidly attracted to a network that feeds on insecurity" (Fortuna; Lacerda, 2018, p. 49).

## CONCLUSION

During the analysis of the narratives in the newspaper O Globo, we identified that these reportages approached people experiencing homelessness both as alleged perpetrators of crimes and victims of violence. An example is the reportage "Wave of robberies on the sidewalk" by Ouchana (2017), which accused these people of robberies at kiosks in Copacabana, even without presenting concrete evidence. However, the report "Crime in Copacabana – Siege of the massage gang" by Werneck and Merola (2017) revealed several violent actions targeting the homeless population in different areas of Rio de Janeiro.

Another aspect addressed was the connection established between people experiencing homelessness and urban space pollution, as presented in the reportage “Canals have drugs, mattresses and even clotheslines” by Rodrigues (2017). To a certain extent, journalism contributed to this perspective by pointing out these people as responsible for pollution and environmental degradation, not only in this specific reportage but also in others. Therefore, it is essential to highlight that people experiencing homelessness are victims of the social and economic system, facing difficulties and deprivations that led them to this condition. By establishing a direct relationship between them and urban pollution, both journalism and the rest of society tend to perpetuate negative representations and contribute to social exclusion.

The news analysis reveals that, after the formal abolition of slavery in 1888, many structures and mentalities that marginalized and dehumanized Black people remained rooted in Brazilian society. In particular, those in vulnerable situations face several challenges, including high rates of violence, lack of access to socioeconomic opportunities, and the perpetuation of negative representations. In this study, we realized how the narratives constructed, and the only voices heard (residents of upscale neighborhoods) directly influence public perception and understanding of racial issues, potentially reinforcing existing prejudice. Therefore, journalism must adopt a critical, reflective stance and is committed to promoting equality and respect for diversity, challenging structures of oppression, and seeking to build a more inclusive and fair society.

Journalism, not limited to the newspaper O Globo, plays a significant role in shaping public opinion and disseminating representations about different social groups. Newspapers have the opportunity to influence the way society views homeless people and, therefore, must adopt a constructive approach based on awareness and changing thoughts. This fact implies portraying these people empathetically, highlighting their individual stories, the challenges they face, and the difficulties that led them to this condition, not just listening to middle and upper-class people who want the “removal” of “beggars” and the “dirt” from the streets.

In summary, journalism can play a relevant role in reporting and investigating the lack of public policies related to housing and social inclusion, which involves covering housing policies, access to primary services such as health, housing, and education relating to social reintegration programs. By bringing these issues to light and promoting public debate with different opinions on these topics, journalism can contribute to sensitizing everyone and seeking more effective solutions by the State, which is truly responsible for addressing the issue of people experiencing homelessness and other social problems.

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