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# TRANSFLUÊNCIA: REFLEXÃO URBANÍSTICA SOBRE UM CONCEITO
## TRANSFLUENCY: AN URBANISM PERSPECTIVE
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**Abstract**

This paper problematizes the incorporation of the racial dimension into urban strains of social activism from the standpoint of the term "transfluency". The concept was formulated by the quilombola thinker Nego Bispo to reflect – among other phenomena – the heterogeneous and vaguely articulated set of concepts of existence of the Black populations in Brazil. For Bispo, these experiences stem from diverse cosmologies and identity references that make up unique modes of resistance and collaboration specific to the geopolitical space-time of the Global South. In this theoretical approach, the goal is to promote critical reflection comparing concepts associated with struggle identities. In terms of methodology, we strive to correlate theoretical sources by connecting transfluency to the term "collective action repertoires": a structured but flexible set of modes of action in cycles of activism. We hope that the analysis of insurgent events in view of the urban practices that took place at the Rio de Janeiro and Salvador harbors can create references for regional historiography. We consider that the combination of the idea of transfluency with the conceptual pair repertoire/performance is potentially capable of expanding the framework of study dedicated to modes of activism with a spatial aspect.

**Keywords:** Transfluency, Nego Bispo, Repertoire, Urbanistic practices

## 1        Introduction

Racial conflict is a structuring phenomenon of social life in Brazil. In colonial Rio de Janeiro, royalty and enslaved people shared the same spaces, leading hegemonic groups to come up with codes to set them apart

in everyday common spaces. Through urbanistic practices (Farias Filho, 2013), the state, the elite, and the middle classes have produced dynamics to set themselves apart from enslaved people and the freed (both Brazilians and Africans). Urbanism (as a discipline) is shaped in Brazil with this purpose, based on features very different from those produced in the European continent.

Like what happened in urban spaces in the North of the African continent (Avermaete, 2010), the country has been a fertile laboratory for the construction of mechanisms meant to segregate Black men and women, to reduce their possibilities of emancipation through exclusionary land-use planning (Fridman, 2017), to deprive them of the fruits of their own labor (Mamigonian, 2017), and to control their mobility through public space (Reis, 2019).

In this context, Black populations created ways of communicating and using space flexibly. Brazilian thinker Antônio Bispo dos Santos, better known as Nego Bispo (2015) introduced the concept of "transfluency" to designate Black understandings – mainly from *quilombolas*[1] people – that was created to deal with the effects of colonization. Transfluency involves the search for a life in balance with all forms of existence – an idea expressed by the term "bio-interactivity", which means a close relationship between nature and culture, without radical separation. For Bispo, organization processes related to territory – as exemplified by *quilombos* and *terreiros*[2] – or by social organizations – the *maltas de capoeira*[3], the *congados*[4] – are all transfluency phenomena. The term goes beyond everyday practices, also covering the fight against racism and the fight for freedom. Therefore, colonial insurgencies are among the basic empirical interests in Bispo's thought.

In the harbour of Rio de Janeiro and Salvador, two similar insurgent movements came up in reaction to political threats from the state. Those fights are characterized by a kind of relationship with public space unlike what tends to take place in urban protests during democratic regimes. In Rio de Janeiro and Salvador, Black men and women have transformed the times and the modes of circulation in the city with their inventive forms of manifestation. As a result of the flexibility in the ways people associated with each other, distended and fragmented relations with the public space produced by the Black population gave way to improvisations that de-stabilized the institutional powers. Over the course of their experiences in the streets, captive and freed men and women, as well as African and Brazilian workers, have reacted to urbanistic order by incorporating elements of very diverse cosmologies into their contents and modes of manifestation. As such, in addition to the objective, strategic aspect, the identity and associative drive of their actions stand out.

The goal of this paper is to reflect on the term transfluency from the standpoint of possible crossovers and counterpoints with activism studies' conceptual pair repertoire/performance. We drew from Charles Tilly (2008), then, for whom repertoires, in their relational and permeable version, are relatively structured but flexible sets of accrued performances that are re-combined in the context of contentious policies (Tarrow, 2008). Methodology-wise, it is a critical text that relies on the comparison between bibliographical sources. Our argument is that this reflection is potentially capable of producing references for understandings of the South, with contrasts and approximations concerning consolidated concepts and notions. We posit that the term "transfluency" can contribute with dedicated approaches to the construction of references that amplify the history and criticism of urban formation on cities where enslavement was a determining factor – which is the case in Brazil. Therefore, we hope that this articulation of concepts can offer an understanding of the fight strategies in historical contexts marked by colonizing violence.

## 2        Transfluency

Transfluency is about how the Black population came up with strategies of de-stabilization of systems and orders. Nego Bispo elaborated this concept thinking about the relations between "organic knowledge" (concerning the "senses of being") and "synthetic knowledge", of a productive and material character, related to the verbs "contain" and "conform" (Bispo, 2021, p. 214, our translation). For Bispo, relationships forged in the Afro-Indigenous cosmological traffic, of knowledge shared between those peoples, in the *quilombos* and *terreiros*, have influenced the processes of mobilization and fight of Black men and women. Inspired by the organic character of those collective actions, the author recognizes transfluency as the way of understanding the world that allowed for the unraveling of the "psychological relationships of confinement and domination" (Bispo, 2021, p. 213, our translation) elaborated by the colonial power. As it directly relates to subjects' ability to combine their present lives with ancestral memory, transfluency becomes a technology of survival.

Transfluency was slowly settled through community interaction between minority peoples. The composition of "cosmological movements" and expressions took place over centuries without getting entirely captured by the colonizers (Bispo, 2021, p. 211). It is the thought that leans on oral tradition and allows generations to communicate even when not inhabiting the same space-time. Effectively, sophisticated relations "of displacement [by which] we experience the rupture of all contending thought" and their instrumental

rationales are formed (Bispo, 2021, p. 211, our translation). Bispo presents transfluency as a re-edition of Black life in Other territories. In other words, the formation of a cosmological territory referring to spatial organizations such as *terreiros*, *quilombos*, and *favelas*; and to manifestations (episodic or continuous, visible, or otherwise) such as *reisado*[5], *congado*, and *capoeira*.

Explaining how he developed the concept, Bispo recalls a conversation he had with an indigenous leader. For the thinker, the fresh waters of the São Francisco River, in Brazil, cross the Atlantic Ocean and meet the waters of the Nile, in the African continent, "through the rivers of the sky, through clouds, through evaporation" (Bispo, 2021, p. 213, our translation). This is what he tells us:

> The most convincing image about transfluency, for me, is this movement of freshwater, as they all evaporate here in Brazil and go get rained down in Africa, transflowing across the ocean without passing through it. This is how our ancestral memory lives here, it comes through the cosmos. This is, from the cosmic and physical standpoint, the image I have of transfluency (Bispo, 2021, p. 213, our translation).

This means that transfluency is an uncontrollable part of the movements driven by Black populations, which "makes our fights endure so that colonialists cannot identify us at all times" (Bispo, 2021, p. 213, our translation). Thus, the concept is fundamental in understanding Black insurgencies and fights. Bispo mentions the Revolt of the Malês (1835), led by ethnic groups with an Islamic majority in Western Africa, and reminds us that "the participants wore signaling earrings as well as all-white outfits on armed fight days" (Bispo, 2015, p. 60, our translation). The memory of those tacit and pervasive codes resonated in the social space of Salvador. Like rivers, they flowed into the political imagination of the country.

In Brazil, the long and hard political fight for abolition and freedom was elaborated by means of multiple strategies that had to adapt to changing circumstances to reach a level of visibility that allowed for concrete results (Alonso, 2015). Similarly, we argue that the fragmented relationship with the public space we mentioned in the introduction has formed a way of making politics outside of the institutional framework, in public places and streets all over the country. This made an impact on the level of organization and these subjects' ability to adapt their tactics according to ever-changing contexts. Transfluency helps us reflect here about movements that are defined according to their relationships on the streets. Thus, the harbour of Rio de Janeiro and Salvador have become prime lookouts for the observation of this dense network where different dimensions of urban life are enmeshed. For their centrality and importance, we argue that harbors are the loci of the constitutive tensions implicated in the oppositions that brought about, on one hand, the emergence of the urbanism aspect; and, on the other hand, the formation of repertoires of social fights marked by contrasts between "a de-territorialized monistic thought" and a "territorialized pluralistic thought"; between "vertical structuring" against "circular elaboration"; "colonization" and "counter-colonization" (Bispo, 2015, p. 28, our translation).

In effect, to transflow is to make a living through multiple displacements, even faced with (urbanistic) devices meant for hierarchically defined social constructions. The analysis of transfluency can be a privileged means of investigating societies rife with inequality stemming from colonizing violence. We view the identity-building of Black collectives such as the tropas (in Rio de Janeiro) and the cantos de trabalho (in Salvador) as related to urban practices. In this context, they have created attributes that are never stable or essential. We suggest that the experience of those groups relates to transfluency because of the knowledge exchange that takes place when there is social and territorial exclusion of Black populations by means of "urbanistic practices'', an expression that designates a very heterogeneous set of actions involving the promoters of urbanization, their techniques, their discourse, and the results they achieve (Farias Filho, 2013).

Without wanting to reduce the diversity of the processes involved in the urbanization of regions, or even dismissing the complexity of counter-colonial fight tactics in Brazil, we propose that spaces such as the Rio de Janeiro harbor are historically configured, on one hand, by control tactics elaborated by dominant strains (Gonçalves and Costa, 2020); and on the other, by Black experiences and insurgencies. In its unstable and changing character, cantos and tropas have yielded political actions that not only shaped urbanism devices, but also inspired theoretical re-elaborations born from the diverse materiality of thought in the Global South – in this case, fight repertoires with an ancestral, Afro-diasporic matrix, whose effects are discernible in the public sphere.

## 3       Tropas and cantos de trabalho: transfluency in movements' everyday actions

Acts of control related to urbanism are at the basis of imaginative solutions produced by Black men and women in the spaces considered here. Barred from living close to work, and not making enough money to

secure a home in an exclusionary land market, they strolled the streets daily. Over the course of days and nights, those groups ended up creating networks of mutual protection and help. In the central areas of Rio and Salvador, Black collectives have transflowed experiences and knowledge associated with varied aspects of life. In the Black perspective, disputes for the urban space are never-ending, and that is why they become multi-dimensional phenomena where culture and labor issues meet.

In Salvador, the main function of the cantos de trabalho was collectively tackling labor issues, but it was also an instrument in the fight for survival (Reis, 2019). In Rio de Janeiro, the tropas yielded groups that unfolded throughout different spaces and to various ends, putting in check the control power of the state (Arantes, 2005). The two strikes organized by the cantos and the tropas in Salvador and Rio de Janeiro are important events for thinking about the development of political tactics outside of the institutional frameworks. We will focus on some of the control actions in the following section.

### 3.1    Actions of control using urbanism

After the independence, Rio de Janeiro consolidated its position as the Empire's political, administrative, and financial center, becoming a bustling and cosmopolitan urban center. With almost 275,000 people per the 1872 census, Rio became the largest urban consumer market in the country (Cruz, 1999). To paint a picture of the social space to which we are referring, by the mid-19th Century, almost 65% of the workers employed in the 1,013 manufacture and industry establishments in Rio de Janeiro were enslaved people, the others were free Brazilian and foreign workers (Chalhoub, 1990). Brazil had many decades of enslavement in its own territory, even after the prohibition of Black trade in the Atlantic. This imparts specific contours to the urban space of the harbor, where material accumulation is exercised through non-economic violence and expropriations of the non-elite population are important for the affirmation of hegemony.

For Gonçalves and Costa (2020, p. 32, our translation), this phenomenon can be defined as an interwoven capitalist accumulation, where there is "interconnection and interpenetration not only among the different regions of the world, but also different historical times and distinct dimensions of capitalist expansion". Without exhausting the possibilities of the term, we highlight three of the points offered by the authors: i) incorporation of new non-marketized spaces aimed at the process of accumulation; ii) separation between workers and means of production; iii) growing interweaving of social categories pertaining to ethnicity, race, and gender (Gonçalves and Costa, 2020, p. 32-33, our translation).

The combination of legislation geared toward social control and of privatization has left marks that can still be felt in the urban life of Rio de Janeiro. The urbanistic practices constructed in this context involve actions in the following directions: a) norms and legal expedients created to promote the assimilation of capital from the former trafficking of people, making it legal and keeping it in the hands of smugglers, the class of small owners and of local managers; b) constitution of a local economy based on the workforce of freed and enslaved people in different sectors – circulation of goods and people, dock work, civil construction, street trade; c) regulation of urban life by the control apparatus of the 1800s state. As such, there was abundant content created for the control of the Black population, hampering their material life conditions and their own subjectivity (Bispo, 2021).

The urban structure of the slave harbor became a productive space in the city while the ossification of spatial layouts and the centralization of functions were promoted. The resulting makeup made for an urban area that was relatively homogenous and prime for accumulation activities. In this sense, the transformation of buildings into piers or the construction of new customs warehouses – numerous and scattered – were fundamental for the development of the urban structure (Honorato, 2015). The constitution of the so-called trapiches alfandegados ("customs piers", translator's note) shows the permeability between public and private actors who converged in the urban reforms of the beginning of the 20th Century. The transformations undertaken during mayor Pereira Passos' office, although adding ideological representations and methods taken from progressive and sanitarian urban models – which tickled the elites – failed to tackle social inequality and even made it more profound, the exact opposite of what happened with Europe, where new forms of urbanism changed social structures.

Another relevant point: at least since the 18th Century, the Catholic Church has had a central role in the occupation of the area surrounding the harbor – and not just there. The religious orders and brotherhoods detained many plots of land and used a workforce composed of enslaved or recently freed men for civil construction. It so happens that the residences were attorned to those very workers, who often lacked the means to pay rent. In addition to that, the Church controlled urban equipment "such as the schools, the hospitals, the harbor, the water fountains, the city plumbing, the markets or symbolic spaces such as churches, cemeteries and processional paths" (Fridman, 2017, p. 49, our translation). Those phenomena may show the historicity of the urban formation of Brazil, traditionally described as a stationary unit, which

progressively came to dominate the urban space with clear, defined goals, all of which were transposed from the European matrix.

The non-elite population (mostly Black) was kept alienated from their work and apart from the most important means of subsistence: the land. The transformations stemming from the opening of the harbors to friendly nations and the construction of public equipment after the flight of the Portuguese Crown Family to Brazil in 1808 had significant impact in the enslavement dynamics from the political standpoint and reverberated in the political processes that led to abolition. But it must be stressed that the Black population was at the mercy of a predatory land market, left to their own devices. For Black men and women, the state and the private sector have created devices/structures of control such as the constitution of Lazareto da Gamboa, in the Valongo region in 1810 – an enterprise led by traffickers of enslaved people, or Cemitério dos Pretos Novos (Cemetery of the New Blacks), which was in fact more of a landfill, a necropolis teeming with surfacing body parts. In Europe, ideologies and programmatic features of urbanism arise associated with a burgeoning process over the process of mass industrialization, of concentration of productive centers and of parallel expansion of cities led by new technical implements in networks of circulation of energy, goods, and people (Calabi, 2012). In Brazil, their sources and focus may have been elsewhere: the control of Black, indigenous, and poor migrant individuals through the intersection of material and symbolic expedients.

### 3.2      Fight strategies

Even with the end of the slave trade, those that were granted manumission were supposed to provide services for 14 years before they could achieve true freedom (Mamigonian, 2017). The labor of these so-called "free Africans'' multiplied the assets of small landowners, to whom they were ceded, and contributed toward public construction work for the development of the country. Since most of those Africans were male, they made up a "fundamental workforce for public works that transformed the space of the Court and its surroundings, for the military-manufacture institutions and for public service, which was in expansion" (Mamigonian, 2017, p. 150, our translation). In Bahia, dozens of free Africans fulfilled the 14-year labor obligation in the Navy armory, between 1834 and 1850. The construction also benefited from the involuntary recruiting of indigenous men, mixed-race men, and free Black men, all of whom were regarded as idle and unproductive (Mamigonian, 2017). The *escravos de ganho* (enslaved men who were sent to work in the city, outside of the landowner's property, and had to relinquish at least part of their earnings to the master, translator's note) and free Africans had to deal with widely varied life and labor conditions, being sent to work for businesses or public institutions (Mamigonian, 2017). They were in permanent work relationships with European immigrants, indigenous people and poor workers, African or not. Life in the streets around the harbors of Salvador and Rio de Janeiro produced distended associative forms, characterized by bonds of solidarity and a common political life.

In 1857, the Black strike of the *ganhadores of Salvador* paralyzed the city for about ten days in almost the entirety of their range of activities. The *cantos de trabalho* mobilized after the implementation of a set of tax bills undermining the African. These labor collectives represented "the most perfect solidarity and community spirit of the African street worker in 1800s Bahia" (Reis, 2019, p. 83, our translation). The beginning of the movement, in June of that same year, paralyzed the circulation of people and the transportation of goods, as well as construction and dock work. This wide range of workforce affected by the strike shows how dependent the city was on the captives, even for the most essential services. The unprecedented character of the movement meant that it was also hard to counter. After all, how does one repress a movement that is not on the streets? With those actions, the ganhadores provoked the municipality and announced the political aspect (not just fiscal and economic) of the walkout (Reis, 2019). The historical sources tell that the reaction of the state and the elites was to control labor organizations even more rigorously, in an attempt to slowly corrode the precarious material existence of people who had taken enough beatings from life (Reis, 2019).

Some of the aspects of the life of enslaved and freed citizens that took to the streets illustrate how organic knowledge (Bispo, 2021) is manifested: a) the porous, permeable aspect of how they circulated in the city during their work shift; b) the wide-ranging repertoire of activities they performed and the constitution of relationships between groups that overcame production matters. As for the first aspect, unlike the kind of work done in a typical slavery-driven plantation, the gains-based workday was "almost always discontinuous, fragmented, and not just by the gaps between one job and another" (Reis, 2019, p. 89, our translation). In the time spans between so-called productive activities, the enslaved men frequently let their hair down and hung out, played or watched capoeira rounds, participated in a *roda de samba* (informal gathering of musicians to play samba), "visited relatives, lovers, or friends, consulted with a seer or a healer in the peripheries of the city [...]" (Reis, 2019, p. 89, our translation). Thus, the associations between enslaved and freed people yielded practices that ran counter to the mercantile morals of the masters and their urban regulations. This teeming culture gave rise to a set of ways of socializing where ethnicity, class, and gender dimensions converged, making up an environment of different languages, origins, and worldviews. In Salvador, the *cantos de trabalho* converged into "symbols of Black occupation of the public space" and provoked disputes (Reis, p. 110, our translation). As an example, "the *ganhadeiras* not only disrupted traffic – a perennial problem – but they also offended the area residents' sense of smell with their fish and other seafood [...]" (Reis, p. 111, our translation).

Half a century later, in Rio de Janeiro, the general strike of 1903 counted on a similar form of solidarity between workers. The movement was organized by members of the *tropas de trabalho*, composed of Black men hired by various private businesses under a freelance regime. Those groups gathered on the streets, spent the day in front of walls with notice boards that filled up as the demands of the day kept coming. Their daily chores usually did not demand qualification or prior criteria to be filled (Arantes, 2005). The fluctuations in the flow of goods meant that owners would hire workers according to the amount of cargo they were shipping. The general strike started out with fabric factory workers, and soon others such as construction workers, carpenters, industry workers and dock workers joined in. The organization of the *tropas* followed shared interests and goals without prior meetings or discussions. But the tropas were "informal networks of communication and shared knowledge" (Arantes, 2005, p. 55, our translation) resulting in a political formation that faced a hierarchy-driven, violent social order.

So far, we have been referring to men because women faced other hurdles in the streets. In addition to the *cantos* and *tropas*, the *ganhadeiras* (women who were hired per job, translator's note) were also important for the development of bonds of solidarity born in public spaces. Machado and Ariza (2018), analyzing the period between 1870 and 1888, in São Paulo, show that captive, freed and free women "had to organize their lives according to the limitations imposed to women of African heritage in Brazilian society" (Machado and Ariza, 2018, p. 137, our translation), since their circulation in the city was only possible when authorized by the men and families who held them under tutelage. This turned the household into virtually the only space where they could earn wages and autonomy. Even within this reality, many were *ganho* workers in the streets, allowing them to earn enough to subsist and to buy their freedom. Even with hardships and more challenging hurdles, the everyday experiences of Black women and their descendants were greatly influenced by the streets.

As discussed in the previous section, the predatory land market obstructed Black men and women's access to housing. Many men lived in areas that were far from their workplaces, or did not have a fixed living situation, which led them to spend nights in hostels or even sleep on the streets so they could remain in the central areas of the city. Doing so, they managed to get extra work and experience a life apart from the determinations of workday rhythms (Arantes, 2005). In the piers and the streets, Black men and women were exploited for labor and produced complex associative forms. Thus, we will offer in the next section a combination of the notions of transfluency and the conceptual pair of repertoire/performance, especially in their more recent formulations, pointing toward actions formed by understandings, memories, and agreements over the course of their activism trajectory.

## 4        Transfluency and repertoire: a conceptual pair

For Bispo, the phenomena of de-territorialization, of subtraction of subjective and spiritual experiences in favor of labor-related activities constitutes a process of erasure of memories and knowledge aimed at the constitution of artificialities – manufacture, synthetic knowledge, production of goods. The "colonization war is territorial'' and the counter-colonizing peoples have shown their ability to deal with the bitterness of those processes (Bispo, 2015, p. 51, our translation). For Bispo, successive re-signification of identities amid the most perverse contexts of racism, prejudice, and stigma, associated with the re-adaptation of the ways of life of the Black population have yielded patchwork-like, de-characterized, degraded territories. And it was by the association of oral languages with the colonizers' written word that transfluent "organic knowledge'' was created (Bispo, 2015, p. 51, our translation).

Approaches dedicated to investigating the actions and ways of acting – that is, the linguistic resources and the expressions used by activists to make their demands be impactful – find a key idea in the notion of *repertoire*. The term is elaborated starting in the 1970s (repertoire of collective actions) and gradually incorporates a performance facet (Alonso, 2009; 2012). The outlines of the term were developed up to the 2000s, when political unrest produced new meanings for "doing together". The history of the concept is configured by changes of course and re-orientations that reveal not just the prolific thinking of its central theoretician, Charles Tilly, but also the profusion of contentious actions in the city. "Repertoires are learned cultural creations, but they do not descend from abstract philosophy or take shape as a result of political propaganda; they emerge from struggle" (Tilly, 1995, p. 26).

The movements of the Black population on the streets, either episodic or continuous, can be characterized, to a point, as "contentious politics" actions, which means "episodic, public, collective interaction among makers of claims and their objects […]" (McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly, p. 5, 2001), taking place outside of well-defined organizations (churches, associations, etc.). Therefore, the focus lies on the political ramifications of unforeseen, open mobilizations, whose characteristics are closely related to the use of public spaces. Repertoire is a language that is structured and structuring, "it is sedimented social knowledge, but it can only exist when activated by the use that makes the language vary in terms of speech, dialects, accents'" (Alonso, 2012, p. 25, our translation). It is in this sense that we could bring together the terms repertoire and transfluency, as it is used that imbues action with meaning.

The transfluent strategies employed by *tropas* and *cantos* are made of inversions, shifts, and condensations in a context permeated by various kinds of violence. Considering the heterogeneous character of the challenges they faced, the walkout upheavals (in a wider sense) cited here have dealt with the mutability of urbanistic practices, done and redone with the aim of controlling, diving, and separating their bodies. Without meetings or deliberation, *cantos* and *tropas* have produced a particular kind of activism. Their transfluent actions have intersected nexus between politics and ways of life to undo the positions imposed upon them, investing in solidarities that affirm blending and living together with differences (Bispo, 2015) as something desirable toward the actualization of public spaces and their own idea of urban democracy.

If we posit that the impact of a movement transcends its occurrence and "becomes perennial in the political practices of a country" (Alonso, 2015, p. 20, our translation), we may suggest that, by occupying the streets to make their demands be impactful, or by promoting ruptures aimed at raising collective awareness about the problems of the urbanized space, Black men and women have produced re-existing citizens who escape the homogenizing fusions resulting from urbanistic practices, which unraveled a process of urbanization that tried to condemn Black men and women to a life of squalor, precarious jobs and crumbling social bonds. In this context, a research agenda can unfold from analyses that consider the repertoire of confrontation as it developed in the South, giving way to narrative reconstructions that are necessary both to urbanistic practices and to urban social movements, moving in the direction of references that can help us develop more consistent projects and policies for understanding the South.

## 5 Conclusion

Understood as a notion or concept, transfluency is like many other terms from the diaspora and from the repertoire of collective action. It does not consist of a method or formula to be applied to just any situation but is rather an invitation to the empirical investigation of historical context strongly marked by colonizing violence. This text offers some considerations about the term, making it a key idea that is permeable to experiences driven by Black collectives during their emancipatory struggles. The pretentious scope of phenomena toward which we have tried to point only stresses the theoretical character of this endeavor, so it is more about theoretical reformulations than purposeful uses or application of concepts to certain situations. Within this approach, we make a call for the construction of research agendas with similar directions, dedicated to the confluence of action symbols and strategies performed by Black men and women in acts of activism. This is a desirable direction in the struggle for an urban space that evokes alterity in its modes of collectivization. Going back to Bispo, this is a relevant subject in the affirmation of the myriad possibilities of living together among diverse peoples.

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[1]Translator's note: the Kimbundu word "quilombola" designates the residents of quilombos, which were settlements created by formerly enslaved people and their descendants.

[2]Translator's note: "terreiro", meaning literally a patch of land, designates the ritual space or temple, which frequently involves indoor and outdoor activities, where variations of candomblé, an Afro-Brazilian religion, is practiced.

[3] Translator's note: "maltas de capoeira" were groups that practiced capoeira, a martial art developed in Brazil (probably based on existing dance/fight modalities from the regions now known as Congo and Angola) among former enslaved people originating from different parts of the African continent and their descendants. The maltas introduced the use of weapons during capoeira fights.

[4] Translator's note: "congados" are Afro-Brazilian celebrations involving song, dance, narrative and drama.

[5] Translator's note: "Reisados" are religious-profane pantomimes by musicians, actors and dancers who go from door to door from December 24 until January 6 announcing the arrival of the Messiah.