

NAVIGATING SCREENS

Mariah Rafaela Silva

• *The technopolitics of security, •
the smart paradigm and gender vigilantism in a data harvesting age*

ABSTRACT

This essay aims to reflect on some of the ways in which security surveillance technology has become politicised through race and gender biases, the product of a historical process known as cis-coloniality. This analysis aims to demonstrate, with some urgency, that this type of technology is not neutral and in fact reinforces transgendered racism, under the auspices of “efficiency and security”. Rather than providing alternatives for the democratisation of intelligent connected cities, it actually operates as a device for classifying risk, harvesting data and alienating black, poor and transsexual bodies, by widening and reframing the gap between bodies and territories. Technopolitics validate both proof of life and automate experience. They determine gender and circumscribe death movements in cities with hyper-surveillance, thus turning collective life into an image-based ritual, through which the militarisation of urban space and the dynamic of contemporary capitalism itself are amplified.

KEYWORDS

Technopolitics | Transsexualities | Race | Territory | Contemporary life

*Old people have dreams, young people have vision.*¹

1 • Accessing a network of (im)perceptible strengths

I boarded an underground train during the rush hour on a Monday, sometime in March 2021, headed for the outskirts of Rio de Janeiro. Although we were still in the midst of the pandemic, it seemed that the Covid-19 virus had been ‘cancelled’ with few people wearing masks. They were probably on their way home from work, *surviving* in one of the most lethal months of the pandemic in the hyper-productivity of neoliberal politics. Although astonished and fearful, I did notice that most of those people, packed in like sardines in a tin, were holding smartphones as though the lack of space and the dangers of the virus were the least of their problems. For many of them, the most important task was to scroll randomly and distractedly through their social media feeds, while trying not to fall over and to hold on to something, without dropping their phones or taking their eyes off the screens. In this chaotic juggling act, they looked like wandering zombies being tossed about by the train, immersed in a profusion of hyper-connected micro-universes, heads bowed in a typical scene of modern life!

Two trains of thought battled for my attention – fear of contamination by a deadly virus and my ongoing inquiry into the repercussions of this type of ‘anachronistic’ commitment to smart devices. Maybe few of those people knew that all their digital interactions were being pooled into an immense machine, the methods of which are still unclear and biased and which follow criteria defined by an economic model that claims human experience as the raw material for commercial activities. Within *surveillance* capitalism,² a new economic model that has emerged this century, boundaries of security, observation, control management of life and emotions are being established, as are the political principles that regulate laws, national sovereignty and access to rights. For this very reason its principal focus is harvesting data on behaviour and on increasing integration between human nature and the nature of machines. This new ‘tentacle’ of capitalism also produces and reinforces policies of gender management, at times curtailing the right to and the limits of self-affirmation, by means of biometric and subjective control mechanisms. Through the use of increasingly prevalent surveillance and security cameras and by offering ‘gendered’ products and a whole range of wearables,³ our performance is monitored and tracked according to a binary perspective of gender.

I left the underground train, thinking about how this new economic order has been reinforcing methods of social classification, particularly of groups of people who have been historically vulnerable, given that it operates on the principles of *cis-coloniality*. In other words, methods through which the tools and rationale of the colonial model are revived and gain new contours in the contemporary world, reproducing the disposability, predation and abjection that are common in colonial societies, as well as methods of exploitation, discipline, control and the subordination of black bodies, the poor, the periphery and all and any type of ‘difference’ in gender and sexuality.

These forces operate asymmetrically in the bodies and subjectivities that constitute the black-becoming in the world. Namely, in beings whose process of ontological constitution stems from dynamics of organised pillaging, which served the purposes of the trans-Atlantic trafficking of enslaved African people from the XV century to the XIX century and which are gradually being introduced into the field of racial invention in “human-object, human-merchandise and human-money”.⁵

2 • The technopolitics of surveillance as automation of life/debt

So-called smart technology and policies for harvesting and managing data, under the guise of labels such as “difference” and “inclusion” (digital/social), have never been neutral. Any claim that they are neutral calls for recognition that they are imbued with aspects of the culture and environment in which they were developed and as such have always leveraged beliefs and values that foster certain means of survival/living while simultaneously inhibiting others. Furthermore, speaking of the neutrality of this technology begs recognition of its history and of the whole force field that establish its heritage as an instrument of power, as well as the means by which its production techniques (economic and subjective) circumscribe life in our times, principally at the intersection between gender and race.

Technology of this nature that is based on algorithms,⁶ not only presents a risk to democracies around the planet but is also scrutinizing bodies and subjectivities that have historically occupied a position of social subordination. This is how the bases of surveillance technopolitics are constituted (under the neoliberal shroud of security). Biometric control and economic production round the clock not only “say” who you are but also automate the entire field of sensory experience and condition its place in this model of data harvesting, manipulation and human conditioning.

The scene on the underground described above is only one of many of which we are an integral part, in a metric of possibilities. “Predictive behavioural data comes from intervening in the state of play in order to nudge, coax, tune and herd behaviour toward profitable outcomes”,⁷ in a large-scale shaping of our behaviour. The aim is not only profit by managing behaviour but also the production of behavioural economics within which society can be managed (privacy, profit, electoral pledges, emotions, desires, rights, self-determination of gender and sexuality, racial dynamics, security strategies etc).

In this process peripheral bodies and peripheral territories are invented where the management of life/debt is carried out: a social economy that functions in the same way as the original sin⁸ and is in perfect harmony with the working strategies of surveillance capitalism. The debt of life generates taxes, fees, liquidity and profit as well as “appropriate” ways of being, thinking, behaving and above all consuming while being consumed via data surveillance. This includes urban cameras, dating apps, online games, social media, biometrics and identification data, databases, online purchases and anything that can possibly be used in

the calculation of this form of economic management and of behavioural “understanding”. Getting to know you is an act of market investment, whereby human relationships are inferred statistically and all that matters is computer validation, not people with bodies, history and flesh, but instead an “avatar” accompanied by credit and credibility scores.⁹

Through technological devices, technopolitics are tools that set up forms of collective administration, as well as methods of communication and information management that are reconfiguring the economic dynamics and the topography of power in contemporary society. Surveillance technopolitics literally operate on the basis of paradoxes that waiver between “empowerment” and “cancellation”, “inclusion” and “exclusion”, “intelligible” and “unintelligible”, “worthy of killing” and “worthy of living”, among others. Through a set of technical and social mechanisms they define the verification of people’s identities and their annihilation by deciding what suspicious visual appearance looks like. They also automate behaviour, the management of desires and large-scale consumer mechanisms. They establish ‘proof of life’ - for the use of public services – as well as the criteria that justify police operations in regions where very often ‘proof of death’ is praised. In other words, this software defines the baseline that classifies human experience from a solidly binary perspective, between poles of tension and opposition that are almost always incompatible with the idea of normality, idealness, acceptability and insurability.

3 • Cis-coloniality and technopolitical traces

To be concise, cis-colonialism is the ontological dimension where the colonialism of being and of power¹⁰ produces an experience of living in the “cis-system”,¹¹ the modern/colonial world, establishing criteria for normality, truth and the universality of cisgender bodies and experiences, to the detriment of regulation and dehumanisation of body diversities and gender identities.¹² By establishing cis-genderism as the paradigm of “normal” and “universal”, a set of social and technological rules are formed, from which technopolitics emerge and develop.

Cis-coloniality arose out of colonialism, in other words, a process that has been unfolding since the foundation of modernity¹³ in around the XVI century, and which has been undergoing transformation in terms of power dynamics. In my opinion, these transformations stem from seven important *movements*: economic; scientific/epistemic; technical; from visibility and attention regimes, theology and the “otherness” of race and gender. Based on the idea that these *movements* operate as ontological regimes and historical methods of subjectification, colonialism is the rationale that underpins the foundation and the developments of the West European civilisation that emerged following the advent of the European Renaissance and whose movements foster practices of economic and cultural domination until the present day. Cis-coloniality is the amplification of the management of body, gender and sexuality and is echoed in technopolitics in its methods of control and collective administration in modernity, with race and sexism as its paradigmatic points of support and continuity.¹⁴

Race is a fundamental dynamic of annihilation and of reducing human experience to exploitation, making it an instrument to brutalise black people, their territory and their culture and constitutes a mechanism that has fed into a collective vision of black people as a risk to society. So, their bodies have become medical, industrial, biomedical and social experiments and they have been left to either go mad or die. There is always a black person who is in a state of delirium,¹⁵ poverty or violence. This movement sparked the transnationalisation of racism and sexism as epicentres of a “new world order”. In this way, race has gained a damning future and black people have become dangerous and threatening, while their bodies have become a peripheral experience, all of which underpins the justifications of current technopolitics regarding security and incarceration.

In parallel, theological administration methods, created by Europeans erased and fought religious and cultural features, justifying the appropriation and exploitation of land, by demonising practices and creating social monsters, reinforcing the techniques of punishment and domestication of bodies and sexuality. From an economic point of view from the XV century market norms were invented. In addition, the economic market was literally set up through the regulation of the body-commodity of black men and women. Epistemic and scientific administration methods reframed the field of representations imposing a “biological truth” on bodies. This also led to a technical method for economic urban and cultural development, making the body a fundamental means of production inseparable from industrial machines. From the XIX century, visibility and attention regimes were generated, making image, above all the image and perception of “abnormal bodies”, a kind of device within which power is focused on ways of seeing. The panoptic model¹⁶ was implemented in factories, social institutions and on the streets and led to an increasing escalation in medical military and police hierarchies, in the XX century.

These movements define the dynamics of cis-coloniality, as they contribute to the invention of normality and pathology and the pathological, of the criminal and the “good citizen”, by means of a specific set of discourses and judicial, medical, institutional, political and cultural practices.¹⁷ In other words, by defining who is deviating in terms of gender, cis-coloniality causes cis-genderism to emerge as a desirable category within the scope of what has been defined as “ideal”, “sacred” and “universal”.

This is how the invention of gender and transsexuality came about in the first half of the XX century. It is the result of a set of social and bio-technological discourses and practices that emerged from the medical industries¹⁸ and from methods of redirecting knowledge, classifying the body in terms of erogenous zones due to an asymmetric distribution of power between masculine and feminine genders based on their sexual anatomy.¹⁹

These principles were drawn into the administration model and data harvesting in modernity, making the neutrality of technology a fiction, principally with regards to biometric identification, defining risk categories and criteria that guide surveillance technopolitics of gender in the XXI century.

4 • The *smart* model as visibility management on the *periphery*

In contemporary life, with the advance and development of new technology, the term smart has become increasingly embedded in society to refer to “intelligent” equipment, connected to the internet with the objective of optimising time and easing day-to-day tasks. Toothbrushes, telephones, TV sets, fridges, light bulbs, locks, watches, rubbish bins, vacuum cleaners, surveillance cameras, drones, manholes, bus passes, airports and an endless list of equipment and services are now shaping “smart” homes and cities.

This “technological revolution” is backed by large corporations as a product of the neoliberal agenda that aims to decentralise the running of cities and the privatisation of public services through an endless flow of data.²⁰ Although the idea of facilitating services, like recyclable waste collection, is desirable, in practice the organisation of these services comes with an asymmetric history of power and income. Benefits and services are unequally distributed throughout the cities. Conversely, what is being developed is the refinement of surveillance capitalism and the ongoing submission of urban populations, job instability, an increase in the cost of living, unequal access to information and services and gentrification, underpinned by integrated platforms that operate 24/7.

While the grander regions of cities like Rio de Janeiro reap the benefits of technological development, with improved services and security, the historically underprivileged regions have seen an increase in the use of this type of technology in the form of security equipment and real-time discrimination, like for example the use of facial recognition technology for crime prevention.²¹ Broadly speaking, the equation is as follows: smart cities attract smart citizens who in turn attract smart money.²² To reframe this equation, the flow of smart money in smart cities is proportional to the growth and increase in smart-style security, which in turn is proportional to the sum of smart racism and transphobia squared. This can be seen in pilot projects for monitoring and security²³ that end up targeting subjects who have always been classified as a risk and threatening,²⁴ while they simultaneously manage and control the facilities on offer in upper class public areas.²⁵

From this perspective, phobias and social differences take on new characteristics. Inequality is socially produced, politically reinforced and economically dynamic. When the state looks at *favelas* and peripheral regions – and at the people who live in these places – it is almost exclusively through the optic of the problem of security. All other services then turn on this axis and large corporations know how to take advantage of this. A huge quantity of public money²⁶ is invested in the “modernisation” of security, through tech companies that promise improved security. However, they have contributed to a significant increase in the militarisation of urban space, particularly at mega-events²⁷ like the World Cup (2014) and the Olympic Games (2016). The militarisation of public spaces in Brazil is not recent, it is ongoing. *Favelas* and peripheral regions have seen the implementation of Police Pacification Units (UPP),²⁸ police operations and military intervention as happened in 2018 in Rio de Janeiro.²⁹

Police violence rose by 34% in the first half of 2021, compared with the previous year.³⁰ It had already increased by 27.9% by April 2020 compared with 2019. The number of police raids in *favela* territories is increasing, resulting in carnage of young black people and school closures. Data from the Public Security Institute³¹ indicate that in 2021 there was an 88.2% increase in police lethality in Rio, compared to 2020. This tells us that the city is not only the capital of mega-events, it is also the ideal laboratory for testing smart surveillance technology and controlling black bodies and anyone who “deviates” from the norms of gender and civility. In conjunction with this war-like rationale, smart surveillance has been producing both a suicide state,³² one which annihilates its own people, and has also been stimulating necropolitics, in other words, an asymmetric redistribution of the organisation of living and dying in the contemporary capitalist system. Brazil is not only one of the countries with the highest rates for incarcerating and killing black people in the world but is also known to be one of the countries with the highest rates for killing trans people, with around 80% of victims being black and racialised,³³ i.e. transgenderised racism. This concept is used as an analytical key³⁴ to understanding the process by which trans black people are encountering greater difficulty in receiving Emergency Aid from the federal government, in being issued with documents and securing food and income³⁵ in the Rio *favelas* during the pandemic. This is related to a particular unfolding of normative gender policy in coloniality which is pushing “socio-racial” black transgender people into the abyss.

In smart cities, transgenderised racism is smart necropolitics that emerge out of the management of biometric data, risk and threat management³⁶ and the automation of behaviour as market practice. So that, the very category “transgender” is produced, regulated and contested on the basis of a profusion of surveillance technologies³⁷ the objective of which is the maintenance and honing of the fictional narrative of the “social deviant”, turning trans bodies into a sort of double periphery – that of gender and that of the social-urban setting. In these cities, machines, homes, public transport, airport x-ray scanners, surveillance cameras etc are composed of algorithms designed to identify “anomalies” of gender and race. In this scenario, biometrics are used not as a means of identification, but as the technopolitics of differentiation, based on methods of classification and risk management and they set the boundaries of social access for black trans people at airport control³⁸ and borders, through travel passes³⁹ and registration at schools and universities.⁴⁰

4.1 - Biometric technopolitics and transgenderised racism in terms of “security”

The biometric of identification was developed on the basis of anthropometry and eugenics at the end of the XIX century which has resulted in a direct link between physical and corporeal characteristics and identity cards. It is based on the idea that physical characteristics are immutable and define concrete aspects about an individual and is not seen as 100% effective, by any means. This type of technology, particularly facial recognition, has a wide margin of error in identifying the faces of black cis women.⁴¹ Women and trans men are also vulnerable to the use of this type of technology, conditioned as they are to normative racialised policies of gender which are embedded

in the equipment design. Under these policies their bodies and identities are called into question, violated and limited and are constantly under suspicion. It is difficult for facial recognition technology to associate trans identities with self-determined genders because it operates on the basis of binary perspectives. There is a 38% chance that a trans man's identity will be incorrectly read, while non-binary, non-gendered or gender fluid people are incorrectly identified 100% of the time.⁴² This percentage tends to increase when there is also a criterion of race. In addition, it is important to note further factors such as transition, hormone therapy, class and income (which affects access to surgery and continuity in the gender transition process).

Travel cards, the supply of public services via facial recognition machines, access to public toilets and photo apps are just some examples in which additional obstacles have been identified due to smart systems that determine who is a "man" or "woman" and as such deem an attempt to deceive the cis-system.⁴³ This "biometric surveillance programme" defines the risks of people on the periphery and also restricts access at international borders through migratory policies that target the ideas of illegality and marginality.⁴⁴ The transgendered racism embedded in these databases produces and reinforces the boundaries of categories like race, gender, sexuality and citizenship which operate as a means of social classification, determining where individuals stand on the urban landscape and restricting their autonomy to say which gender they belong to. As such, facial recognition is not just facial identification and verification; it is principally, bundles of photographs, analyses of biometric data both subjective and emotional, real-time tracking and social classification, 24/7, on systems that are scattered through different public and private spaces and are even in the palm of our hands and on the accessories we use on a daily basis, all of which put particular black, transsexual, non-binary and intersex people at risk.⁴⁵

Smart technopolitics activate transgendered racism and are being adopted not only for security purposes, as we have seen here, but also in providing conditional access to public services. Either you provide your biometric data or you will be denied access to a particular public service, thus placing citizenship in check. Public authorities have been implementing facial recognition software and data management systems as essential in identity verification, proof of life and as a safety policy without divulging the real use of this data. This may be the big challenge of this new century for the affirmation of gender and for a broadening of the scope of citizenship.

5 • Escape routes

Although this technology is a reality and is being implemented in urban centres and in our daily lives, escape routes and means of resistance are being constructed at both the social and political levels. The General Act for Data Protection,⁴⁶ that came into force in 2020 may be a good example of how an ethical policy of sharing and using data could be beneficial to society.

In Brazil, civil society has been organising through projects and organisations like Coding Rights,⁴⁷ O Panóptico,⁴⁸ Grupo Conexão G,⁴⁹ among others, in order to problematize gender and race biases and also, above all, to present alternatives for protection and collective care, with a view to mitigating the technocratic uses of these devices that are controlling and repressing the masses. There is no easy route when fighting with technological capitalists for power. However, trans-activist collectives, university groups and feminist hackers have been putting up considerable resistance to the uses and abuses of these technologies by governments and enterprises that are conditioning our experiences and transforming them into profitable business, while classifying and reinforcing the debasement of groups that have been historically oppressed.

The implementation of biometric software is a human rights issue and as such affects fundamental rights to privacy, citizenship, equality, non-discrimination and self-determination. In addition, human rights organisations that are not working directly on this matter can contribute by reinforcing the universal principles that establish rights and human guarantees, above all with regards to diversity and differences.

This was exactly how I became involved in this matter. I understood that it is about the way that I, a trans woman, can be classified and denied my rights, by default and that as a Brazilian citizen, I would not only like my data to be treated with respect, but above all my gender and the way I present myself to the world. This is a human rights issue for the XXI century and as such it is about life.

NOTES

1 • Taken from the music video “Eu não vou morrer”, Ventura Profana y podenserdesligado, YouTube video, 4:32, published by Ventura Profana y podenserdesligado, May 22, 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MWZPd5EjO8>.

2 • Shoshana Zuboff, *A era do capitalismo de vigilância: a luta por um futuro humano na fronteira do poder* (Rio de Janeiro: Intrínseca, 2021).

3 • The term ‘wearables’ comes from the technological industry and among others refers to watches, bracelets, glasses and other devices with artificial intelligence and/or a huge processing capacity, connected to the internet which adapt to

the body in order to physically monitor it, suggest activities, process payments and increase human abilities in general, under the guise of making daily life easier and of keeping you connected.

4 • Achille Mbembe, *Crítica da razão negra* (São Paulo: n-1 edições, 2018).

5 • *Ibid.*, 14.

6 • Generally, an algorithm refers to a set of rules or operating instructions for calculations that carry out a sequence of computational thinking to reach a determined pre-programmed objective.

7 • Zuboff, *The age of surveillance capitalism*.

8 • Maurizio Lazzarato, *O governo do homem*

endividado (São Paulo: n-1 edições, 2017).

9 • Zuboff, *A era do capitalismo de vigilância...*, p. 202.

10 • Anibal Quijano, *Colonialid y Modernidad-Racionalidad*. Em B. Heraclito, *Los Conquistados* (Bogotá: Tercer Mundo Ediciones, 1992): 437-449.

11 • The world “cis-system” derives from the combination of two terms “cisgender” and “system” to designate the ways in which social, technical and collective systems operate from the paradigm of cisgenderism. By cisgender, I mean people who are born with a specific sexual organ and who understand or perceive their identity as being in accordance with the gender symbols of that sexual organ. For example, a person who is born with a penis and identifies as a “man”.

12 • Viviane Vergueiro, *Por inflexões decoloniais de corpos e identidades de gênero inconformes: uma análise autoetnográfica da cisgeneridade como normatividade* (Salvador: UFBA, 2016).

13 • Walter Mignolo, “COLONIALIDADE: O lado mais escuro da modernidade”, *Revista Brasileira de Ciências Sociais* 32, no. 94 (June 2017).

14 • Ramón Grosfoguel, “Racismo/Sexismo Epistêmico, Universidades Ocidentalizadas e os quatro Genocídios/Epistemicídios ao longo do século XVI”, *Tabula Rasa* [on-line], no.19 (2013): 31-58.

15 • Gilles Deleuze, *Dois regimes de loucos* (São Paulo: Editora 34, 2016).

16 • Michel Foucault, *Vigiar e punir: nascimento da prisão* (Petrópolis: Vozes, 1987).

17 • Michel Foucault, *História da sexualidade I: a vontade de saber* (São Paulo: Paz e Terra, 2014).

18 • Paul Preciado, *Testo Junkie: sexo, drogas e biopolíticas na era farmacopornográfica* (São Paulo: n-1 edições, 2018).

19 • Beatriz Preciado, *Manifesto contrassexual* (São Paulo: n-1 edições, 2015).

20 • E. Morozov and F. Bria, *A cidade inteligente - tecnologias urbanas e democracia* (São Paulo: Ubu editora, 2019).

21 • Pablo Nunes, “Prever crimes, a que custo?”. Centro de Estudos de Segurança e Cidadania, September 28, 2021, accessed December 9, 2021,

<https://cesecseguranca.com.br/artigo/prever-crimes-a-que-custo/>.

22 • Morozov and Bria, *A cidade inteligente...*, 2019.

23 • “PM vai implantar programa de reconhecimento facial e de placas de veículos”, Governo Aberto RJ, February 27, 2019, accessed December 9, 2021, <http://www.governoaberto.rj.gov.br/noticias/2019/02/pm-vai-implantar-programa-de-reconhecimento-facial-e-de-placas-de-veiculos>.

24 • Sarah Alves, “Além do racismo, reconhecimento facial erra mais em pessoas trans”. UOL, February 14, 2021, accessed December 9, 2021, <https://www.uol.com.br/tilt/noticias/redacao/2021/02/14/nao-e-so-racismo-reconhecimento-facial-tambem-erra-mais-em-peopleas-trans.htm>.

25 • Leticia Lopes and Marjoriê Cristine, “Praia de Copacabana será o ‘projeto piloto’ da marcação de lugar na areia por aplicativo no Rio”. Extra, August 11, 2020, accessed December 9, 2021, <https://extra.globo.com/noticias/rio/praiade-copacabana-sera-projeto-piloto-da-marcacao-de-lugar-na-areia-por-aplicativo-no-rio-rv1-1-24579562.html>.

26 • According to Bruno Cardoso, spending on security for the World Cup was around 1.85 billion real, the majority of which was invested in security and defence technology. The author also says that the total spending on security for the 2016 Olympic Games was around 2.8 billion real. See: Bruno Cardoso, “Estado, tecnologias de segurança e normatividade neoliberal”, in *Tecnopolíticas de vigilância: perspectivas da margem*, eds. F. Bruni, M. K. Bruno Cardoso and L. Melgaço (São Paulo: Boitempo, 2018).

27 • Cardoso, “Estado, tecnologias de segurança e normatividade neoliberal”, 2018, 91-16; and Morozov and Bria, *A cidade inteligente...*, 2019.

28 • The UPPs caused tension and fear among those living in the *favelas* rather than a sense of security. Felipe Betim, “UPPs, mais uma história de esperança e fracasso na segurança pública do Rio”. El País, March 11, 2018, accessed 9 December 2021, https://brasil.elpais.com/brasil/2018/03/11/politica/1520769227_645322.html.

- 29 • This model of military intervention proved to be ineffective in terms of public security and represented stunning failures and unimaginable costs for the tax payer. Roberta Jansen, “Estudo: intervenção no RJ fracassou e não deve ser copiada”. Terra, February 14, 2019, accessed December 9, 2021, <https://www.terra.com.br/noticias/brasil/policia/intervencao-na-seguranca-do-rio-nao-teve-resultado-significativo-diz-relatorio,f7f760e0252757049469d4eca9899bdekmb32yq6.html>.
- 30 • S. RAMOS et al., *A vida resiste além dos dados da violência* (Rio de Janeiro: CEsC, 2021); and Edmund Ruge, “Violência Policial Quebra Recorde Enquanto Rio se Torna Epicentro da Covid-19”. RioOnWatch, May 26, 2020, accessed October 27, 2021, <https://riononwatch.org.br/?p=47760>.
- 31 • Bárbara Carvalho and Fabiana Cimieri, “Políciais cometeram 38% dos homicídios no RJ nos últimos 7 meses”. G1, September 3, 2021, accessed December 9, 2021, <https://g1.globo.com/rj/rio-de-janeiro/noticia/2021/09/03/no-rj-38percent-dos-homicidios-foram-cometidos-por-policiais-em-7-meses-e-proporcao-bate-recorde.ghtml>.
- 32 • V. Safatle, “Bem-vindo ao estado suicidário”, in *Pandemia crítica outono 2020*, eds. P. P. Pelbart and R. M. Fernandez (São Paulo: n-1 edições, 2021): 45-49.
- 33 • B. G. Benevides and S. N. Nogueira, *Dossiê dos assassinatos e da violência contra travestis e transexuais brasileiras em 2020* (São Paulo: Expressão Popular, ANTRA, IBTE, 2021).
- 34 • As I say in the text called *Éticas de vida, políticas de morte*, due to be launched at the end of 2021, in which I describe research I coordinated for Grupo Conexão G in 2020 in five *favelas* in Rio de Janeiro, to chart the conditions of the LGBTI community in the pandemic. We noted that trans people experienced greater exposure to the virus, as they were forced to continue to work in prostitution for their subsistence. Most of the interviews stated that public officers, particularly those of security, are the ones who most perpetrate violence against their bodies.
- 35 • Almost 40% of them live on an income of up to one hundred real a month. The combination of security, visibility and cis-coloniality produces and reinforces the poverty of these people (Mariah Rafaela Silva, “Código da ameaça: trans; Classe de risco: preta”, in *Pandemia crítica inverno 2020*, eds. P. P. Pelbart and R. M. Fernandez [São Paulo: n-1 edições, 2021]: 300-306). Within capitalism, poverty generates wealth. Inequality is a reflection of this dynamic and impoverished communities are also sources for data harvesting and ultimately the targets of the data produced. In the paradigm of smart surveillance, the algorithm calculates the risks and based on that defines the levels of threat, credit ratings and policing. (S. Zuboff, “Big Other: capitalismo de vigilância e perspectivas para uma civilização da informação”, in *Tecnopolíticas da vigilância: perspectivas da margem*, eds. F. Bruno, B. Cardoso, M. Kanashiro, L. Guilhon and L. Melgaço [São Paulo: Boitempo 2018, 17-68]).
- 36 • Silva, “Código da ameaça...”, 2021.
- 37 • Toby Beauchamp, *Going Stealth: transgender politics and U.S. surveillance practices* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2019).
- 38 • “DPU recomenda que revista de pessoa trans seja feita por agente do mesmo sexo”, Jusbrasil, August 29, 2018, accessed December 9, 2021, <https://dpu.jusbrasil.com.br/noticias/619081927/dpu-recomenda-que-revista-de-pessoa-trans-seja-feita-por-agente-do-mesmo-sexo>.
- 39 • “Transexual consegue colocar nome social no vale-transporte”, O Globo, October 2, 2015, accessed December 9, 2021, <https://oglobo.globo.com/brasil/transexual-consegue-colocar-nome-social-no-vale-transporte-17669811>.
- 40 • “Mais da metade dos alunos trans da USP dizem sofrer preconceito”, Agência Brasil, July 13, 2021, accessed December 9, 2021, <https://www.correiobraziliense.com.br/euestudante/2021/07/4937378-mais-da-metade-dos-alunos-trans-da-usp-dizem-sofrer-preconceito.html>.
- 41 • The percentage of error is about 93% making it much more likely for a black woman to be mistaken

for a man than a white woman. Diagnoses in the case of suspected criminals on public streets are even less reliable, with a significant margin of error, making black cis and trans people the favourite targets. (Mariah Rafaela Silva and Joana Varon, *Reconhecimento facial no setor público e identidades trans: tecnopolíticas de controle e ameaça à diversidade de gênero em suas interseccionalidades de raça, classe e território* [Rio de Janeiro: Coding Rights, 2021]).

42 • Using a study with photo apps, the researcher Morgan Klaus Scheuerman, at the University of Colorado, concluded that facial recognition software presents often insurmountable hurdles for transgender people, given the high error rate. Lisa Marshall, “Facial recognition software has a gender problem”. CU Boulder, October 8, 2019, accessed December 9, 2021, <https://www.colorado.edu/today/2019/10/08/facial-recognition-software-has-gender-problem>.

43 • Silva and Varon, *Reconhecimento facial no setor público e identidades trans...*, 2021.

44 • Beauchamp, *Going Stealth...*, 2019.

45 • Bennett Cyphers, Adam Schwartz and Nathan Sheard, “Face Recognition Isn’t Just Face Identification and Verification: It’s Also Photo Clustering, Race Analysis, Real-time Tracking, and More”. EFF, October 7, 2021, accessed December 9, 2021, <https://www.eff.org/deeplinks/2021/10/face-recognition-isnt-just-face-identification-and-verification>.

46 • “Punições pelo uso indevido de dados pessoais começam a valer no domingo”, Agência Senado, July 29, 2021, accessed December 9, 2021, <https://www12.senado.leg.br/noticias/materias/2021/07/29/punicoes-pelo-uso-indevido-de-dados-pessoais-comecam-a-valer-no-domingo>.

47 • Coding Rights, Homepage, 2021, accessed December 9, 2021, <https://codingrights.org>.

48 • O Panóptico, Homepage, 2021, accessed December 9, 2021, <https://opanoptico.com.br>.

49 • Grupo Conexão G. Page of Grupo Conexão G de Cidadania LGBT de Favelas, Facebook, 2021, <https://pt-br.facebook.com/GrupoConexaoG/>.



MARIAH RAFAELA SILVA – Brazil

Mariah Rafaela Silva graduated in History of Art, holds a Master’s Degree in History, Theory and Cultural Criticism and is currently working towards a doctorate in Communications at the Federal Fluminense University (UFF). She was a lecturer in the Department of History and Art Theory at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ) and participated in an exchange programme at the New University of Lisbon, where she studied gender, migration and globalisation. She is a social activist and a collaborator on *O Panóptico*.

email: mariah.rafaela.silva@gmail.com

Received in November 2021.

Original in Portuguese. Translated by Jane do Carmo.



“This journal is published under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License”